

# Dryad's Saddle

## TREE DOCTOR TIPS

### Dryad's Saddle (*Polyporus squamosus*)

#### DESCRIPTION:

Dryad's saddle, also known as pheasant's back, is a large, scaled cap mushroom that can decay dead trees and the sapwood of living trees. The fruiting body ranges from 3-18 inches across and can get quite thick with a yellow/brown body and a scale pattern on the top. The fruiting body is tanish/brown on top and cream on the bottom. The underside has pores that are very deep and wide, making them visible to the naked eye. The large pores and the scale-like top make it easy to identify. The thickness changes throughout the actual fruiting body, from where the stem and the edges are.

#### HOSTS:

The mushroom will grow on any dead or dying wood, but is commonly found on elm trees. Other hosts include:

- Ash
- Beech
- Horse chestnut
- Persian walnut
- Maple
- Planetree
- Poplar
- Willow

#### BIOLOGY AND SYMPTOMS:

If found growing on a living tree, this mushroom is considered a parasite and is a sign of internal decay. Dryad's saddle can cause white rot in hardwood trees, and this type of decay causes the heartwood of a tree to become spongy, which can lead to breakage in a storm. This fungus is something to keep an eye on. However, it is a very slow progressing decay fungus, so it does not necessarily mean removal.

#### MANAGEMENT:

Dryad's saddle is easy to remove from wood with a knife. However, if found on a living landscape tree, it could be a sign of internal decay and the tree should be tested for soundness immediately. Try to optimize tree health with cultural practices such as proper fertilization, watering, mulching and pruning practices. Consult your local arborist if you think any of your trees may have dryad's saddle growing on or near it.



FIGURES A & B. DRYAD'S SADDLE MUSHROOMS WITH CHARACTERISTIC SCALED TOPS CAN BE A SIGN OF INTERNAL DECAY IF FOUND ON A LIVING LANDSCAPE TREE

*The scientists at **The Davey Institute** laboratory and research facility support our arborists and technicians in diagnosing and prescribing based on the latest arboricultural science. For specific treatment and application details, your arborist may consult *The Davey Institute's Plant Health Care Book*.*

