

Pristine Miombo woodland of the Selous-Niassa Wildlife Corridor

More than 40 wild edible mushrooms species are growing in the Corridor. This high diversity is caused by the symbiosis between the roots of the Miombo tree species (most of them are ectomycorrhizal) and the mushroom mycelia and is also the reason why these delicious mushroom species grow exclusively in the wild and cannot be cultivated.

Cantharellus platyphyllus
[–, Nakachejwa/
Kunguro kwetiti]



Cap: 2–5 (–10) cm in diam. fleshy, first convex, at centre depressed, margin incurved and often regularly wavy, then irregularly funnel-shaped with expanded and undulating margin; surface red at centre, becoming orange towards margin, matt, radially furrowed.

Stipe: 2–4 (–7) x 0.6–1.2 (–2) cm, equal to tapering, often curved, surface smooth, yellowish.

Gill-folds: decurrent, distant, pale to bright yellow.

Flesh: reddish under surface, otherwise white, sometimes obtaining a faint greenish tint when cut.

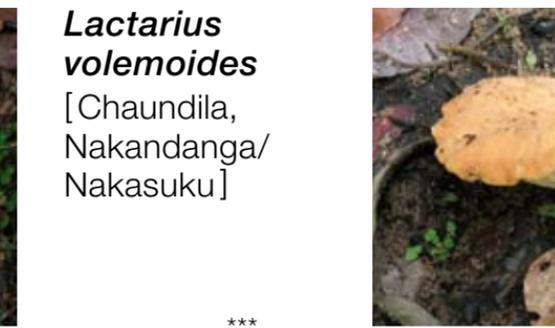
Smell: fruity.

Taste: slightly bitter.

Particularities: ectomycorrhizal fungus.

Habitat: Miombo woodlands.

Lactarius edulis
[Upoa/Masikio ya
jeuri, Uboa]



Cap: 4–9 cm in diam. at first convex, margin incurved, then uplifted, margin irregular and wavy; surface ochraceous, darker at centre, matt, tomentose, smooth, old fruit bodies divided by cracks into small areas.

Stipe: 2.5–4.5 x 1.6–2.1 cm, equal, eccentric, brittle, ochraceous cream, surface smooth, matt.

Gills: decurrent, fairly distant, up to 6 mm broad, ochraceous cream, margin entire.

Flesh: white, solid, in cap up to 16 mm thick, milk latex scanty.

Smell: weak.

Taste: mild.

Particularities: ectomycorrhizal fungus.

Habitat: Miombo woodlands.

Lactarius volemoides
[Chaundila,
Nakandanga/
Nakasuku]



Cap: 4.5–9 cm in diam. at first convex, margin incurved then uplifted; surface orange or orange-brown, darker at centre (navel), tomentose, slightly wrinkled.

Stipe: 2–3.5 x 0.6–2 cm, tapering downwards, brittle, same but lighter colour as cap surface.

Gills: decurrent, distant, thick, up to 7 mm broad, white or cream, margin smooth.

Flesh: white, stipe often eaten by maggots, milk latex white and abundant.

Smell: weak, fishy.

Taste: mild.

Particularities: ectomycorrhizal fungus.

Habitat: Miombo woodlands.

Russula cellulata
[Usinda, Uzinda]



Cap: 4–9 cm in diam. at first convex then flattened and widely depressed, pale olivaceous brown at centre becoming greyish brown towards the margin, matt, edge finely divided by cracks exposing white flesh.

Stipe: 3–5 x 1–2 cm, cylindrical, brittle, greyish cream, base rounded and ochraceous.

Gills: sinuate to free, crowded, fairly thin, up to 10 mm broad, often forked, cream.

Flesh: white; in cap rather firm, in stipe somewhat stuffed.

Smell/taste: mild.

Particularities: ectomycorrhizal fungus.

Habitat: Miombo woodlands.

Termitomyces letestui
[Mislaji, Maize field]



Cap: up to 34 cm in diam. at first subglobose and involute then convex to flat, when fully opened, always with a knob at the centre; surface cream coloured to light-brown at margin becoming brown to sepia towards the centre, sometimes of same colour, matt-fibrillose, felted tomentose becoming finely scaled.

Stipe: 5–15 x 1–3.5 cm, cylindrical, solid, white or whitish, tapering gradually into a long pseudorrhiza up to 1 m long; ring thick, membranous, striated above, superior, and pendant.

Gills: free, crowded, thin, up to 12 mm broad, edge sometimes delicately crenate, whitish to cream with pinkish tint.

Flesh: white; firm to soft in cap, up to 25 mm thick, in stipe fibrous up to the knob on the cap.

Smell: strong and pleasant, like fresh peanuts.

Taste: mild, pleasant.

Particularities: symbiotic life together with termites; termites cultivate the mycelium in their nests and fruit bodies can be seen arising on or near the mounds.

Habitat: on or near termite mounds in cultivated fields.

***Ganoderma* sp.**



Fruit body: 20–30 (–40) cm wide, perennial, sessile, flattened, hard crust, 5–10 cm thick, edge rounded; upper surface fissured, creamy greyish to sooty black, matt.

Pore: surface white.

Medicinal uses: treat asthma and cough.

Particularities: parasitic fungus attacking living trees.

Habitat: growing on *Pericopsis angolensis* (Mbanga, Muvanga).

Mushroom hunting



The nutritious wild mushrooms are an important part of the diet for the local people in the Selous-Niassa Wildlife Corridor. Mushrooms grow only during the rainy season which coincides with the time when food shortages occur. It's the women who are the most knowledgeable about the different species and do the picking with their children.

Market



The good taste and nutritious value of wild mushrooms is also appreciated by people living in the urban centers of Southern Tanzania. They are available on different markets (women selling *Russula cellulata* on an informal market in Songea town).

Wild edible mushrooms from the Selous-Niassa Wildlife Corridor in Ruvuma Region, Tanzania



