Visual Identification of Decay Fungi of Living Trees

Introduction

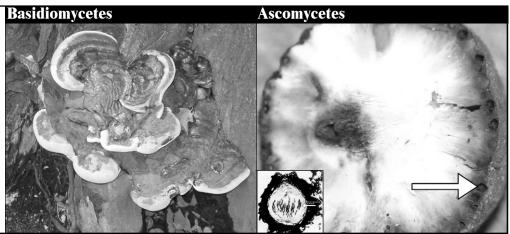
Decay fungi of living trees can be categorized and named using a number of different methods. Accurate identification provides valuable information about the impact of decay on the tree, mode of action and importance to risk analysis. The presence of any fruiting body on a tree requires that the tree be investigated more closely for decay. Identification of the 18 most common fungi of living trees in the Eastern and Central United States includes the following key factors:

1 The Fungi That Cause Decay

Taxonomy/Classification

- Basidiomycetes
- Ascomycetes

The vast majority of common tree decay fungi are basidiomycetes.



Name of Decay Based on Location

Note that each fungus is specific to the location on the tree where it is found.

Root and Butt

Armillaria spp. Grifola frondosa Ganoderma lucidum Inonotus dryadeus Ustulina deusta

Trunk and Butt

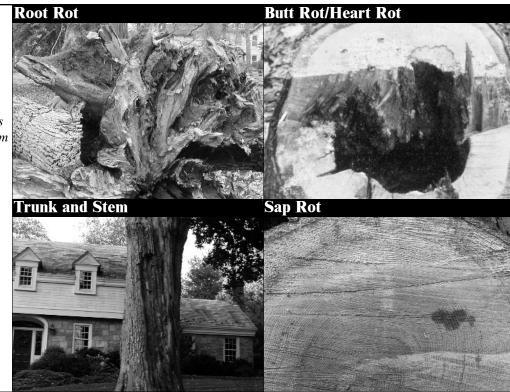
Laetioporus sulphureus Ganoderma applanatum

Xylaria polymorpha Trunk and Stem

Pleurotus ostreatus
Polyporus squamosis
Schizophyllum commune
Climacodon septentrionalis
Cerrena unicolor
Daedalea quercina
Phellinus robineae
Fomes fomentarius. Phellin

Fomes fomentarius, Phellinus ignarius Perenniporia fraxinophilia

Common Sap rots



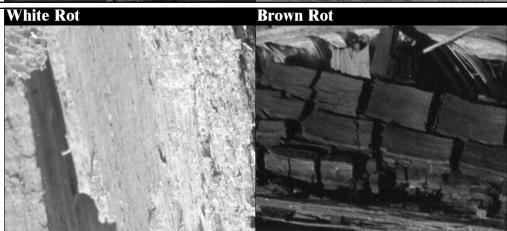
3 Types of Wood Decay

White Rot

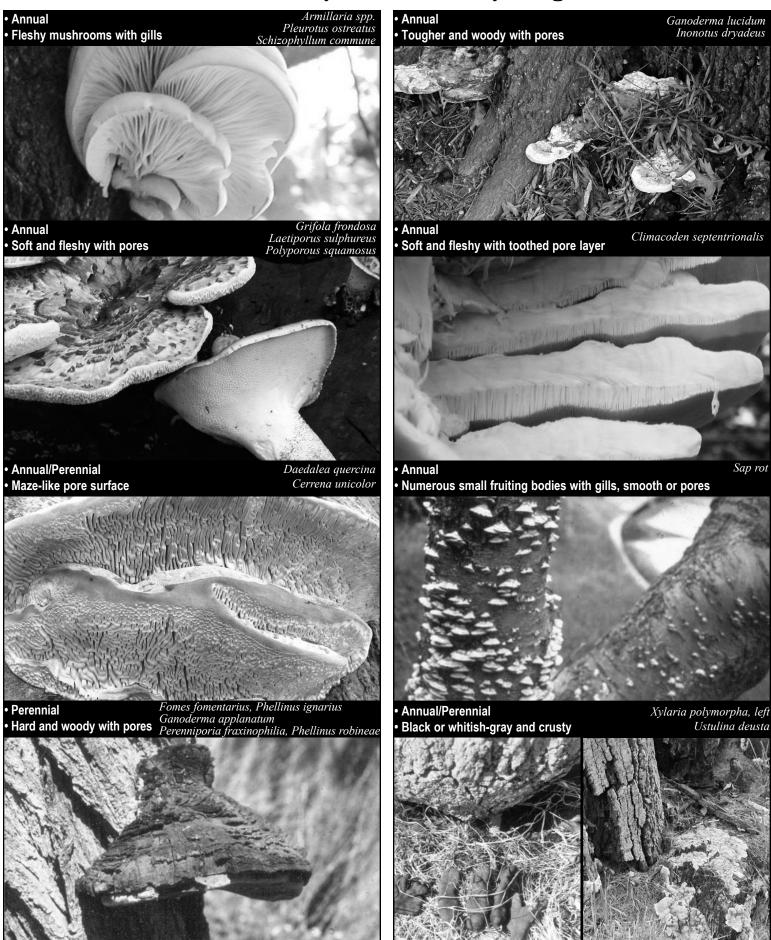
Decays mostly lignin and secondarily cellulose.

Brown Rot

Decays mostly cellulose and secondarily lignin. Great strength loss occurs in initial stages of decay.



General Key to Wood Decay Fungi



Information and photographs provided based on Visual Identification Series, Wood Fungi Decay Common To Urban Living Trees In The Northeast and Central United States, Copyright © 2005 by Christopher J. Luley, Ph.D., Urban Forestry LLC • www.urbanforestryllc.com