

Polyporus austroafricanus sp. nov.

Maria Nuñez & Leif Ryvarden

Department of Botany, University of Oslo, P.O. Box 1045 Blindern, N-0316 Oslo,
Norway

Nuñez, M. & L. Ryvarden (1994). *Polyporus austroafricanus* sp. nov. – *Sydowia* 46 (1): 63–65.

Polyporus austroafricanus from East Africa is described as new and compared with related species.

Keywords: Africa, Basidiomycetes, Polyporales, *Polyporus*, taxonomy.

Following a revision of the genus *Polyporus* Fr. s. str., a collection from the Mulanje Mnts, Malawi, gathered in 1992 by one of the authors (L.R.), was unnamed. A second specimen of the same species was collected by A. Osano in Nairobi (Kenya) whilst a third was found by L. Ryvarden in Zimbabwe in 1993. The species is herewith described as new.

Polyporus austroafricanus Nuñez & Ryvarden nov. sp. – Fig. 1.

Fructificatio stipitata, pileus fuscus, levis, pororum facies ochracea, pori 1–2 per mm, stipes fuscus, levis, contextus albus. Systema hypharum dimiticum, hyphae generativae fibulatae, hyphae ligantes crassitunicatae, hyalinae, spores subellipsoideae, leves, crassitunicatae, non amyloideae et non dextrinoideae, 10–12 × 3–5 µm.

Holotypus. – Malawi, Mulanje Mts., Lichenya Hut, 24 January 1992, on dead hardwood with a white rot, Ryvarden 31460. Herb. O, isotype in K.

B a s i d i o c a r p s solitary, centrally stipitate, fleshy, 5–10 (12) cm in diameter, up to 8 cm high. – **P i l e u s** flat, circular, with a deflexed, undulate margin when old; upper surface felty, dark fuscous brown to black, ridged irregularly between pore-like depressions. – **P o r e** surface cream-coloured, darkening when old; pores brittle, irregular, elongate to partly lacerate, 1–2 per mm, decurrent along the stipe. – **C o n t e x t** fleshy, cream-coloured, 7 mm to 1.5 cm thick when fresh. – **S t i p e** 8 mm to 1.5 cm thick, concolorous or lighter than the pileus, reticulate on the upper part with pore rudiments, finely pulverulent over a thick, black cuticle that extends throughout its whole length. – **H y p h a l** system dimitic. Generative hyphae clamped, slightly thick-walled, (2)3–5 µm wide, in the context inflated

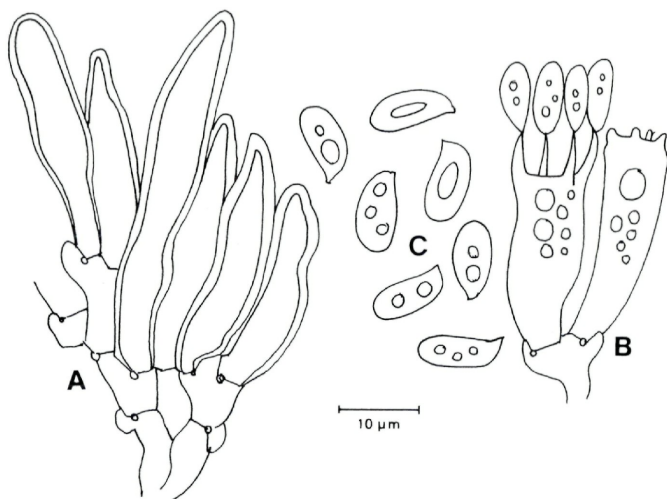


Fig. 1. *Polyporus austroafricanus*. – A. Part of the pileal tomentum showing the palisade of thick-walled, apical, hyphal segments. – B. Basidia. – C. Spores. – From the holotype.

to 12 μm , some as gloeoplerous hyphae, in the pileus and stipe as a palisade of brown, thick-walled, clavate hyphae 30–60 μm long. Skeleton-binding hyphae dominant, tortuous with a wide lumen, branches up to 400 μm long. – Basidia clavate, 25–30 \times 10(15) μm , guttulate, with 4 stout sterigmata up to 2 μm wide. – Basidiospores hyaline, subellipsoid, (8)10–12 \times 3–5 μm , guttulate and obliquely apiculate, tending to agglutinate, spore-wall up to 0.7 μm thick.

Distribution. – East African species, known from Malawi, Kenya and Zimbabwe.

Other specimens examined. – KENYA: Nairobi, Karura forest, A. Osano, Herb. NAI. Zimbabwe, Chimanimani, 31 January 1993, Ryvarden 32840, Herb. O.

Macroscopically the species is easily recognized by the dark brown, felty pileus and stipe surface, and a thick, black cuticle under the stipe tomentum.

Polyporus austroafricanus belong in the same complex of species as *P. melanopus* Fr. and *P. badius* (Pers.) Schw. owing to the dark brown stipe and pileus. However, it is a fairly robust species with much thicker stipe than is normally encountered in these taxa and often has a swollen base. Further, the pileus surface is matted dark fuscous brown, never becoming smooth and subshiny as in other species in this complex.

The distinctive character of the new species is the large spores, far larger than previously recorded in this complex. In size they approach those of *P. udus* Jungh., which has a contrasting basidiocarp with a lighter, greyish brown pileus often with scattered scales, much larger pores and a dirty brown stipe (for a description see Ryvarden & Johansen, 1980: 507).

Reference

Ryvarden, L. & I. Johansen (1980). A preliminary polypore flora of East Africa. – Fungiflora. Oslo.

(Manuscript accepted 13th December 1993)

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Zeitschrift/Journal: [Sydowia](#)

Jahr/Year: 1994

Band/Volume: [46](#)

Autor(en)/Author(s): Nunez Maria, Ryvarden Leif

Artikel/Article: [Polyporus austroafricanus n.spec. 63-65](#)