

***Hypholoma sublateritium* (Brick Caps)**  
Dave Layton



In a woods plagued by dangerous and hard to identify little brown mushrooms, Brick Caps stand out. Their shades of yellow to orange to brick-red are all handsomely arranged on each cap. The stout younger buttons have a wholesome appearance almost like tiny fresh baked Cinnamon bun, and the mature caps

display abundant purple black chocolate spores making identification certain. Brick Caps provide a perfect compliment to the abundance of color in a fall woods. The problem is they're not seen enough. This Fall marks the first time in five years since I last found these.

This October, Glen Schwartz and Roger Heidt also found a good amount at Wickiup Hill near Cedar Rapids. Photos of their find can be found on the internet at <http://iowamushroom.smugmug.com/Sightings> I found the ones pictured in this article in mid-November on Eagle Point Nature Trail near Clinton. The specimens I found were growing on old wood mulch rather than from a decaying log or stump. Though this is unusual, I've found other species that usually grow on logs the same way. I have a picture of *Lycoperdon pyriforme* growing on wood mulch in the same Smugmug gallery as Glen and Roger's Brick Caps.

I've found Brick Caps before but this was the first time I found enough fresh ones to experiment with their edibility. I first tried an older cap in the microwave. It was a strange slightly paper-like taste, wholesome but not outstanding. I decided to sautee the rest in butter and add to grilled cheese sandwiches. They went very well with a mild pleasant flavor. The young ones were best with an excellent texture. They digested very easily. I think these would go well with a variety of meals, especially Chinese ones. I just hope I don't have to wait for five years before I can try them again.

Dave



**Note the gill color in the older specimens, purple, black brown, but no green.**

**Note the cobwebby veil on the youngest caps**

