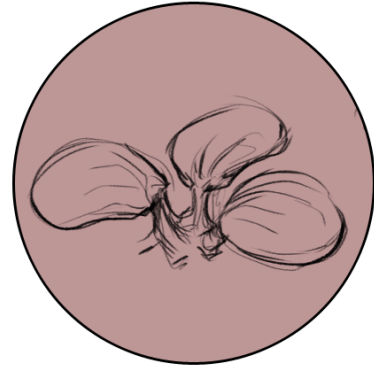


# DESERT WAXLOBE

- ▶ **Height:** 2in
- ▶ **Classification:** Fungus
- ▶ **Substrate:** Roots of desert plants



The desert waxlobe is a member of the Sceptis taxonomic Order of fungi. As its name suggests it is a desert and arid-area dwelling fungus, and it has a modest position in Kaleidian culture as a seasonal food source.

## Physiology

The desert waxlobe mushroom is named as such because it grows a layer of wax on the caps of its fruiting bodies to protect itself from the heat of the desert in which it grows. Its caps are an off-white colour and asymmetrical.

### *Reproduction*

This fungus disperses its spores by releasing them for the wind to draw up, usually in the form of vortices created by passing animals. It is edible, which encourages animals to venture close, which ultimately helps the fungus to disperse its spores this way, but the wind is its chief method.

## **Geographical Distribution**

This fungus is mostly found in the desert of South Oplayn, where it grows in the root systems of several desert plant species.

## **Position in Ecosystem**

Due to its status as an edible species, the desert waxlobe is eaten by a number of species that venture into the edges of the desert, so is one of the better-known fungus species in Kaleida's equatorial regions.

The following list of animals and mesolithics that eat it is not yet exhaustive, nor close to, but note that Kaleidian native and researchers alike have yet to identify a species for whom the desert waxlobe is poisonous.

### *Kasulam*

Kasulam routinely eat desert waxlobe.

### *Mukash*

Like kasulam, mukash routinely eat this fungus.

### *Offworlders*

Desert waxlobe has been tested and is safe for consumption by all currently known offworlder species. However, caution is still advised. Visitors to Kaleida are recommended to consult their team leader or support team.

## Technology

Desert waxlobes contribute little to the already meagre technological advancement of Kaleida. There are only a few comments to make in this section.

## Agriculture

While farming is rare to non-existent on Kaleida, desert waxlobes are a relatively reliable mushroom to forage in subarid areas. They can theoretically be dried, but as they usually fruit at the beginning of the wet season, humidity is usually too high to ensure that they are dried thoroughly enough to store for later consumption.

## Language

This fungus grows on the roots of desert plants of various species. It is unknown whether it aids these plant species in communication with one another, or whether it communicates with the host plant in any way.

## Energy Usage

The desert waxlobe draws its energy from living plants but does not appear to do them any damage.

## History

There appears to be no notable commentary to make on the history of the desert waxlobe. No natural history about them has been reported by the mesolithics of Kaleida.



Contribution towards Kaleidan culture by the desert waxlobe is modest; it is seasonably edible.

### **Food**

All of the sapients, native and otherwise, who have eaten the desert waxlobe have found it not only to be harmless, but moderately palatable. It dries easily so it stores well, can be used to make a stock or tea (although due to the unremarkable flavour of the mushroom this is rare - it has a pleasantly earthy taste which does not tend to hold up well on its own), and can be thrown into stews to contribute to the flavour and texture.

### **Special Events**

The desert waxlobe tends to develop fruiting bodies after short-sharp rain showers, which makes it a minor seasonal ingredient in early wet season dishes.

#### *Welcome-the-Rain Stew*

The mukash and kasulam make this after the first rains of the wet season, to welcome the season in and warm themselves against the cooler breezes that the rains bring. It is flavoured and textured with desert waxlobes among other ingredients, which produce their fruiting bodies after the first downpour.

### **Festivals**

The edible nature of this fungus, plus the seasonal appearance of its mushrooms, earns it a minor role in mesolithic celebrations.

#### *Welcoming of the Rains*

Desert waxlobe fungus grows its edible fruiting bodies at the start of the wet season, and they are used in a stew traditionally made on the first cool nights.

## **Politics**

Desert waxlobes have had no impact on the political history or process of Kaleida.

## **Military and Law**

As the desert waxlobe is not poisonous, it cannot be used as a poison.

## **Economy**

The economy of Kaleida is not developed enough for a minor, medically inert ingredient such as desert waxlobes to be a valuable bartering item. The occasional, dried handful may be traded but they are only moderately desirable.

## **Healthcare and Medicine**

The desert waxlobe is neither poisonous, nor does it have medicinal properties.

## **Travel / Transport**

Desert waxlobes can be dried, which means they can be taken on journeys with relative ease, but are not usually a desirable enough item to trade with. In practice, as these mushrooms fruit at the start of the rainy season, the atmosphere is often too wet to dry them effectively.



## **Credits**

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~Hayley, The Character Consultancy