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## unmasking fascinating fungi

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Generally, the word fungus (plural:fungi) will simply bring the image of mushroom. Actually moulds, yeast, truffles, mildews, smuts and rusts are all kinds of fungi from the Kingdom of Fungi. Fungi are unique organisms as they are neither plants nor animals. This is because they contain no chlorophyll which brings no photosynthesis, and lack such complex plant structure like roots, stems and flowers. They are also non-motile organism as they feed according to their nutritional sources. When they get their food from living plants or animals, fungi are called parasites. When they are nourished from dead plant or animal, they are called as saprophytes. Furthermore, fungi are widely distributed throughout the world, particularly in temperate and tropical regions where there is sufficient moisture for their optimum growth. About 50,000 known species of fungi have been identified. With the variety of colour and wonderful appearance and structure, the typical fungus usually consists of branched filaments called hyphae. The mass of hyphae is called the mycelium. Spores or small fruiting body of fungus will spread by wind or animal, to be deposited and germinate again. Besides their beauty in nature, fungi have many uses in the home and in industry. Fungi are used as medicine such as antibiotic, beverage, cheese, soysauce, pesticide, biocontrol and bioremediation. However, fungi also can cause diseases such as athlete's foot or ringworm that grows on human feet. Fungi definitely play a role in just about every part of our daily lives..

