

Bumps in the Night!!!!

Paranormal "U"

Glowing Plants and Fungi - Don't Mistake Them For Paranormal

by Angela Sangster

One of the things we see when looking at photographs are glowing anomalies, often which are explained by camera straps, dust, bugs, and the like. However, there are other things to consider and question about the environment when the picture was taken. For centuries, people have reported seeing glowing balls of light in trees or close to the ground, much of which can be explained by natural means. One of these explanations is the possibility of light-emitting fungi growing on plants and trees. Owls and other birds can carry fungi on their feathers from coming into contact with rotting trees and vegetation. When they fly away, it can appear as though there are glowing lights that don't seem to have a source, which often gets mistaken as something paranormal.

One type of fungus that is common in many areas is *Armillaria mellea*, or "honey fungus". This is often found in rotting trees. When owls roost, their feathers accidentally pick up this fungus and when they fly it appears as moving, glowing bits of light. When they are stationary in trees or rooftops, the only thing that may be seen at night is the luminescence of the feathers. If pictures show up with these types of anomalies and it is ruled out as bugs or dust, this is something that must be considered, especially if it is outside or in an old abandoned building that may have owls roosting in the rafters.

One article that was found during this research states that there are approximately fifty species of fungi that are bioluminescent (found at <http://www.mykoweb.com/articles/BioluminescentFungi.html> if you care to do further reading). It isn't fully known what causes some fungi to glow while others do not, however it has been hypothesized that it is simply part of individual metabolic processes. One theory states that when lignin, a polymer found in both wood and plants starts to decompose, excess oxygen is absorbed in response to the peroxides created during this degradation. This is thought to possibly cause the luminescent effect.

For further reading, please check the following links

<http://www.livescience.com/2759-freaky-fungi-glow-dark.html>

<http://www.gardenguides.com/87077-plants-glow-dark.html>

A couple of examples of the glowing plants and mushrooms found on Google images:

<http://www.wonderfulinfo.com/winfo/glowmushrooms/pic03.jpg> (glowing mushrooms)

<http://www.shoarns.com/glowing%20wood%20002%20-s%20-c.jpg> (glowing wood)

<http://www.chicagowildernessmag.org/issues/fall2008/images/foxfire.jpg> (this is an image of *Armillaria mellea*, the fungus commonly picked up on owl's feathers)

