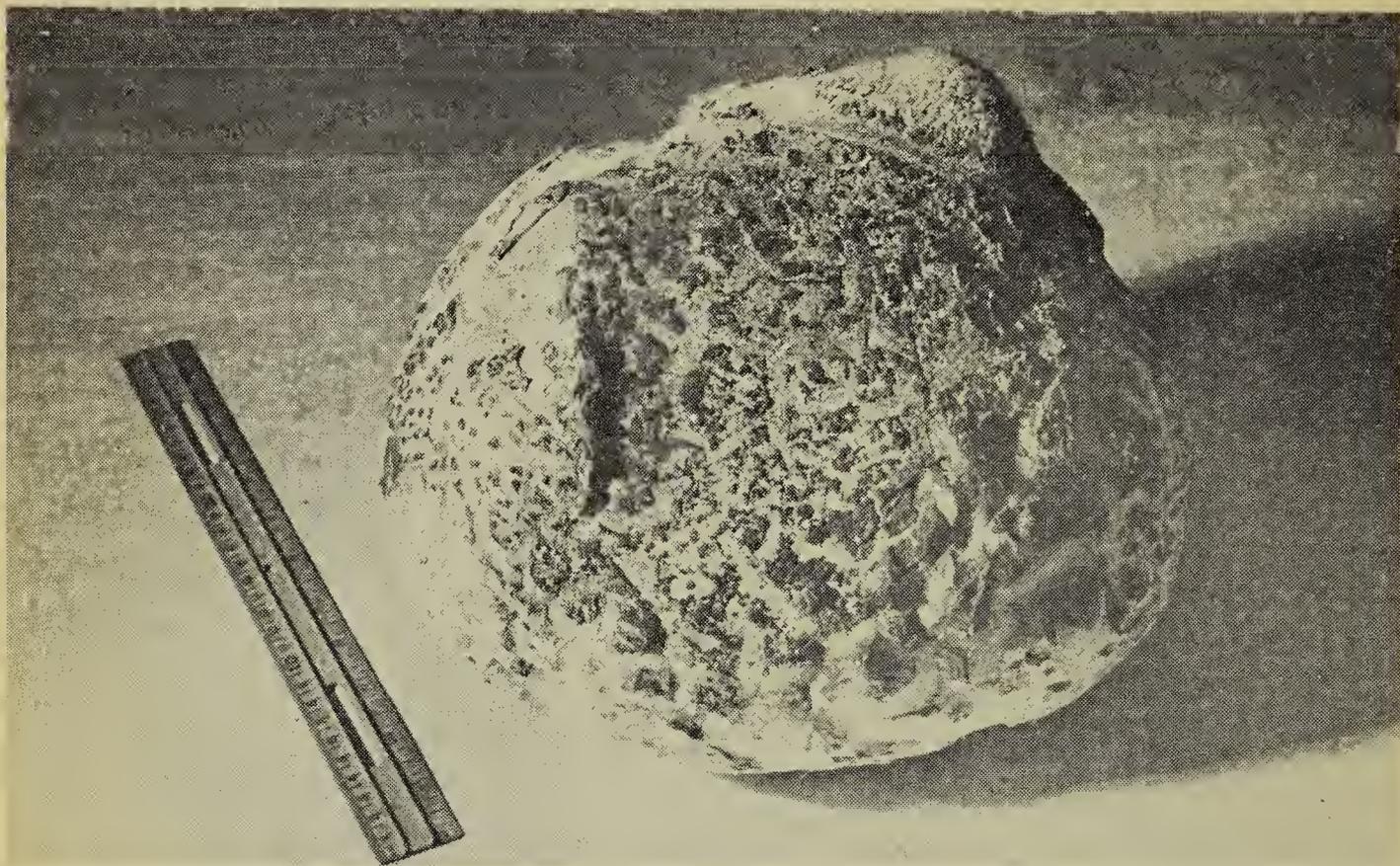


**GIANT PUFFBALL**  
**CALVATIA MAXIMA**  
 by George F. Ledingham, Regina



GIANT PUFFBALL

Photo by B. C. Shier

An excellent specimen of the *Calvatia maxima* was sent to the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History for identification on Nov. 2, 1959, by Fred Novak, Regina. Mr. Novak found the puffball in the Qu'Appelle Valley north of Regina near the bottom of the valley on a north-facing slope among trees five to eight feet high.

The puffball was depressed globose in shape, a full 10 inches across and about eight inches high. The surface was rather conspicuously grooved and fissured. The larger

grooves suggested that the surface had split when the puffball was still growing rapidly. The tissue within appeared to have filled the splits and formed a new surface.

Young *Calvati* puffballs are edible and are said to be very good. Puffballs of the genus *Calvatia* differ from the commoner puffballs of the genus *Lycoperdon* by their larger size and by the fact that the peridium opens not by a single central pore but by irregular slits through the surface.

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**PINK PENSTEMON NITIDUS**

by George F. Ledingham, Regina

While collecting at Moose Jaw, June 3, 1960, I noted three plants of the Blue Beard-tongue (*Penstemon nitidus* Dougl.) with pink flowers, growing on a high bank south of Moose Jaw Creek. The pink blossom represented a colour variation which I had not seen before in this species. Blue is the only colour mentioned for *P. nitidus* in most manuals of botany (including Rydberg, 1954, *Flora of Rocky Mountains and adjacent plains*) but A. C. Budd (1957, *Wild*

*plants of the Canadian prairies*) elaborates this description by saying that great variations of color are found, from purple, through all shades of red and pink to pure white." I have noted plants with blooms that were purplish rather than blue indicating the presence of red pigment, but this is the first truly pink specimen that I have collected. I wonder whether our readers have noticed colour variations in the Blue Beard-tongue.