

Matchmaker: Mushrooms of the Pacific Northwest

Below are written descriptions and images of fruiting bodies, mushrooms, of the fungal species in this ectomycorrhizal association. The information is from the web version of the Matchmaker: Mushrooms of the Pacific Northwest (MMPNW) created by the Canadian Forest Service and based on the Windows MMPNW version 1.3 by Ian and Eli Gibson.

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LATIN NAME(S) *Russula densifolia* (Secr.) Gillet Champ. Fr.: 231. 1876

ENGLISH NAME(S) reddening *Russula*

NOTES typified by staining reaction to red and then black, (along with other *Russula* species, see SIMILAR), whitish cap, narrow crowded gills with numerous subgills, usually peppery taste, and white spore deposit; Shaffer describes four additional forms

CAP 5-10cm (rarely 15cm), cream white when young, soon shiny brown; slightly viscid, drying smooth, slightly peeling, margin even, (PNW keys), 4.5-15cm, convex with depressed disc and inrolled margin, becoming convex and then nearly flat with depressed disc, finally more or less funnel-shaped; chalk white to pale buff, but soon brown to drab, fuscous, or black almost overall, usually darker centrally and lighter marginally; viscid when moist, but soon dry, usually shining, bald to minutely felted, at times with rivulose margin (with river-like lines), cuticle separable up to half the distance to the center and the margin not striate, (Shaffer), 5-15cm, broadly convex to flat or depressed; whitish to pale buff becoming grayish or brownish or eventually blackish in old age; viscid when moist, soon dry and often polished, smooth, margin not striate, (Arora)

FLESH firm; white turning reddish when cut, then blackening, (PNW keys), moderately thick, 0.7-1.5cm, hard-brittle; white to pale yellow, when cut changing slowly through vinaceous-cinnamon to brick red and eventually to gray, drab, fuscous or black, or in some old fruiting bodies becoming no more reddish than "cinnamon-drab" before becoming dark gray to black, (Shaffer), thick, crisp; white bruising reddish or orange-red, then eventually grayish brown or black, (Arora)



Fred Stevens (MykoWeb)



Ben Woo



Michael Beug

GILLS somewhat crowded, regular subgills, narrow; old ivory color, bruising red, then black, (PNW keys), adnate to decurrent, close to crowded, subgills abundant, 1-6 between each pair of gills, narrow, 0.3-0.7cm broad, acute near cap margin, broadest in middle, interveined, sometimes forked; pale yellow or with a greenish or vinaceous tinge, often stained with "fuscous" to black, when bruised changing through the same general color series as the cap flesh; with entire edges, (Shaffer), adnate to slightly decurrent, close, brittle, narrow, regular subgills, usually alternating long and short; whitish, developing sordid reddish to smoky stains when old, (Arora)

STEM 1.5-9cm x 1-3.5cm, equal, or widening or narrowing to the base which may be more or less bulbous, solid or stuffed, straight or curved slightly, not flattened; when young white to pale buff, becoming "drab" to "fuscous", when bruised changing through the same general color series as cap flesh; bald or in part minutely felted to furfuraceous, usually uneven, (Shaffer), 2.2-8cm x 1.2-5.8cm, (Singer), 4-10cm x 1.0-3.0cm, hard, rigid, smooth, equal, whitish when fresh, but staining like the flesh (reddish or orangish, then smoky-brown to black), the full reaction may half an hour (scratch the stem), (Arora)

VEIL none

ODOR faintly earthy (PNW keys), not distinctive except in forma fragrans (Shaffer), of orange juice when just beginning to ferment, sweetish, not of old wine barrels but variable and sometimes more unpleasant like that of *Boletus satanas* or even farinaceous, (Singer), faintly earthy, then slightly soapy to faintly of pickled herrings, (Pilat)

TASTE mild to somewhat peppery (always peppery in gills), (PNW keys), usually slightly peppery to burning peppery, sometimes mild (Shaffer)

EDIBILITY insipid and at worst poisonous (Arora)

HABITAT hardwoods, mixed or conifer woods, (PNW keys), solitary or gregarious in small groups in deciduous, mixed, and coniferous forests, (Shaffer), solitary, scattered or in groups in woods, (Arora)

SPORE DEPOSIT white, Crawshay A, (PNW keys), white (Arora)

MICROSCOPIC spores 7-9 x 6-7 microns, ornamentation Patterson type C-1, D-1, (PNW keys), spores (7)7.5-10.2(11.2) x 6-8(8.6) microns, usually elliptic to broadly elliptic, occasionally nearly round or oboval, rarely conspicuously flattened ventrally, or

NAME ORIGIN means 'close-gilled'

SIMILAR nigricans which has thick widely spaced gills, and cap cuticle less than 150 microns thick; like dissimulans which has cap soon dry, felty or velvety, and cap cuticle less than 150 microns thick; like adusta which has sepia to grayish brown rather than yellow-brown cap, less tendency to redden before blackening, close but not crowded gills, mild taste, and mild or wine-barrel odor, Lange says in Flora Agaricina Danica (1940) "It is rather questionable whether no. 2 and no. 3 can be clearly distinguished. Typical specimens of R. densifolia are more brown, those of R. adusta are more dull gray, but intermediate colors occur. And in most cases a slight rubescence takes place (but very slowly), even in "typical" specimens of R. adusta, while they are in bud."

SOURCES Shaffer(5), Arora, Phillips*, Courtecuisse*, McKnight*, PNW keys, Barron*, Redhead(5), Singer(8), Hesler(7), Pilat, Rinaldi*, Thiers(3)

FAMILY Russulaceae of Order Russulales