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## *Russula* sp. 'multicolor'

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The true identity of this species is uncertain. It's very similar to *Russula kalimna* found in south eastern Australia and *Russula cyanoxantha* found in the northern hemisphere, but differs from both microscopically. In Western Australia, this species is often referred to as *Russula* sp. 'multicolor'. It's common in karri, tingle and the wetter regions of jarrah forest.

Fruit bodies are large mushrooms that vary in colour and are generally mottled with varying proportions of faded red, yellow-grey, dull greyish or bluish green, creamy yellow and cream. Caps are up to 9cm diameter, dome-shaped at first (*inset above*) then expand to be broad with a depressed centre. Gills are crowded and cream in colour. Stems are up to 7cm tall and creamy white.

In contrast, *Russula kalimna* generally has a short stout stem and the cap surface tends to develop fine cracks. Despite the uncertainty of its identity and the variations in colour, *Russula* sp. 'multicolor' is quite a distinct and beautiful fungus.

The scientific names of all species mentioned refer to their multi-coloured appearance. *Russ-*: reddish (likely referring to the colour of the Northern hemisphere type specimen for *Russula*, *Russula emetrica*, which has a red cap); *kalimna*: Aboriginal term meaning beautiful; *cyan-*: blue, *xanth-*: yellow.