

Phallus rubicundus Bosc., 1823

Description: *Phallus rubicundus* is easily recognised by its vivid pink to scarlet cylindrical stem and conical slime-bearing cap.

Egg: The immature fruiting body is a white, gelatinous egg-like sac, up to 30 mm diameter, with numerous rhizomorphs (root like threads) attached. The egg-like sac splits to release the rapidly expanding receptacle (fruiting body) and produces the volva (sac remnants) at the base.

Receptacle (mature fruiting body):

Stipe: To 150 mm high and to 20 mm diameter, pink to bright red, spongy, dry, smooth, hollow. It can be cylindrical, or narrowing towards both ends.

Pileus (cap): A bell-shaped, reddish cap to 38 x 15 mm, slightly wrinkled. It is covered by the gleba (fertile spore mass) - an olive-brown, thick slime which is cleared by visiting insects. The tip may have a hole.

Spores: 4-5 x 2 µm. Elongate ellipsoid, smooth, clear.

Odour: Foetid, like rotting meat or sewage.

Habitat: Common and widespread in soil, wood chip mulch, forests and woodland. Can be single or in large groups. The considerable variation in size may be due to prevailing environmental conditions.



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