

ISSN 1322-1396

# **AUSTRALASIAN MYCOLOGICAL NEWSLETTER**

**No. 16 (2)**

**June 1997**

**Publication of the Australasian Mycological Society, Inc.**

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***Australasian Mycological Newsletter***

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This issue was published on 11 July 1997.

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## PUFFBALLS AND 'POISONINGS'

A.M. Young  
'Bee Cottage', Blackbutt, Qld 4306

The recent floods and heavy rains in parts of central Queensland have produced some very interesting members of the specialised group within the 'puffballs' that is mostly confined to arid (or at least drier) regions of Australia. Recently, three separate collections of fungi from these drier areas were forwarded to me for identification: two of these collections were implicated in possible poisonings by reports to the Queensland State Poisons Centre, while the third was forwarded purely because the specimen was so unusual to the collector.

The unusual specimen forwarded was *Phellorinia strobilina* Kalchbrenner (Figure 1) which resembles the spiky mace of a medieval knight. Fortunately, the material was packaged very carefully and arrived in an absolutely perfect state thanks to Robin Cowley of the Department of Natural Resources in Charleville, Queensland. Robin forwarded the material after residents at 'South Riversleigh' (a property near Charleville) found the specimen which they thought was unusual and requested further information as to its identity. As is common with the species, only a solitary specimen was found. The collected specimen measured 13 cm in height with the stem measuring 6 × 2 cm. The mace-like head measured 9 cm in diameter and is of some interest due to the extremely large spikes or scales. These are pyramidal in form and measure 1.5–2.0 cm in height and up to 1.5 cm in base diameter; they are more or less rectangular at their bases. These spikes or scales are the main distinguishing character which separates *P. strobilina* from the second Australian species *Phellorinia inquinans* Berkeley. *Phellorinia inquinans* is also club-shaped but its scales are more or less overlapping and do not project outwards as in *P. strobilina*. The scales or spikes of *P. strobilina* also exhibit layers or zones which are very easily seen as a series of wrinkles on the surface of the spike. Excellent photographs of both species can be found in Bottomley (1948) while Cunningham (1944) has a good photograph of a partially dehiscent *P. inquinans*. Luckily, the material forwarded by Robin Cowley had not yet begun to dehisce and the all important scales/spikes were very prominent as shown in Figure 1 which is drawn directly from the specimen. The overall colour is light cream with the stem more brownish and darkening towards the bottom. As the fungus matures, the top of the 'mace' disintegrates to leave a wine glass-shaped receptacle full of a powdery, reddish brown spore mass which disperses in clouds of spores at the slightest touch. *Phellorinia strobilina* has been collected from Victoria and South Australia as well as the type locality of Rockhampton in Queensland and is therefore quite widespread. To my knowledge, reports of this species are uncommon, but this is probably because it is not often found or recognised by collectors.

Figure 1

The second material forwarded to me involved a call to the Queensland State Poisons Centre with respect to a possible poisoning case. From experience, it is often simpler for the caller to speak directly to me in order to describe the fungus involved, rather than go through the intermediary of the Poison Centre staff and on numerous occasions the Poison Centre has referred the caller directly to my telephone number. On this occasion

Figure 2

I was able to speak to the mother concerned: a 21 month old girl in Dalby had been playing with clothes pegs in the garden, found the fungus, pushed the pegs around in the powdery mass and had then placed the pegs in her mouth. The mother was only able to provide the information that the fungus was very 'dusty' which immediately suggested to me that the material was in the 'puffball tribe'. At the time, my advice was that although I could not be sure, I believed that there was unlikely to be any reaction other than the faint possibility that the girl might have an adverse respiratory reaction to the dusty spore mass, however, I requested that the material be forwarded and this was done. The fungus was quite fragmented, but investigation showed that the reddish brown spore mass was extremely powdery and that the stem (although reduced to shredded fragments), was quite fibrous; there was however, the faint suggestion of a wine glass cup structure for the spore mass and there is no doubt that the material is a species of *Phellorinia* but without any fragments of the peridial surface to check on the presence/absence of spines it is impossible to be certain which of the two species is present. Based on the appearance of the Charleville material, the most probable species is *P. strobilina*. The mother did not indicate that any adverse reactions had occurred in the child.

Neither Cunningham (1944) nor Bottomley (1948) include any details on the edibility of *Phellorinia* spp. However, Kalotas (1996) cites information that *P. inquinans* is regularly used as an edible species in northern India. Although Kalotas indicates that Aborigines in arid areas knew of and used this fungus for body paint purposes, no evidence is given of its use by them for food. Based on the Indian information, it is probable that our species of *Phellorinia* are equally edible, but this is yet to be tested.

The last puffball species to be implicated in a 'poisoning' call to the Queensland Poisons Centre came from Clermont in central Queensland. Again this is in the more arid interior of the State and in this case a two year old boy had tried a 'taste test' on a 'dead fungus' that was also described as 'dusty'. Questions to the mother elicited the facts that the fungus looked more or less like a drumstick and that the stem was thin, hard and woody. I suggested its identity and requested the fungus be forwarded to me for identification. Again the material arrived in excellent condition and I was pleased to see confirmation of my diagnosis of *Podaxis pistillaris* (L.: Pers.) Morse. I had suggested that on the basis of the description it was unlikely that any symptoms would develop and the letter included with the material stated that this was in fact the case.

*Podaxis pistillaris* (Figure 2) is widespread and common, but like *Phellorinia* spp., there are no records in either Cunningham (1944) or in Bottomley (1948) as to its edibility. Again, Kalotas (1996) provides extensive information on its use as a body paint by Aborigines and also its use as food in northern India.

Both these Queensland State Poison Centre records are interesting as they have produced some information on the likely toxicity of some of the more unusual puffball members, even if in the dry, dusty, ripe stage. Even more gratifying was the reaction by all three members of the public who took some care in transmitting the material for identification. One of the most difficult things I have found during my association with the Poisons Centre, is to get my hands on material implicated in fungal poisonings. Perhaps my relatively good experiences recently are the start of a new era...or maybe I've spoken too soon.

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## AUSTRALASIAN FUNGAL POISONING NETWORK



**AUSTRALASIAN MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.**

**Australasian Fungal Poisoning Network**

5/4/04

The Director  
State Poisons Centre

Dear Sir,

The Australasian Mycological Society consists of both professional and amateur scientists with research interests in the Australasian fungi. At its last annual general meeting in October 1996, a sub-group called 'The Australasian Fungal Poisoning Network' was formed with the intentions of improving our knowledge of the Australasian toxic macrofungi and ensuring that the gathered information reaches the appropriate poisons centres and medical staff. Currently, the proposed aims of the sub-group are to:

- provide a readily accessible, telephone information service so that at least one member of the network can be reached if there is a macrofungal poisoning emergency.
- collect information on and samples of the relevant fungus from any situation in which macrofungi are involved in poisoning with the aims of identifying and preserving the fungus and record.
- build an information database based on the above information together with any confirmed past material.
- collate macrofungal poisoning literature.
- disseminate this information to both State Poisons Centres and the relevant medical practitioner groups.
- provide lectures and/or workshops for teaching persons involved with macrofungal poisonings with the intent of improving knowledge of the toxins, treatment and identification of the macrofungi involved.
- develop a computerised interactive key to the Australasian toxic macrofungi which could be used by persons unskilled in the identification of these organisms. Such a key to include colour images of the fungi, descriptions, relevant toxins and appropriate treatments.
- develop an Australian toxic fungi site on the Internet.

You will appreciate that the above aims are complex and the sub-group does not expect that they will all be rapidly achieved, however some of them (*e.g.* the telephone information service) can be set in place quite rapidly.

The present members of the sub-group are specialists in the taxonomy of the higher fungi, some of whom have additional experience in the identification of the macrofungi involved in poisonings. Members may also be able to provide information relevant to symptoms and treatments for macrofungal poisonings based on both experience and access to appropriate resources, but it is emphasised that this service is purely informative and only intended as a support service for the medical practitioners involved in poisoning cases.

The personal details of the sub-group's current members are attached as an appendix to this letter and the appendix may be copied for use as a reference document for any relevant medical staff. The limited numbers of the present group means that each member has taken responsibility for setting up the network for several of the Australian States although it is very probable and desirable that this will alter in the near future, hopefully to the point where at least one representative mycologist is appointed to each State.

If you consider the aims of the Network are relevant to your organisation, would you please contact me by mail and if possible, indicate which of our aims would be of most interest or benefit to you.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

Dr A. M. Young

*Encl.: member details of the Australasian Fungal Poisoning Network*

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Relevant publications:

Toxic Fungi—Toadstools and Mushrooms in J.Pearn. & J.Nixon (eds.), *Preventive First Aid*. St. John Ambulance: Australia, Brisbane, Qld (1989).

Poisonings by *Chlorophyllum molybdites* in Australia. *The Mycologist* **3**, 11–12 (1989).

Muscarine-containing Mushrooms in D.G. Spoerke & B.H. Rumack (eds.), *Handbook of Mushroom Poisoning Diagnosis and Treatment*. CRC Press, Boca Raton, USA (1994).

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Recent mushroom poisonings in New Zealand. *Australasian Mycological Newsletter* **14(4)**, 57–60 (1995).

Death cap mushroom poisoning. Letter to the editor. *New Zealand Medical Journal* 14 June 1995: 234 (1995).

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Relevant publications:

*Amanita phalloides* in Australia, *Medical Journal of Australia* **158**, 849–850 (1993).

A puppy death and *Amanita phalloides*, *Australian Veterinary Journal* **70(7)**, 27–28 (1993).

Edible and poisonous fungi in southern Australia—cases of mistaken identity. *The Mycologist* **8(1)**, 35–36 (1994).

## INDEMNITY FOR AUSTRALASIAN FUNGAL POISONING NETWORK CONSULTANTS

All members should be aware that the Australasian Fungal Poisoning Network that was proposed at the Annual General Meeting in October 96 is now very much in the balance and may even cease to exist before it is formed. The problem is medical indemnity. As most members would realise, the 'American litigation disease' is now well and truly established in Australia with the legal profession actively encouraging people to sue for vast sums of money with the result that professions such as medical practitioners are compelled to take out huge annual premiums to cover costs of litigation.

During the early stages of the Network's formation, letters went out to all the Australian State Poisons Centres and the reply from most Centres was that the Network's concept was excellent and urgently required. One of these replies did, however, raise several points, one of which was medical indemnity for the consultants. Considerable discussion by email, telephone and letter ensued but the legally confirmed situation as it now stands is: the moment a network mycologist provides information over the telephone, he or she assumes a 'duty of care' and the patient is able to sue for negligence. While the disclaimers we use to preface our telephone information may reduce the risk considerably and make a legal case quite difficult to win, this is still untested and would still incur the consultant considerable legal costs even if the case was resolved in favour of the consultant. Further, the Poisons Centres are now aware that all of their consultants are 'in the same boat' unless they are legally indemnified by their own institution and they therefore stand to lose other consultants as well as the mycologists.

Several avenues are being explored, one of which is to obtain indemnity from a commercial firm and this is likely to be available, but the costs are as yet unknown. The problem of indemnity protection for 'good Samaritan' services such as the Network still remains, however, and it is appalling that a needed and free service should be in jeopardy because of this litigation problem. I should very much like to see the Australasian Mycological Society take up this problem urgently at a National/ministerial level with the aim of having suitable 'Good Samaritan' legislation passed at both Federal and State levels to indemnify and protect such people as the Poison Centre consultants. Otherwise, an extremely useful and worthy project will never be able to function.

Dr Tony Young  
Convenor, Australasian Fungal Poisoning Network

## FUNGI FROM THE MYCOLOGY POST-CONFERENCE FORAY OCTOBER 1996

*Tom May*  
*National Herbarium of Victoria, Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne*

Fourteen participants enjoyed a spell of fine spring weather at the foray after the Australasian Mycological Society conference in October. We visited wet forests and rainforest in the vicinity of Marysville. In these types of forests the peak of the macrofungal season is usually in Autumn, so October is not the best time for observing macrofungi. Nevertheless there had been some heavy rain in the week prior to our visit (especially on the day which we drove to Marysville!) and 68 species of fungi were recorded. Species of *Cortinarius*, *Russula* and other mycorrhizal agarics are plentiful in the area in Autumn, but few were seen during our visit. Most species present were wood-inhabiting agarics, polypores and thelephores. Two interesting fungicolous fungi were collected, a *Tremella* on *Xylobolus illudens* and *Endogone pisiformis* on *Amauroderma rude*.

### **Endogone pisiformis** Link : Fr., *Syst. Mycol.* 2: 296 (1823)

Fruit body pale pink, white when dry, up to 3 mm diam., like a rubber ball pushed in on one side, with the hollow side facing the substrate. Spores numerous, globose to subglobose, often bluntly angular, 32-49  $\mu$  25-35  $\mu$ m, hyaline in water, reddish brown (dextrinoid) in Melzer's reagent, in these mountants with wall to 3  $\mu$ m thick (a very thin outer wall possibly present), when mounted in Ammonium Hydroxide (with Congo Red) up to 6  $\mu$ m thick, in water or Melzer's reagent contents granular or with numerous very fine refractive droplets, and usually with one large refractive droplet, rarely with a few large droplets. Hyphae up to 4  $\mu$ m diam., thick-walled, hyaline in water. Gregarious on upper surface of old fruit bodies of *Amauroderma rude* at base of *Acacia*, in Cool Temperate Rainforest (*Nothofagus cunninghamii*).

The hollow fruit bodies and the habit, are a good match against the description of *E. pisiformis* by Gerdemann & Trappe (1974), although the spores differ from the zygospores which they describe in their thinner wall which lacks an obvious outer wall, and in the presence of a single large droplet rather than numerous small droplets. *Endogone pisiformis* is widespread in the Northern Hemisphere where it occurs on a variety of substrates, including old fruit bodies of polypores. It seems not to have been recorded previously from Australia.

Specimens from Lady Talbot Drive collected during the foray were not retained, but the same species was also observed a few weeks later on fallen eucalypt wood in a *Eucalyptus regnans* forest near Powelltown (MEL). The small size of the fruit bodies means that the fungus is easy to overlook, and it could well be more common.

### LOCALITIES VISITED

- (1) 6.10.96. Lady Talbot Drive, walk from The Beeches to Meeting of the Waters. Cool Temperate Rainforest with *Nothofagus cunninghamii*, *Atherosperma moschatum*, and tree ferns, with some *Eucalyptus regnans*.
- (2) 6.10.96. Margaret Gap. Eucalypt forest.
- (3) 6.10.96. Night walk to Steavensons Falls. Eucalypt forest.
- (4) 7.10.96. Lake Mountain, walk to Echo Flat. Snow Gum (*Eucalyptus pauciflora*) woodland and alpine heathland.
- (5) 7.10.96. Cambarville, Tall Tree Walk, return via road. *Eucalyptus regnans*, with a small patch of Cool Temperate Rainforest (*Nothofagus*).
- (6) 7.10.96. Blackwood Lodge, Marysville. Eucalypts and garden plants.
- (7) 8.10.96. Somers Park, Acheron Way. *Nothofagus cunninghamii*, *Eucalyptus regnans*.

### FUNGI LIST

Selected synonyms are given in square brackets. The form '*Psathyrella* sp. [*Psilocybe echinata*]' indicates that the species belongs in *Psathyrella*, but the necessary new combination has not yet been made. Some voucher collections were secured, and these have been deposited at the National Herbarium of Victoria (MEL) and/or the Herbarium, Landcare Research, Auckland (PDD).

#### AGARICS

- Camarophyllopsis* sp. (pileipellis consists of brown-pigmented, clavate elements) (1) (MEL)
- Coprinus* sp. (5)
- Cortinarius* sp. (probably *Cortinarius* sp. A of May (1989), which has the pileus clothed initially in white fibrils, which later disappear, leaving a smooth, brown, translucent -striate surface) (5, 7)
- Entoloma* sp. (brown, mycenoid) (7)
- Galerina* sp. (1)
- Hypholoma brunneum* (1)
- Hypholoma fasciculare* (normal and orange-gilled forms) (1)
- Laccaria canaliculata* (7)
- Laccaria masonii* (1)
- Marasmiellus affixus* (5)
- Mycena subcapillaris* group (5)
- Mycena* sp. (pileus with olive tints, lamellae strong pinkish vinaceous) (1)
- Panellus longinquus* (on fallen Snow Gum) (4)
- Panellus stipticus* (fallen eucalypt wood) (2, 5)
- Pholiota* sp. (cap up to 2 cm diam., brown, translucent-striate; stipe pale, glutinous below; spores smooth, thick-walled, with germ pore; chrysocystidia present) (2)
- Pholiotina* aff. *filaris* (stipe slender, with ample membranous ring). (5)
- Psathyrella* sp. [*Psilocybe echinata*] (pileus with distinct pyramidal warts when young) (2)
- Schizophyllum commune* (5)
- CYPHELLOID FUNGI
- Rectipilus fasciculatus* [*Lachnella fasciculata*] (on bark of fallen Snow Gum branches) (4) (MEL)

#### THELEPHORES

- Acanthophysium sparsum* (3) (MEL)
- Meruliopsis corium* (on *Acacia* sp.) (1) (PDD)
- Peniophora incarnata* (on dead *Nothofagus* trunk) (5) (PDD)

- Punctularia strigosozonatum* (on fallen *Eucalyptus pauciflora* branches) (4, 5) (MEL, PDD)
- ? *Stereum ostrea* (very old fruit body) (7)
- Xylobolus illudens* (4, 5) (PDD)
- Yellow corticioid fungus (5) (MEL)

#### HYDNOID FUNGI

- Hydnum repandum* (a large specimen, pileus 7.5 cm diam., of the common form, stem staining orange upon handling) (1)
- Mycoacia subceracea* (forming waxy, yellow patches with a bumpy or toothed surface) (on fallen *Eucalyptus pauciflora* branches) (1, 4) (PDD)
- Steccherinum* sp. (small brackets, effused-reflexed) (7)

#### JELLY FUNGI

- Heterotextus miltinus* (4)
- Tremella fuciformis* (5)
- Tremella* sp. (fruit bodies up to 2 mm across, gregarious on hymenial surface of *Xylobolus illudens*. Basidia cruciate) (5) (MEL)

#### POLYPORES

- Amauroderma rude* (at base of *Acacia*) (1, 7) (PDD)
- Antrodia zonata* [*Irpex zonatus*] (1) (PDD)
- Australoporus tasmanicus* [*Heterobasidion tasmanicum*] (1) (PDD)
- Fistulina* sp. (very old fruit body, pileus very hipsid) (5)
- Fomes hemitephrus* [*Fomitopsis hemitephrus*, *Heterobasidion hemitephrum*] (on trunk of living *Nothofagus cunninghamii*) (1, 5)
- Ganoderma* cf. *applanatum* (1, 5) (PDD)
- Grifola campyla* (1)
- Inonotus nothofagi* (1) (PDD)
- Laetiporus portentosus* (*Piptoporus portentosus*) (old fruit body, on ground near *Eucalyptus regnans*, presumably the cause of brown cubical rot commonly seen on stumps and in hollows of

living *E. regnans*. Also present as *Xylostroma giganteum* anamorph among brown cubical rot on stump of *E. regnans*) (5) (PDD)  
*Phellinus wahlbergii* (on base of living *Nothofagus cunninghamii*) (5) (PDD)  
*Postia cretacea* (on living *Nothofagus cunninghamii*) (1) (PDD)  
*Postia pelliculosa* (1) (PDD)  
*Trametes lilacinogilva* (6)  
*Trametes versicolor* (1, 7)

#### RUSTS

*Puccinia oleariae* (on *Olearia argophylla*) (1) (PDD)  
*Phragmidium violaceum* (on *Rubus*) (PDD)

#### ASCOMYCOTINA

*Biscogniauxia nothofagi* (present also as the *Nodulisporium* stage, olive powdery patches, often with a bright orange, fleshy margin) (1)  
*Bisporella orites* (on follicles of *Orites lancifolia*) (4)  
*Discinella terrestris* (7)  
*Geoglossum* sp. (1) (MEL)  
*Gibberidea plagia* (on *Cassinia aculeata*) (5) (PDD)

#### PARTICIPANTS

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#### Acknowledgements

The Department of Natural Resources & Environment is thanked for permission to collect in areas under their control.

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 May, T. (1989). Report of F.N.C.V. fungal excursions: 1986–1988. *Victorian Naturalist* 106: 48–58.

*Hypoxyton* sect. *Annulata* sp. (7)  
*Hypoxyton bovei* (1)  
*Jaftheadelphus ferrugineus* (1)  
*Labyrinthomyces* sp. (1, 5) (MEL)  
*Lachnum* aff. *pteridophyllum* [*Dasyscypha pteridophylla*] (spores larger, up to 24 × 2 μm) (1) (MEL)  
*Mollisia cinerea* (1, 5)  
*Torrendiella eucalypti* (on fallen leaves of *Acacia melanoxylon*) (7)  
*Xylaria hypoxyton*  
*Xylaria polymorpha* (1)  
 Discomycete (white, on wood) (7)  
 Discomycete (white, hairy)

#### ZYGOMYCOTINA

*Endogone pisiformis* (1)

#### ANAMORPHS

*Isaria* sp. (on moth pupa) (1) (MEL)

#### MYXOMYCETES

*Arcyria* sp. (1)  
*Ceratiomyxa fruticulosa* (5)

## THE AUSTRALIAN FUNGAL MAPPING SCHEME—FUNGIMAP

Knowledge of the distribution of Australian macrofungi is poor. There are very few published distribution maps, and herbarium holdings of most species are minimal. Understanding of conservation status, biogeography, and ecology is impeded by lack of basic distribution data.

FUNGIMAP is a joint initiative of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria and the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne. The aim of the scheme is to rapidly improve knowledge of the distribution of fungal species and communities in Australia. An integral part of FUNGIMAP is a joint approach linking research objectives developed by mycologists with the considerable interest and expertise on fungi which exists among field naturalists and other non specialists.

FUNGIMAP commenced in 1995 with a call for records of eight highly distinctive macrofungi (*Aseroe rubra*, *Amanita muscaria*, *Battarraea stevenii*, *Dermocybe austroveneta*, *Mycena interrupta*, *Omphalina chromacea* and *Omphalotus nidiformis*). A brochure with coloured illustrations of the eight species was distributed, and some small scale publicity was carried out via talks to several Field Naturalists Clubs in Victoria. As a result nearly 800 records have been received from recorders across Australia. All records are sight records, and the initial stage of the scheme does not involve any voucher collections. Photos have been supplied in about a sixth of cases, and among these the misidentification rate is less than 2 per cent. A regular newsletter is produced, which goes out to more than 200 participants. Following on from the success of the pilot scheme, the list of target species has this year been expanded to 50 species. Financial support has been received from the Myer Foundation and Parks Victoria.

The species chosen as targets are mostly relatively common and distinctive. All but two are illustrated in the *Field Companion to Australian Fungi* (by Bruce Fuhrer). The first phase of FUNGIMAP is focussed on common and distinctive species to give recorders a chance to find target species reasonably often, and to allow the possibility of identification in the field. In any case, even for common species, distribution information is at best patchy. Once a network of 500 recorders is recruited, rarer species will be added to the target list in a second stage of FUNGIMAP.

In addition to compiling basic distribution data, other research objectives involve assessment of (1) possible effects of atmospheric pollution—particularly in urban areas, (2) host and habitat preferences, and (3) determining factors of distribution.

A third stage of FUNGIMAP will be the setting up of a network of permanent sites across Australia where long term inventories of fungal biodiversity will be carried out. Field Naturalists groups and other similar organisations have an important role in monitoring local bushland for fungi. It will be important to link such surveys with specialists of all groups of fungi, who will be encouraged to examine material from the permanent sites, and to themselves collect at the sites whenever possible.

The pioneering macrofungal surveys carried out by the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria and the Sydney Fungal Studies Group demonstrate that valuable data can be collected. The FNCV has initiated a long term study of the macrofungi of Wattle Park (an area of urban remnant bushland and parkland in Melbourne), and has also organised expeditions to Wilsons Promontory National Park and Mt Buffalo National Park in Victoria to carry out surveys of macrofungi. During the FNCV surveys voucher collections have been made of all macrofungi. The surveys encourage the development of skills in collecting, preserving and identifying fungi by participants, in addition to allowing surveys of large areas and a diversity of habitats (not feasible for an individual researcher in the same time).

A fourth aspect of FUNGIMAP will be the involvement of more experienced participants in the collection and preparation of well-documented herbarium collections of fungi—especially from out of the way localities, and for groups of fungi where collections are required for revisions or other research. Mycologists are encouraged to contact FUNGIMAP about species which they are interested in receiving (macrofungi or microfungi)—especially those that may be readily recognised in the field (or whose symptoms are obvious). FUNGIMAP has already sent out a call for dung—to assist with the preparation by Ann Bell of a volume of the *Fungi of Australia* on dung fungi.

A Scientific Advisory Committee sets research objectives and the target species. Committee members are: Tom May (convenor), Jack Simpson, Cheryl Grgurinovic, and Bruce Fuhrer. Two FUNGIMAP members provide important voluntary support to the project—John Julian in his role as the Executive Officer of the project assists with administration, publicity and fund raising. John also edits the FUNGIMAP newsletter. Pat Grey is the Records Coordinator, and maintains the various databases involved in keeping track of recorders, the batches of records, and the individual records.

Included herein is a sample FUNGIMAP newsletter, in which is a list of the 50 target species, and also details of the request for dung samples.

Anyone interested in receiving the newsletter should contact FUNGIMAP, National Herbarium of Victoria, Birdwood Ave, South Yarra, Victoria 3141. All records of target species are most welcome, and should be sent to the same address.

Tom May

### TOADSTOOL CAUSES BROKEN BONE

*Sophie Ducker*

*School of Botany, University of Melbourne, Parkville, Vic. 3052*

Some years ago I participated in a survey of toadstools and mushrooms in the State of Victoria. To my joy, in season, there was a prolific harvest of a wonderful diversity of fungi. However, it was a real nightmare to name these, because at that time there was no fungal flora of Victoria or New South Wales. Hence we had to rely on fungal floras from South Australia or from overseas countries. As there was so little known about the local fungal flora in general, I thought it useful to record, if possible also the taste and smell of the members of the collection. Most certainly I did not taste any reputedly poisonous fungi. I kept clear of such poisonous species as *Amanita muscaria* or *Amanita phalloides*, both known to me from my European experience. Cooking a dish of what I believed to be *Lactarius deliciosus* proved very disappointing because the Victorian representatives of this delicious overseas fungus found under pine trees was terribly bitter when cooked.

Before most of the fungi were dried for herbarium specimens or ground up for antibiotic testing, I had the habit of tasting small pieces of the pileus. I was delighted to meet for the first time the most attractive *Amanitopsis pulchella* [now *Amanita xanthocephala*]. *Amanitopsis* was recorded as not poisonous in both the South Australian and overseas books. Trustingly I tasted. I was so dreadfully ill during the night that I broke my toe rushing to the bathroom. To save your bones: do not eat a white-spored toadstool with a volva and even a suspicion of an annulus!

### A NEW SOCIETY—SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIAN SYSTEMATIC BIOLOGISTS

A new Society has been formed in Australia to represent and foster the interests systematics and systematists. It encompasses the broad interests and activities of those working in the areas of taxonomy, phylogenetics, biogeography and evolutionary biology, of all groups of organisms and with specific reference to the Australasian region. The Society operates only by email and has NO MEMBERSHIP FEES. To join please send your full name, postal address, taxon group/interests, email address, phone number and fax number to the Society's Secretary, Dr David Morrison <davidm@iris.bio.uts.edu.au>. Details about the Society and its inaugural conference, to be held in Adelaide 29 September–3 October 1997, can be found on the Society's Home page <<http://www.science.uts.edu.au/sasb/>>.

A. Austin

### EDUCATION NETWORK

This network (see *Australasian Mycological Newsletter* 15(4): 72 (1996) has been established and anyone interested in contributing should contact Peter McGee <peterm@bio.usyd.edu.au>.

## MINUTES

### Australasian Mycological Society Annual General Meeting

Held at Commerce Theatre 1, University of Melbourne, 2nd October 1996.

Meeting opened at 5.00 pm.

**Present:** Jack Simpson (chair), Peter Buchanan, Cheryl Grgurinovic, Tom May, and 43 others.

#### 1. Presidents Report

Jack Simpson drew attention to the principal activities of the Australasian Mycological Society Inc. during 1995–1996 which were incorporation of the Society, the production of the *Newsletter*, the organising of the Conference and first Annual General Meeting of the Society, and the presentation of submissions to the Australian Quarantine Review Committee and the Wingecarribe Swamp Management Plan.

#### 2. Treasurers Report

On behalf of the Treasurer, Jack Simpson tabled the Auditor's report [printed in *Australasian Mycological Newsletter* 15(3)]. The net profit for the year ending 30 June 1996 was \$2,842. However, this included a carry over of \$2,605 from the unincorporated Australian Mycological Society, so that a more realistic profit figure is \$777. The newsletter was originally inexpensive to produce, but now some costs must be met. Provided that there is no decline in membership there should be a small profit for the 1996–1997 financial year.

Motion: that the President's Report and the Treasurer's Report be accepted. Moved Peter McGee, seconded David Guest. Carried.

#### 3. Report on election of office-bearers

Tom May reported that the following were elected unopposed:

President: Jack Simpson  
Vice-President: Cheryl Grgurinovic  
Treasurer: Heino Lepp  
Secretary: Tom May  
Councillors: Peter Buchanan & David Ellis

Ken Thomas is the Public Officer.

#### 4. International Mycological Association

AMS will join IMA as an associate member.

#### 5. International Mycological Congress

The Society considered holding the IMC in Sydney in 2002. The estimated budget for such a conference would be \$500,000. It was decided by Council not to put in a bid for the 2002 IMC, but to aim to hold the IMC in Australasia in 2006, with Auckland, Melbourne or Sydney as possible venues. Would be looking at 1,500–2,000 delegates. The traditional timing for IMC is the last two weeks of August. There seems to be general support among members for an Australasian IMC, but it would require some serious commitment to planning and organisation. [A subcommittee will be set up to investigate hosting IMC.]

According to Doug Parbery, initially there had been little support for holding the International Plant Pathology Conference in Melbourne, but through the efforts of Gretna Weste support had eventuated. David Hawksworth mentioned that for IMC5 (Vancouver) the publishing of papers caused some problems; it involved different committees, and a limited company was set up. Sapphire McMullan suggested that a fund-raiser could be used, with their own wage included in money to be raised. David Guest pointed out that the last two weeks of August is not necessarily the only time to hold IMC. Peter McGee felt that if IMC is to be in Sydney, there must be support from mycologists in Sydney. Eric McKenzie pointed out that in 25 years the IMC had never been held in the Southern Hemisphere, and so it was about time that it was held in the region.

#### 6. Winding up of assets.

According to the rules of the Society (38.1), another association must be nominated to whom the assets of AMS go in the event of the society being dissolved or wound up. Peter McGee suggested that the International Mycological Association could hold such assets in trust for mycologists in the region. Council's preference is the Australasian Plant Pathology Society.

Motion: that the Australasian Plant Pathology Society is the society nominated as that to which the assets of the Australasian Mycological Society go in the event of the society being wound up or dissolved. Moved Tony Young, seconded Eileen Scott. Carried.

Meeting closed 5.30 pm.

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS and STUDENT ASSISTANCE**

### **Annual General Meeting**

The 2nd Annual General Meeting of the Australasian Mycological Society will be held during the Second Australasian Mycological Conference in Adelaide at the University of Adelaide on 1 October 1997. Copies of the agenda will be available at registration. Members wishing to place items on the agenda should contact the Secretary by 14 September 1997.

#### **Call for nominations**

**Nominations are requested from members of the Australasian Mycological Society for the following positions in the Society:**

President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and two Councillors.

Nominations should be submitted in writing, signed by two financial members of the Society and accompanied by the written consent of the candidate. Nominations should be received by the Secretary by 31 July 1997. Objects and rules of the Society can be found in the *Newsletter* for March 1995, or can be obtained on request from the Secretary.

**According to the constitution of the Society, current office holders are unable to nominate for their current positions.**

#### **Assistance to attend Australasian Mycological Conference**

The Society will make available funding up to \$100 per applicant for assistance in attending the Conference in Adelaide in October. Funding is targeted at students and unwaged members. Applicants must be members of the Society, and present a contribution to the conference (preferably an oral contribution). Those wishing to apply for assistance should contact the Secretary. The amount of funding available is at the discretion of the Council of the Society and will depend on the number of applications received.

Tom May  
Secretary, Australasian Mycological Society

### **BACK ISSUES OF AUSTRALASIAN MYCOLOGICAL NEWSLETTER**

A limited number of sets of the first 8 issues (1990–1992) of the *Australasian* (then *Australian*) *Mycological Newsletter* are available. Most of the issues are taken up with discussions around the formation of a Mycological Society, but among other articles dealing with miscellaneous topics there are a few foray reports (e.g. for the Tangihua Forest) and notes on mycological holdings (e.g. MEL). Please send a cheque for \$5.00 made out to Australasian Mycological Society to Tom May, National Herbarium of Victoria, Birdwood Ave, South Yarra, Vic. 3141.

**A CONSERVATION OVERVIEW OF AUSTRALIAN NON-MARINE LICHENS,  
BRYOPHYTES, ALGAE AND FUNGI**

This report which was initiated by the Forgotten Flora Workshop and written by G.A. Scott, T. Entwisle, T. May & N. Stevens was finally published in May. Copies are available from The Botanical Bookshop, PO Box 351, Jamison, ACT 2614. Ph.: 06 257 3302; Fax: 06 250 9549. ISBN 0 642 21399 2.

**MYCOSURFING ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB**

*Mycologia*: The table of contents and abstracts of *Mycologia* are available on the WWW beginning with Vol 89 (1) 1997. The new 'Instructions to Authors' are also available at the *Mycologia* site. Follow the link from the MSA Home Page <<http://www.erin.utoronto.ca/soc/msa/>>

*Mycotaxon*: For 'Instructions to Authors', the table of contents and the taxon index for the current issue, and a preview of the contents of the 'in press' issue. See <<http://www.mycotaxon.com>>

<<http://res.agr.ca/lond/pmrc/cps/cpshome.html>>  
The Canadian Phytopathological Society web site.

**CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS**

11–13 July 1997	University of Tasmania, Hobart	Tasmania in the Southern Hemisphere—evolutionary biology and biodiversity	Professor R.S. Hill Department of Plant Science University of Tasmania Hobart 7001, Australia email: <a href="mailto:Bob.Hill@plant.utas.edu.au">Bob.Hill@plant.utas.edu.au</a>
3–7 August 1997	Reno, Nevada, USA	Society of Industrial Microbiology	Joan W. Bennett, Department of Cell & Molecular Biology, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA 70118- 5698 < <a href="mailto:jbennett@mailhost.tcs.tulane.edu">jbennett@mailhost.tcs.tulane.edu</a> >
11 August–19 September 1997	IMI, Egham, UK	International Course on the Identification of Fungi of Agricultural and Environmental significance	Mrs Stephanie Groundwater, International Mycological Institute, Bakeham Lane, Egham, Surrey, TW20 9TY, UK Ph.: +44 (0) 1784 470111 Fax: +44 (0) 1784 470909 Email: <a href="mailto:s.groundwater@cabi.org">s.groundwater@cabi.org</a> (Please give your postal address.)
30 August–6 September 1997	Kindrogan Field Centre, near Pitlochry, Scotland	Autumn Foray of the British Mycological Society	Adrian Newton Kingsmuir Hall Bonnington Road Peebles Scotland EH45 9HE < <a href="mailto:a.newton@ed.ac.uk">a.newton@ed.ac.uk</a> >
15–17 September 1997	University of Bristol, UK	15th Long Ashton International Symposium, UK. Understanding pathosystems: a focus on <i>Septoria</i> .	IACR-Long Ashton Research Station Department of Agricultural Sciences University of Bristol Long Ashton Bristol, BS 18 9AF, UK < <a href="mailto:Christine.Cooke@bbsrc.ac.uk">Christine.Cooke@bbsrc.ac.uk</a> >

<b>28 September–3 October</b>	<b>Adelaide</b>	<b>Australian Society for Microbiology, Annual Scientific Meeting</b>	<b>Assoc. Prof. David Ellis Mycology Unit Women's and Children's Hospital North Adelaide, SA 5006 Ph. +61 8 8204 7365 Fax: +61 8 8204 7589 email: dellis@mad.adelaide.edu.au</b>
<b>29 September–2 October 1997</b>	<b>Radisson Observation City Hotel, Perth, Western Australia</b>	<b>Australasian Plant Pathology Society, 11th Biennial Conference</b>	<b>Ms M. Eyres, Secretary 11th APPS Conference Plant Pathology Agriculture Western Australia Baron-Hay Court South Perth, WA 6151 Ph.: (61 9) 368 3694 Fax: (61 9) 367 2625 email: APPS97@agric.wa.gov.au</b>
<b>29 September–3 October 1997</b>	<b>University of Adelaide</b>	<b>Australian Systematic Botany Society (ASBS) National Conference</b>	<b>Robyn Barker Ph.: 08 82282348 Email: rbarker@btg.lands.sa.gov.au</b>
<b>1 October 1997</b>	<b>University of Adelaide</b>	<b>Second Australasian Mycological Conference</b>	<b>Robyn Barker Ph.: 08 82282348 Email: rbarker@btg.lands.sa.gov.au</b>
<b>13–17 October 1997</b>	<b>IMI, Egham, UK</b>	<b>Mycorrhizas—Identification and Techniques</b>	<b>Mrs Stephanie Groundwater, International Mycological Institute, Bakeham Lane, Egham, Surrey, TW20 9TY, UK Ph.: +44 (0) 1784 470111 Fax: +44 (0) 1784 470909 Email: s.groundwater@cabi.org (Please give your postal address.)</b>
<b>15–17 October 1997</b>	<b>Convention Center of Tapachula, Chiapas, Mexico</b>	<b>VI Mexican Mycological Conference</b>	<b>Jose E. Sanchez Vazquez, ECOSUR-Tapachula, Apdo. Postal 36. Tapachula, Chiapas. 30700 Mexico.</b>
<b>29–31 October 1997</b>	<b>IMI, Egham, UK</b>	<b>Culture Preservation Techniques for Filamentous Fungi and Bacteria</b>	<b>Mrs Stephanie Groundwater, International Mycological Institute, Bakeham Lane, Egham, Surrey, TW20 9TY, UK Ph.: +44 (0) 1784 470111 Fax: +44 (0) 1784 470909 Email: s.groundwater@cabi.org (Please give your postal address.)</b>
<b>17–21 November 1997</b>	<b>IMI, Egham, UK</b>	<b>PCR Fingerprinting and Characterization Techniques</b>	<b>As above</b>
<b>27–30 March 1998</b>	<b>Nijmegen, The Netherlands</b>	<b>The Fourth Conference on the Genetics and Cellular Biology of Basidiomycetes</b>	<b>Leo J.L.D. Van Griensven &lt;mushvg@plex.nl&gt;</b>
<b>July 1998</b>	<b>Uppsala, Sweden</b>	<b>International Congress of Mycorrhizae</b>	<b>&lt;<a href="http://www.slu.se/icom2/icom2.html">http://www.slu.se/icom2/icom2.html</a>&gt;</b>

9–14 August 1998	Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada	Microbial Biosystems: New Frontiers. 8th International Symposium on Microbial Ecology	Dr Colin R. Bell Microbial Ecology Laboratory Department of Biology Acadia University, Wolfville, Nova Scotia Canada B0P 1X0 <isme8@acadiau.ca>
9–16 August 1998	Edinburgh, Scotland	7th International Congress of Plant Pathology	ICPP98 Congress Secretariat, c/o Meeting Makers 50 George Street, Glasgow G1 1QE, Scotland, UK
17–21 August 1998	IMI, Egham, UK	8th International Fusarium Workshop	David Brayford, International Mycological Institute, Bakeham Lane, Egham, Surrey, TW20 9TY, UK <d.brayford@cabi.org>
23–28 August 1998	Jerusalem, Israel	6th International Mycological Congress	Secretariat 6th International Mycological Congress PO Box 50006, Tel Aviv 61500, Israel
26–30 July 1999	Beltsville, Maryland, USA	The Third International Congress on the Systematics and Ecology of Myxomycetes	Lafayette Frederick Biology Department Howard University Washington, DC 20059 or Steve Stephenson Department of Biology Fairmont State College Fairmont, WV 26554, USA <sls@fscvax.wvnet.edu>
1–7 August 1999	St Louis, MO, USA	International Botanical Congress	Contact Don Pfister or Meredith Blackwell with any ideas of topics that will be of interest to the botanical community as a whole, as well as to mycology. Although the meeting is not until 1999, we must offer suggestions now if they are to be considered.

If you know of any other conferences, symposia, workshops, *etc.* that may be of interest to members, please send us the details so the information can be included in the next *Newsletter*.

C.A. Grgurinovic

### LETTER FROM HONG KONG

I met the Head of the Australian Research Grants council last week and gave him a copy of my paper from *Muelleria*, 'Who will look after the Orphans'? I hope he reads it!

In this meeting I was representing the University in a discussion group. The purpose of his visit to Hong Kong was to try to initiate joint research between Hong Kong and Australia. I do not know the results of discussions with the Hong Kong Research Grants Council, but the intention was to set up funding which collaborating scientists could apply for. Since these type of funds have fairly successful rates at present, it could be a future way to get funding for mycology. If this gets off the ground, it should start in 1999, so anyone who is interested in developing a research proposal with me should get in touch: kdhyde@hkucc.hku.hk—or I will be in Adelaide in September. Agriculture is not favoured by the ARC, so it should be non plant pathological!!

#### Other news from Hong Kong

Jane Frohlich, a former Melbourne University Botany graduate, submitted her thesis entitled 'Biodiversity of Microfungi on Palms' just in time to beat the handover. She will leave Hong Kong on 12 July to take up a position on biocontrol of weeds using fungi at Landcare Research in Auckland, New Zealand.

Jacqui Wright (another Australian) is presently writing up her thesis on endophytes and stem end rot in oranges and should submit in November.

Ed Liew who obtained his PhD at the University of Queensland under John Irwin, amongst others, is now a postdoc. at HKU and has set up the molecular laboratory which is now functional. Hopefully, some publications will come out of the work being carried out soon.

At Hong Kong University we will soon be establishing a Fungal Diversity Research Project to carry out research on fungal diversity in this region. More information on this later.

Kevin D. Hyde  
The University of Hong Kong

### THE MYCOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION OF HONG KONG

The Mycological Association of Hong Kong held its inaugural meeting on the morning of 6 June, followed by a one day meeting, which was excellent. The Society aims to promote research and teaching in Mycology in Hong Kong, and it publishes a three-monthly Newsletter. If anyone wants to join this society they should contact me at the University.

Members fees: HK\$ 100 (about AUS\$17).

Kevin D. Hyde  
The University of Hong Kong

### NEW MEMBERS

#### Full members:

Sarah Morrison-Gardiner, Australian Institute of Marine Science, Townsville  
Geoff Ridley, Forest Research Institute, Rotorua

#### Student members:

Sandra Savocchia, University of Adelaide  
Reiny Scheper, University of Adelaide

### DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

Articles for the next *Newsletter* are due by Friday 12 September 1997. If articles are more than half a page long, the editors would appreciate a copy on disc. Please note that for references *journal and book titles are given in full*. The disc will be returned after publication of the *Newsletter*.

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