morel
*Morchella* spp.

Kingdom: Fungi
Division/Phylum: Ascomycota
Class: Pezizomycetes
Order: Pezizales
Family: Morchellaceae

**FEATURES**
Morels are part of a group of fungi called sponge mushrooms. The name is applied because of the spongelike cap of these organisms. They are large fungi with hollow stalks. Slots are often present at the base of the stalk. The cap is oval to conical in shape. Spores are yellow. These fungi range in color from white to brown with the stalk lighter than the cap.

**BEHAVIORS**
Morels may be found statewide in Illinois. They grow in scattered groups in forests and sometimes in open, disturbed areas. Spores are produced in late spring. Morel spores contain clusters of oil droplets.

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Aquatic Habitats
bottomland forests

Woodland Habitats
bottomland forests; southern Illinois lowlands; upland deciduous forests

Prairie Habitats
none