



## *Russula adusta*

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*Russula adusta* is common in eucalypt forests and woodlands in the wetter regions of the southwest of Western Australia in early- to mid-autumn. It generally fruits singly or in small scattered groups, but is not easily seen because it's usually under thick leaf litter, and is well camouflaged.

Fruit bodies are large mushrooms with light brown caps up to about 8cm in diameter with a deep central depression, and a slightly viscid or slimy surface when wet. Gills are creamy white with various lengths and are sometimes joined together by small interconnecting vein-like ridges. Stems are up to 5cm tall, creamy white with a brown blush and stain dirty brown when handled. Young stems are solid but they become hollow with age. Fresh young mushrooms may have a soapy odour and if cut or damaged their creamy flesh stains pale orange-red. Old specimens smell like rotting fish.

*Russula adusta* is similar to *Russula albonigra*, which turns black with age or when damaged. However, *Russula adusta* is more common, does not blacken and *Russula albonigra* doesn't have a soapy odour. However, both (and other *Russulas*) may smell fishy when old.

In this case, the scientific generic name does not adequately describe the fungus, but the species names refer to appearance and colours. *Russ-*: reddish (likely refers to the red coloured cap of the Northern hemisphere type specimen for *Russula*, *Russula emetica*), *-ula*: pertaining to, *adust-*: scorched, and *alb-*: white, *nigr-*: black.