

= Phallus calongei =

Phallus calongei is a species of stinkhorn mushroom . Found in Pakistan , it was described as new to science in 2009 . Starting out as an " egg " , the fully expanded fruit body consists of a single , thick , stipe with a cap attached to the apex and covered with olive @-@ green , slimy spore @-@ containing gleba . It is distinguished from other similar *Phallus* species by a combination of features , including a pinkish , reticulated (network @-@ like) cap , and a stipe that is tapered at both ends . The edibility of the mushroom is unknown .

= = Discovery , taxonomy and classification = =

Phallus calongei was discovered on June 16 , 2008 , near the Khanspur stream in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly known as the North Western Frontier Province) in Pakistan . It was described as new to science in a 2009 Mycotaxon publication . The specific epithet *calongei* honors Spanish mycologist Francisco D. Calonge who has written extensively on the Gasteromycetes , and who has himself published or co @-@ published three *Phallus* species : *P. atrovolvatus* (Kreisel & Calonge) , *P. maderensis* (Calonge) and *P. minusculus* (Kreisel & Calonge) . *P. calongei* is one of four *Phallus* species known to exist in Pakistan , the others being *P. celebicus* , *P. impudicus* , and *P. rubicundus* .

According to the infrageneric classification scheme proposed by German mycologist Hanns Kreisel in 1996 , *Phallus calongei* belongs in the subgenus *Phallus* , section *Flavophallus* of the genus *Phallus* . Other species in this section include *P. flavocostatus* , *P. tenuis* , *P. formanosus* , *P. calichrous* , *P. multicolor* , and *P. cinnabarinus* . A number of features distinguish *P. calongei* from these , including : an undeveloped white volva , a stipe tapered at both ends , a deeply pitted and reticulate cap surface with pinkish ridges , and no indusium (a lacy " skirt " hanging from the cap , present in some *Phallus* species) .

= = Description = =

As a member of the genus *Phallus* , the shape of *P. calongei* mushrooms assume the general form of a phallus (an erect human penis) with a single elongated hollow stipe topped by a bulbous cap @-@ like structure at the apex . The fruit bodies of *P. calongei* start out appearing similar to whitish " eggs " , with a membranous exoperidium (outer tissue layer) and gelatinous , translucent endoperidium (inner tissue layer) . The fully expanded fruit body consists of a single , thick , stalk with a ridged and pitted cap attached to the apex ; the cap is covered with olive @-@ green , slimy gleba . The fruit body can reach up to 24 cm (9 @. @ 4 in) tall and 3 cm (1 @. @ 2 in) thick . It is whitish and hollow , slightly tapered at both ends , and has a wall that consists of layers of perforated chambers . At the apex of the stalk is the " cap " , which can be up to 7 cm (2 @. @ 8 in) high and 4 cm (1 @. @ 6 in) thick . It is bell @-@ shaped to conical @-@ truncate with a pitted surface . As the gleba dissipates , the cap surface becomes strongly reticulated ? forming a network of raised pinkish ridges . The tip of the cap is truncated , with a depressed and perforated surface . The gleba is olive @-@ green , fetid , and deliquescent (melting away gradually) . The spores are ellipsoid , smooth , and hyaline (translucent) , measuring 3 @. @ 5 ? 4 @. @ 5 by 1 @. @ 5 ? 2 @. @ 0 µm . The exoperidium of the " egg " remains at the base of the fruit body as a thin , membranous , undeveloped white volva . The edibility of the mushroom has not been determined .

= = Similar species = = =

The only other *Phallus* species known with a pinkish @-@ colored cap is *P. rubicundus* ; its conical cap has a surface that is wrinkled , not reticulate . Other similar species include *P. hadriani* , which has a purple volva , *P. macrosporus* , which has a reddish volva , and *P. formanosus* , which has a pale pink stipe and volva .

= = Habitat and distribution = =

All species of *Phallus* are known to be saprobic , feeding off dead and decaying organic matter . *P. calongei* is known only from the type locality in Pakistan , where it was found growing on the ground at 2 @, @ 575 metres (8 @, @ 448 ft) above sea level .