



Lactarius eucalypti

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Lactarius eucalypti is found in most eucalypt forests and woodlands throughout southern Australia, and in the southwest of Western Australia is common in both karri and jarrah forests. In jarrah forest it is often found at or near the base of living trees.

Caps are 1.5–3.5cm diameter, red-brown in colour with a smooth rubbery-looking appearance. Gills are pale creamy brown and often speckled with rusty spots and arranged in sets of various lengths with the longest gills reaching to and running 1–2mm down the stem. Stems are up to 3.5–4cm long and about 5mm thick. It has the same red-brown colour of the cap but the surface is often covered with a powdery white coating that is easily brushed or washed off.

Species of *Lactarius* are easily recognised by a milky white substance (latex) that exudes from damaged flesh or gills (see above). Species of *Lactarius* and *Russula* are very similar in appearance, but russulas do not exude latex. However, *Lactarius eucalypti* differs in appearance from other species of *Lactarius* and *Russula* with its rubbery look and slender rather than stout structure.

The scientific name refers to the latex exudate and its habitat. *Lact-*: milk, *-arius*: pertaining to or possessing, *eucalypti-*: refers to eucalypt trees or forest where it is found.