

## Mushrooms of Nepal

**Author:** Mahesh Kumar Adhikari  
**Publishers:** Mrs Kamala S. Adhikari, Messers Oliver Laurence, Mycoshpere, Singapore and E. Sano, Nakoshizu, Japan  
**Price:** Nrs 1500  
**Pages:** 236  
**Year of publication:** May 2000

Foreign researchers have made important contributions to studies related to lower plants in Nepal whereas very few Nepalis have shown interest in this field. Publications brought out by Nepalis on these subjects are therefore meagre. This is true to the mycological studies in general and mushroom in particular. This is evident with the fact that the country has yet to document comprehensive literature such as *Mycoflora*.

In this context, the recent publication- *Mushrooms of Nepal* has come in a good time, and to a great extent, marks a commendable attempt to bridge a knowledge gap on this particular topic. The author of this important publication - Dr Mahesh Kumar Adhikari, who is the Scientific Officer at the National Herbarium and Plant Laboratories at Godawari must be appreciated for such a contribution. The book is a compilation of the results of investigations done on Nepal's tropical to alpine mushroom flora mostly by outsiders. However, this publication would not have been at our hand, had not the author devoted himself sincerely for about 25 years of his life in the field of mycological studies in Nepal. This publication has now paved the way for a much needed work on *Mycoflora* of the country.

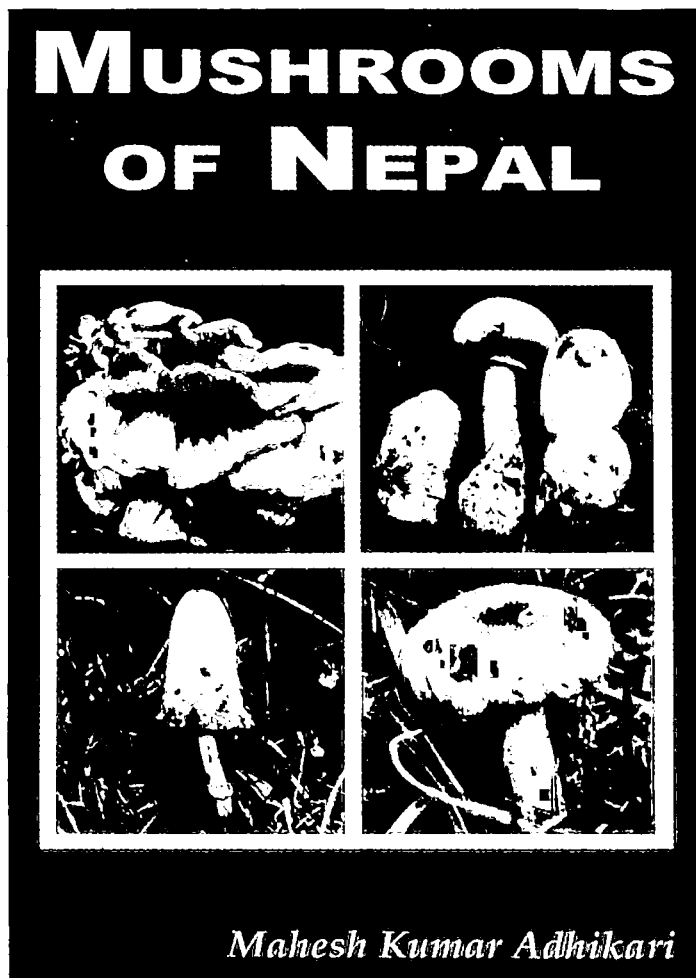
The book presents a review on history of mycological

explorations in Nepal, annotated list of mushrooms, their phytogeography, affinities, ethnomycology and characterisations of nutrients in mushrooms, etc. And the author's hope that the publication will prove beneficial to all those looking for information on matters related to mushrooms of the country is valid.

The first two Chapters of the book present an overview of phytogeography, and exploration of mushrooms since 1948 when J. D. Hooker - an eminent plant

hunter visited the country. The Chapters III and IV give a list of species under Ascomycetes and Basidiomycetes with special emphasis on *Amanita*, *Russula* and *Lactarius* - the genus having both edible as well as the deadly poisonous mushrooms.

Nepali people - especially those living at the rural areas- have had long association with wild mushrooms since time immemorial. Chapter V that deals with the ethnomycology is one of the most interesting Chapters of the book. Professor



Guy Durrieu, an eminent scholar of Mycology has rightly pointed out in his preface of the book that this Chapter *covers all the fields from a strict mycophoby to an enthusiastic mycophily.*

Chapter VI and VII present the status on the collection, consumption, marketing of wild mushrooms along with their nutrient contents. The knowledge on identification of edible or poisonous mushroom at the local level is inherited from the elders and ancestors. Slightest mistake in identification have, quite a number of times, led to deadly consequences. The author's suggestion that the Government should regulate

marketing of such items is highly meaningful.

The temperature, rainfall and humidity and, more importantly altitude are the determining factors for mushroom diversity which have been described in Microbiogeography- a term coined by the author himself. This chapter (VIII) embraces all the group of fungi prevailing in Nepal's different phytogeographic regions. Affinities of Nepal's mycoflora have been separately reviewed in Chapter IX. And, above all, in view of the fact that conservation of the mycoflora of the country which has never been thought of by any institution so far, the author's

valid suggestions could now draw the attention of authorities concerned. Release of four postal stamps of mycoflora each worth seven rupees is a good way to recognise the fungal resource of the country. It is especially important to correct our general opinion that all fungi are detrimental organisms.

The book that adds knowledge on Nepalese studies is worth keeping by the related researchers and institutions.

**Sushim Ranjan Baral, Ph D**  
Department of Forest Research and Survey

## Environmental Education

**Publisher:** IUCN  
**Year of publication:** 2000  
**Pages:** 327  
**Price:** Not mentioned

**E**nvironmental Education is a source book for undergraduate level of education programme of the Tribhuvan University. The book presents a selection of articles written by various authors and edited by various experts. Degradation of environment is the global problem and understanding its causes and effects must be known by every citizen so that they can be reduced and managed. In this context His Majesty's Government has the policy for introducing courses of environment in various grades of the lower as well as the higher education.

The book has covered multidisciplinary topics related

to environment. It is divided into 15 Chapters with topics ranging from general introduction to environment, ecosystem, biogeochemical cycle, natural resources, natural disaster, agriculture and sustainable development, biodiversity and conservation, population and environment, pollution, sanitation, cultural heritage, social problems to effort in environmental management. The incorporation of these topics has made this book very useful as it offers informed readings on environment. The design of this programme has made the course contents very good.

The topics have been written in simple way so that the readers

will understand them easily, for which both the authors and the editors must be given credit. Although the book is intended to serve the needs of the students and teachers in the faculty of Education and TU-affiliated campuses, it is also highly useful to researchers, teachers of high school, planners, policy makers, administrators and general readers who wish to understand the state of global as well as Nepal's environment.

**Narendra Bahadur Khadka**  
Head  
Department of Environmental Science  
TU, Kathmandu