

# Findings from the Field

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## The Mystery Mushrooms

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## The mystery mushrooms Ace McNaughton 8A 2021

On 10-29-21 1:55 PM, it was a little sunny and mostly cold, at Pawtuckaway State park, New Hampshire. I found these cool animals and plants in nature! I saw a really cool bright orange mushroom under a broken log and inside of it I saw a bunch of mushrooms all together in one spot. I saw a frog and little tiny, tiny mushrooms growing on trees and the ground. I turned over a rock and found a salamander. It was very tiny and cute. I was curious about a mushroom I saw that was very interesting and it had a very strange shape. I was surprised to find a salamander out in the cold weather and it was hidden underneath a rock. I was wondering why a mushroom was growing on a tree and how it grew there without soil. How come it was there and not in the ground? Why does it have that color or bright yellow and orange? Why is it so vibrant? How long does it stay alive for?

I found out it was called a small, orange pinhead. A young mushroom, known as a pinhead, can be as small as 1cm tall while a fully grown mushroom can be over 15cm tall. Mushrooms can have the same variety in the size of their cap as well. I found out it grows on mosses and leaf litter on deciduous woodland floors. These little fungi are far too small and insubstantial to be of culinary interest. It is unclear whether they are toxic or not.

Since I learned this, I wonder why these type of mushrooms only grow to a certain size? What if the mushroom is bigger than the size its supposed to be or a different color than it is supposed to be? How come it doesn't expand more than 1cm? I would go out and watch out for this mushroom to see if it grows near my house. I can go nature walks in other places to see if I can find them. I will bring a measuring tape to see if they are all the same size. I will take photos to observe the colors and any other interesting details about the mushroom.

Here are some websites and pictures I used to find my research:

<https://blog.nhstateparks.org/the-fungus-among-us-mushrooms-of-new-hampshire/>

