Lecture 13: The Fungus Among Us

I. What are they?

A. Fungi are _____ organisms that grow best in dark, moist habitats.

B. Once thought to be plants, they are now thought to be _____ _____[1].

C. They receive their energy from _____ by secreting _____ into the environment. Most Fungi are _____, the organic matter from which they take their nutrients is _____.

Taken by Rachel in Minnesota along the Mississippi River

D. Include both the unicellular, non-filamentous _____ and the multicellular, filamentous _____.

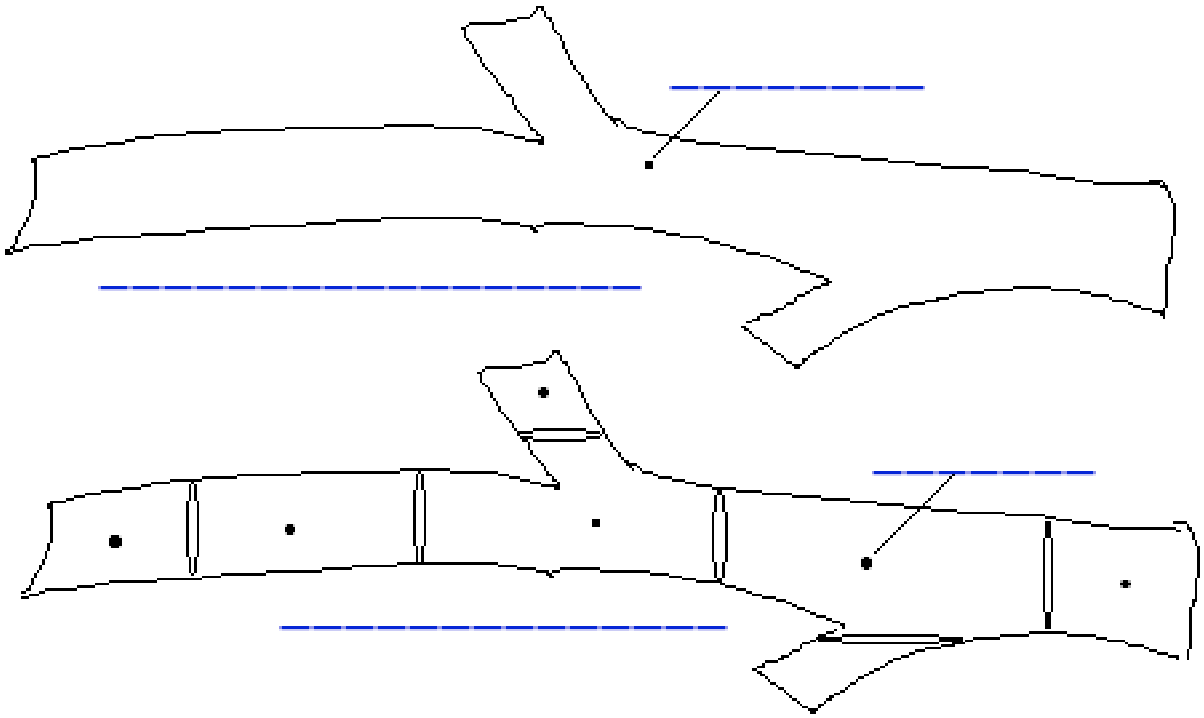
1. Yeasts are typically _____ and are commonly found in nature on fruits and the leaves of trees.
2. Molds are a diverse group ranging from small colonies on fruits and cheeses to large _____.

[1] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fungus#Evolutionary_history

II. What is the structure of a fungus?

A. The body of a fungus is called the _____.

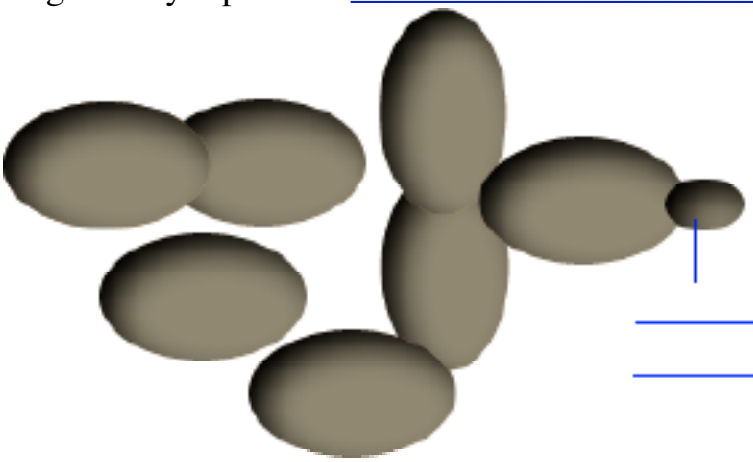
B. Molds are further characterized by long, branched filaments called _____.



The hyphae form a tangled web called _____.

III. How do fungi reproduce?

A. Yeast generally reproduce _____.



B. Molds can reproduce either sexually or asexually.

1. Asexual reproduction can occur either by central _____ of a parent cell to form two daughter cells or by _____.

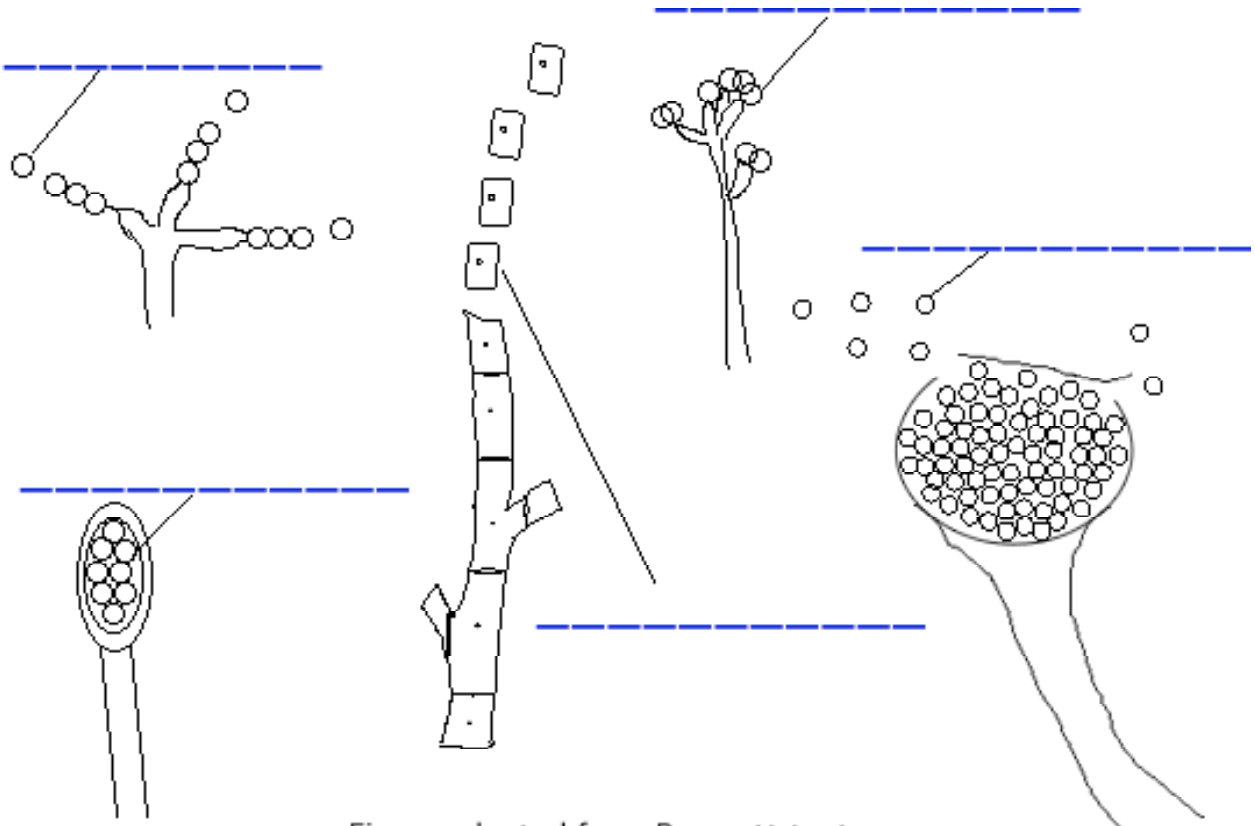


Figure adapted from Prescott text

2. Sexual reproduction involves the _____ _____ and generally includes the formation of a _____ that can survive harsh external conditions.

IV. How do fungi affect us?

A. _____

1. Entire ecosystems would collapse without fungi decomposing dead organisms, fallen leaves, feces, and other organic materials.
2. Nitrogen and carbon wouldn't be recycled for new generations of life.

B. _____

1. You've seen the evidence on your fruit and shower curtains.
2. 10 to 50% of the world's _____is lost to fungal attack every year.
3. During the Revolutionary war, Britain _____ to fungal rot than enemy attack[2] .

[2] msn Encyclopedia Encarta

C. Pathogenic Fungi

1. Many fungi are responsible for some well known human diseases called _____ (e.g. athlete's foot and jock itch).
2. _____ to fungal infection. There are 5,000 pathogens that affect garden plants, agricultural plants and wild plants[3].

D. _____

1. Fungi have been consumed throughout human history. Some you might be familiar with are _____, morel, cremini, chantarelle, shiitake, and oyster (sautéed with garlic and butter; delicious!)
2. Others are used in the production of _____ _____.
3. *Penicillium roquefortii* and P. *camemberti* are responsible for the color, texture, and flavor of _____.

V. How are fungi classified?

We will look at six fungal divisions. Two more (*Urediniomycetes* and *Ustilaginomycetes*) are often classified as *Basidiomycota* and as such are not listed as separate divisions here. Fungal taxonomy is ever-changing. We will base our discussion largely on the classifications presented in the Prescott text.

A. _____

1. Very simple, _____ fungi that live in freshwater, mud, soil and sometimes the rumen.
2. Reproduce both sexually and asexually and spores are _____ via a posterior flagellum.

B. _____

1. Members of this phylum have coenocytic hyphae and generally _____ via sporangiospores.
2. Most bread molds are _____. The common bread mold *Rhizopus stolonifer* is even used in some countries to _____such as tempeh and sufu.

C. _____

1. This group contains molds with _____ such as lichens, morels, _____, and cap fungi. Many yeasts are also classified into this division.
    a. *Letharia vulpina* (_____) grows on conifers. The Native Americans of California used Wolf Lichens for medicinal purposes and as arrow poison[4] .

[3] Prescott Text (seventh edition) p. 630

[4] Lichens of North America (Sharnoff et. al.) ISBN: 0-300-08249-5

Taken by Rachel in Yellowstone (summer 2006)

b. Black Truffles (aka "Black Gold")

1.) A culinary treasure, they are worth up to _____ _____[5]!

2.) Found mostly in France and northern Italy, farmers train pigs and dogs to _____ _____.

3.) They have a complex flavor, often described as nutty, musky, cheesy, earthy, smokey, smooth....

4.) Napoleon was said to have used them as an _____, and they were forbidden to medieval nuns because of their naughty influences.

2. They are called sac fungi because their sexual spores are produced in a _____. They can also reproduce asexually via _____.

3. Many members of this group are _____, causing plant diseases such as Dutch Elm disease and Chestnut Blight as well as the human and animal disease, _____.

a. Ergotism is a toxic condition commonly accompanied by gangrene, nervous spasms, burning sensations, _____, convulsions and temporary insanity.

b. An epidemic of ergot in 943 A.D. _____ _____[6].

c. The widespread accusations of _____ _____ may have resulted from outbreaks of ergotism.

d. The active ingredient of ergot is _____.

D. _____

1. Members of this phylum have _____ and possess a club-shaped structure called a _____ that produces sexual spores called _____.

[5] http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/04_03/c3866097.htm

[6] Prescott Text (seventh edition) p. 637

2. This group has many _____ members (mushrooms and puffballs) and also includes shelf fungi. Also in this division are several _____ such as *Amanita phalloides* ("Destroying Angel").

Shelf fungi (taken by Rachel in England (summer 2006))

E. _____

Most are _____ fungi that form a _____ _____with the roots of plants.

1. Around _____ have an association with mycorrhizae[7] . "Plants don't have roots, they have mycorrhizae!"
2. Mycorrhizae help _____ throughout the soil, and draw up additional water and minerals.

F. _____

1. _____ of fish, humans and insects.
2. _____ such as mitochondria.
3. Spores germinate in response to host signals. A _____ _____ from the spore. This tube penetrates the host cell and allows the parasite to enter.

VI. To sum up:

A. Fungi are a diverse and vital group of organisms, crucial to life on earth.

B. The next time you eat a mushroom pizza, give a little thanks to the guys on top. And remember, mycology is better than yours!

Background information for writing this lecture was obtained largely from Prescott's Microbiology (seventh edition). Other information was from: Campbell's Biology , Nester's Microbiology: A Human Perspective, Murray's Manual of

[7] Prescott Text (seventh edition) p. 697

Clinical Microbiology and Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia

Visit the following web sites for pictures and more information:

www.ftns.wau.nl/imb/research/wrf.html
www.lichen.com/bigpix/Asarmentosa.html
athletesfoot.com/scalyfootpage.html
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www.mykoweb.com/photos/Puffball_(mgw-01).jpg
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fungus#Evolutionary_history