

Fungi

Heavenly light mushroom / *Mycena lux-coeli* / Shiinotomoshibitake / シイノトモシビタケ

This mushroom was once thought to grow only on Hachijojima Island, off the coast of central Honshu, but it has since been found on numerous other Japanese islands. On Amami-Oshima it is most often seen growing on the rotting trunks of chinquapin oaks during the rainy season. It is a small light-brown mushroom that grows only a few centimeters high, with a little cap. It is best known for its bioluminescence, as the cap and stem glow an eerie green in the dark, earning it the nickname *mori no yosei*, or “forest fairy.” This luminosity is the result of a chemical reaction involving luciferin, a light-emitting pigment. The heavenly light mushroom is highly susceptible to dehydration, so its life spans only a few days.