



Olympic National Forest

Mushroom Picking

General Information: Mushrooms are the reproductive structures or “fruit” of certain fungi. Unlike green plants, fungi cannot use sunlight to make food, but the web-like root structures called mycelium decompose organic matter, which the organism utilizes for food.

Mushrooms and truffles are important wildlife food. They are consumed by deer, elk, bear, small mammals, and mollusks. Some rodents rely on mushrooms for a significant part of their food supply and are, in turn, primary prey for larger species such as the northern spotted owl. Preserving the diversity of fungal species in forest ecosystems is essential to the wellbeing of our National Forests.

Harvest Technique: For the best possible recovery of mushroom sites year after year, proper harvesting techniques are necessary and required for both personal and commercial gathering. Mushroom stems are to be cut at or above ground level keeping the growing site as undisturbed as possible. Use only a knife or scissors to harvest mushrooms. Equip yourself properly before going to the field.

Equipment Checklist: Prepare for a safe and efficient trip by carrying the following: 1) Extra food, water and clothing 2) Compass and map of the area 3) Whistle 4) Mushroom field guide 5) Small knife for harvesting and trimming 6) Bucket to carry mushrooms 7) Waxed paper or waxed bags (not plastic) for separating and protecting the mushrooms.

Use Caution: Know the mushroom before you pick it. There are many poisonous mushrooms, but there also are many edible, delicious, and easily identified species. Use guidebooks and pamphlets for identification.

Personal Use: Our policy allows for the incidental removal of mushrooms by those intending to simply gather enough for a meal. No permit is required for incidental gathering of mushrooms for personal use. For a single species, the daily limit for personal use is one (1) gallon. For multiple species, the daily limit is three (3) species, (1) gallon each. Harvested chanterelle mushrooms must have a cap diameter of one inch or greater.

Commercial Use Permits: A Commercial Use Permit is required for any individual intending to sell the mushrooms or harvesting more than the daily three (3) gallon multiple species limit. Permits are available at Forest Service field offices and the cost is based on the length of time permit is valid, with a limit on quantity.

1. 14 Day Permit costs \$50.00 = 50 gallons
2. 30 Day Permit costs \$80.00 = 80 gallons
3. Calendar Year Permit costs \$120.00 = 120 gallons

Conditions of the Commercial Use Permit, including areas available for mushroom gathering, will be authorized at the Forest Service office where the permit is issued.

Regulations, Washington State Law: A Washington Specialized Forest Products Permit must also be obtained to harvest and transport more than five (5) gallons of wild edible mushrooms in the State of Washington. Contact the nearest Forest Service office for information on obtaining this permit.

Safety Recommendations:

1. Wear orange vests or other garments to increase your visibility to hunters and other forest visitors.
2. Know the conditions of your permit, including the permissible harvest locations and other relevant boundaries. Olympic National Forest, <http://www.fs.usda.gov/olympic>
3. In case of an emergency dial 911! Notify them of your situation and location, including the road number.
4. Be careful of large trucks and other vehicles when travelling on logging roads. Always use your headlights and ask a forest district office where active logging is occurring.
5. If you have safety concerns or questions, contact a U.S. Forest Service office.

Olympic National Forest Offices:

Supervisors Office, Olympia- 360-956-2402

Quilcene Office- 360-765-2200

Forks Office- 360-374-6522

Quinault Office- 360-288-2525