

Folk Medicinal Fungi from India: Uses Among Konkanies of Western Maharashtra and Goa

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The information presented in previous work by Vaidya and Rabba (1993) and Vaidya and Lamrood (2000) is confirmed. There are some additional records, namely of *Phellinus gilvus* (Schwein.) Pat., used during pregnancy; *Antrodia mollis* (Sommerf.) P. Karst., used to cure asthma (to be smoked with tobacco); *Ganoderma lucidum* var. *capense*, used by veterinary specialists for curing inflammation in cattle; species of *Lycoperdon* and *Calvatia* that are used in cauterization for healing of wounds; antler stage of many species of *Ganoderma*, used as a sexual stimulant; button stage of *Lactarius* and *Psilocybe* sp., as a hallucinogen; *Daldinia concentrica* (Bolton) Ces. et De Not., used for cramps and inflammation. Yet, many more mushrooms are still obscure, mainly because of mistaken concepts among ayurvedic specialists in fungal organisms. Even the traditional knowledge

that is known to a particular tribe is not or rarely shared with others, mainly because of the fear that "sharing of this sacred knowledge reduces the efficacy of that medicine." This scenario is now slowly changing and many tribes of Western Maharashtra and Goa have formed a group (with a local learned doctor or vaidu as a representative of a particular tribe) and started participating regularly in local seminars and workshops that are organized by the several NGOs.

We have therefore proposed to work toward enlisting such folk medicinal mushrooms from different regions of India and we sincerely hope that this wealth of information about them can be made available or will be accessible through such an organization.

We urge the dignitaries attending this conference to help us in solving problems and bringing this valuable wealth of information to light.