

Ray Van Court

Ray discovered their love of fungi as a kid when they found an earthstar in the Colorado Rockies and was immediately fascinated. However, they got a little lost on the way to studying mycology. They graduated with a BA in anthropology and biological chemistry from Grinnell College, then worked in the tech industry in Portland, OR. They were lured back to academia by a talk on semiconductors made from fungal pigments put on by the Oregon Mycological Society and have since been working on applied fungal technologies. Ray completed a master's degree in Wood Science and Engineering at Oregon State University, focusing on fungal pigment production and sustainable product development. They are now a PhD candidate in the same department working with Dr. Gerald Presley on a new project using ectomycorrhizal fungi for bioremediation of heavy metals from wood preservatives. Additional projects include analysis of the impact of pigment from *Chlorociboria* spp. on wood decay communities, and assessment of pigmentation and wood decay capabilities of the fungal pathogen *Scytalidium ganodermophthorum.*