Fungimap Newsletter Issue 7 April 1998

Australian Fungi Mapping Scheme

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The new fungi season starts!

Drought The drought has been temporarily broken around Bright with 65 mm of rain falling on Easter Sunday and Monday. Hopefully more will follow.

Maybe we will get some fungi coming up at last!

In times of drought fewer fungi are to be found and during these times we try to cut back on things in Fungimap to ensure the meagre funds we have will last longer. However, you can still find some very interesting specimens and records of these are important in considering how drought effects fungi.

As you will note, we do not charge a fee for the newsletter, believing that the hard work

given by fungi-hunters should not cost them. We will continue with this policy for as long as possible, however, our funds cannot last forever.

Congratulations to Tom May

Our 'founding' father, Dr Tom May, is now able to state he is a father in reality! Tom became a father late last year with the arrival of his daughter, Iona May Maroske. Congratulations, Tom and Sarah!

Records

We have now collected more than 1600 records across Australia. This means we collected twice as many fungi last year (1100) as we did in our first year of operating (500). Well done FUNGI-HUNTERS!

Last year I nearly got to my target number of 20 records: I got 16. 1 am determined this year to find 30 records. How about you? A target of 30 new records is just 5 records a month for the next six months -- that should be really easy for us all to achieve.

We need every record you can find as these are now starting to give us a picture of where fungi are for the first time! So send in every record as soon as you find it.

Welcome to New FUNGI-HUNTERS A lot of new people have joined us recently as FUNGI-HUNTERS. Welcome to the exciting world of mapping one of Australia's unknown frontiers.

We currently have many atlases and maps of plants, animals and birds. As far as I am aware, we have very few, if any, maps of the distribution of fungi outside of those published in this newsletter.

Every record submitted of the target species significantly adds to our knowledge base. Colour brochures of the original 8 target species are available from myself. The remaining 42 species can all be found in Bruce Fuhrer's book, *A Field Guide to Australian Fungi. (For*

the complete list of species see p.2.) This is available in many bookshops, through the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria or through Fungimap. The cost of Bruce's book is S20.00. Each copy you buy from Fungimap assists us to keep going.

New Recorders Needed

We still need many more recorders in the true heart of Victoria, that is every where outside of Melbourne. Importantly, we need many more people from other States. Spread the word -- talk about the exciting work you are doing -- mapping a new frontier.

Newsletter items

We welcome any items of interest that Fungimap recorders wish to send in to us relation to fungi.

We will publish these in the newsletter as space permits. This month we have items from Julie Strudwick, who also donated some excellent slides of fungi for us to use in talks, and from Margery Smith. Margery, in examining old newspaper records, has found a very old record of *Ileodictyon cibarium.*

John Julian

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What is Fungimap?

The Fungimap project is the first mapping scheme of fungi to occur in the southern hemisphere and aims to gather information about the distribution and spread of 100 selected species of fungi. In essence, we are increasing the knowledge of the distribution and ecology of Australian fungi. Literally we are mapping a new scientific frontier in Australia.

Currently, approximately 5,000 Australian fungi are known. This represents only 5% of the

expected population of Australian species. At current rates of research, it is estimated that it would take 700 years before all Australian fungi are catalogued.

The Australian Fungi Mapping Scheme is a volunteer group working in close conjunction with professional mycologists. It undertakes the Fungimap project as well as carrying out field research of specific areas each year. Last year a field expedition occurred at Mt Buffalo and this year an expedition will be occurring at Wilson's Promontory.

In the Fungimap project, 50 target species have now been selected *(see page 2*) and volunteers have been searching for these species for one year, sending in 1600 records. Volunteers are able to identify the species from photographs in readily available texts, predominantly Bruce Fuhrer's A *Field Guide to Australian Fungi.*

For further information you can contact John Julian, P.O. Box 178, Bright Vic 3741, phone (03) 5750 1796 or preferably, by email at wandivalley@netc.net.au

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Fungimap Target Species

Records, recent or old, of all 50 target species from all parts of Australia are requested. Some of the additional species are not so distinctive as the original eight species and some recorders may wish to limit themselves to the more obvious species. Remember to indicate if you are in any doubt about the identification of a record, and in such cases it is best to send a photo.

Numbers in brackets are page numbers in Bruce Fuhrer's ***Field Companion to Australian Fungi*** (published by FNCV).

ORIGINAL EIGHT (illustrated in Fungimap colour brochure -- in addition, all species except *Amanita muscaria* and *Battarraea stevenii* are illustrated in *Field Comp*.)

Amanita muscaria

Amanita xanthocephala (21)

Aseroe rubra (102)

Battarraea stevenii

Dermocybe austroveneta (31)

Mycena interrupta (59)

Omphalina chromacea (62)

Omphalotus nidiformis (70)

ADDITIONS MARCH 1997 For this first updated list, all species are illustrated in Bruce Fuhrer's *Field Companion.*

Agaricus xanthodermus (15)

Amauroderma rude (113)

Anthurus archeri (102)

Armillaria luteobubalina (22)

Ascocoryne sarcoides (144)

Banksiamyces macrocarpa (146)

Boletellus obscurecoccineus (80)

Calostoma fuscum (94)

Cordyceps gunnii (154)

Cordyceps hawkesii (155)

Cortinarius austroalbidus (in Field Comp. as C. albidus) (29)

Cortinarius radicatus (34)

Cortinarius rotundisporus (36)

Cyttaria gunnii (147)

Fistulina hepatica (116)

Gymnopilus pampeanus (45)

Hericium clathroides (108)

Hygrophorus lewellinae (48)

Ileodictyon gracile/cibarium (in Field Comp. as Clathrus cibarius) (101/104)

Leotia lubrica (150)

Lepista nuda (52)

Macrotyphula juncea (in Field Comp. as Clavaria delphus) (85)

Marasmius oreades (55)

Microporus xanthopus (118)

Morchella elata/conica (in Field Comp. as Morchella sp.) (151)

Mucronella pendula (in Field Comp. as Myxomycidium pendulum) (90)

Mycena austrororida (57)

Mycoacia subceracea (109)

Neolentinus dactyloides (in Field Comp. as Lentinus terrestris) (52)

Oudemansiella radicata (67)

Panus fasciatus (in Field Comp. as Lentinus fasciatus) (51)

Piptoporus australiensis (119)

Piptoporus maculatissimus (121)

Podaxis pistillaris (100)

Podoserpula pusio (132)

Poronia ericii (in Field Comp. as P. punctata) (158)

Pseudohydnum gelatinosum (142)

Schizophyllum commune (76)

Tremella fuciformis (138)

Tremella mesenterica (140)

Vibrissea bicolor (154)

Volvariella speciosa (77)

All fungi records to be sent to:

Fungimap

National Herbarium of Victoria,

Birdwood Avenue,

South Yarra, 3141

All administrative and general enquiries to:

John Julian,

PO Box 178, Bright, Victoria 3741.

Telephone (03) 5750 1796.

Margery Smith has sent in an interesting snippet from the *Gundagai Times* Saturday July 17 1869

> TUMUT
>
> (from our correspondent)
>
> *A singular fungus was recently unearthed in Mrs Atkinson's garden at Transit Hill. Fungi of the same description are I believe occasionally met with in other neighbourhoods. They are always buried a few inches below the surface, in rich rotten ground, and when found are rolled up like a ball, but on being carefully raised immediately expand and present a beautiful, geometrical, net like appearance, each interstice being a perfect hexagon; the colour is creamy white and the odour emitted is peculiar; in some particular way they resemble the truffle. The fungus in question was of unusual dimensions, viz., about 12 inches in circumference, and when expanded the very counterpart of a lady 's chignon net on a large scale.*

Margery has identified this fungus as *Ileodictyon cibarium* (=*Clathrus cibarius*), and worked out a grid reference for the site, so that the record can be entered into the data base.

Prior to this, our oldest record was from 1887, of *Battarraea stevenii,* collected by C.

French from Lake Albacutya, collated by John Avram from the holdings of the Herbarium at the Plant Research Institute, Knoxfield.

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From Pat Grey's desk

Acknowledgements and signiflcant records

Acknowledgements

Our recorders have been very busy in the latter half of 1997, sending in 847 records. Thanks go to the following: George Biron, Prue Brown, Pamela Catcheside (3 batches), Eileen Collins, Judith Cooke, Robin Corringham, Julia Davis (2), Elaine Davison, Jane Dennithome, Rod Dunstan. Robin Dzedins, Ian Endersby, Timothy Entwisle, Cecily Falkingham, Arthur Farnworth, Cicely Fenton (2), Ron Fletcher (3), FNCV, Sharon Ford (4), Ade Foster, Sally Green, Pat Grey (2), Sheila Houghton, Virgil Hubregtse, Anne Hughes, Patricia Jordan, John Julian (5), Helen Langley, Heino Lepp (2), Simon Lewis, Tom May, Ian McCann and Thelma Argall (4), Marie Mclntyre, Dave Munro (3), Peter Neish (2), Lois Prictor, David Ratkowsky (3), Rosemary Robb (2), Joan & Bob Rowlands, Margery Smith, Julie Strudwick (2), Katrina Syme, Bon Thompson, Tom Verberne, Wandiligong PS, and Hilary Weatherhead.

Highlights

Some recent highlights are the 200th record of *Amanita muscaria* from Judith Cooke (North Ringwood, Vic). Ian McCann with Thelma Argall sent in 31 records at the end of last year despite the extremely dry weather. Among the records have been the first we have received of *Poronia ericii* and *Macrotyphula juncea.* This brings Ian's batch number to 12 and takes his total number of records to 196 -- thank you Ian and Thelma, a tremendous

effort. Talking of record numbers, Heino Lepp sent 161 records in one batch from the holdings of the Canberra Herbarium (Be!connen, ACT), which certainly boosted the records. Hilary Weatherhead (Emerald, Vic) hunted through her notebooks for old records and among them was the first Fungimap record of *Ascocoryne sarcoides,* and Bon Thompson (Traralgon, Vic) sent in the first records of *Mucronella pendula* and *Amauroderma rude.* Habitat information is going to very useful, and Julie Strudwick (Benalla, Vic) gave us a description of the vegetation for the first sighting for the scheme of *Mycoacia subceracea,* growing on a dead log under *Eucalyptus melliodora* and *E polyanthemos*.

Stop Press - New fungus book

Fungi of Southern Australia by Neale Bougher and Katie Syme has just been published. This is a most useful work with 125 watercolour paintings of macrofungi, a very detailed text and lots of useful introductory chapters. RRP is $75, but this book will be available from the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria at a discounted price ($60 + $4.50 postage) -- orders to Ray White (03 9379 3602) or FNCV office (03 9877 9860), Locked Bag 3, PO Blackburn, Victoria 3130.

Dung

You will be pleased to know that the first batch of 100 dung samples has arrived safely in New Zealand. Anne Bell was finally able to resolve all the paperwork and quarantine issues. Her work will be done in a 'quarantined area'. Good Luck Anne, with growing fungi from the dung samples. The next 50 batches of dung are ready to go. So thanks to all those people who have sent in dung -- these include in the latter half of 1997:Robin Corringham (5 batches), Julia Davies, Cecily Falkingham (2), Cicely Fenton, Ron Fletcher (5), Dick Griffiths, Greg Kirby, Tom May, Dave Munro (3), Susan Palmer, Joan & Bob

Rowlands (2), Margery Smith (3), and Julie Strudwick.

Ann Bell recently wrote to us -- "All *the samples are beautifully documented and all arrived to good order. Thank you so much once again, without the assistance of you and all these collectors I would not be able to do this project. With kind regards, Ann"*

Due to the efforts of our valiant dung collectors, a sufficient sample of wombat, wallaby and kangaroo dung has been accumulated from Victoria. If you have just collected dung of these three animals from Victoria, do send it in, but we ask collectors in Victoria to now concentrate of dung of other herbivores such as koala, echidna, bush rat, or bandicoot. Samples of any type of dung from OTHER STATES are still required.

Fungal specimens on dung

A few people sent in dung with fungi, but in most cases there was not enough material to form Herbarium samples. At present, the call for dung is a request just for the dung, and not the fungi. The dung will be sent to Ann Bell at Victoria University, Wellington, where samples will be incubated in moist chambers and the fungi appearing will be described and form the basis of the taxonomic treatment of dung fungi for *Fungi of Australia.* Ann will be able to observe important characters of the fruit bodies (of what are often tiny and delicate species) directly from living material.

If you wish to send in fungi samples as Herbarium Collections, they need to be separated from the dung. To be of value for taxonomic studies, collections should be well dried, ample and accompanied by notes on fresh appearance (photos are also useful) and by a separate label for each collection giving the same information as required for Fungimap records (collector, date, locality, grid etc.). Ample means that with specimens less than 1 cm at least 10 are needed, and for the very tiny, less than 1 mm, at least 50 fruit bodies are required. Before drying the fruit bodies should be in good condition, and neither immature nor overmature. If you are in any doubt about any of these requirements, it is

best not to send specimens at present. There are further details on collecting and drying collections for the herbarium in the FNCV Fungi Kit (available on request).

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Entoloma virescens in Victoria

Entoloma virescens is a startlingly sky blue toadstool that seems not uncommon around Sydney, and is also widespread in New Zealand. There are only two published records of the species from Victoria (from Marlo and Wilsons Promontory), and no specimens from the state in the National Herbarium of Victoria. So, it was a cause of great excitement to receive a photo of an unidentified fungus which appears to be *E. virescens*, sent in by Helen Langley of the Timboon Field Naturalists Club. The colour and also the distinctive conical cap are consistent with *E. virescens,* although confirmation requires examination of the spores (which are an unusual cuboid shape).

The species seems to have a distribution similar to other tropical/subtropical fungi which tend to be found along the eastern seaboard as far south as Sydney, sometimes extending to Victoria, and then only in the east of the state (such as *Cyptotrama asprata* and *Dictyophora multicolor*.) Thus the occurrence in the west of the state is surprising. *E. virescens* will be added to the list of target species and it will be interesting to see where else it occurs in Victoria and southern New South Wales.

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Target Species Premiership Table

Below is a list of the Fungi species and the number of records that we have to the end of 1997. You will note that *Amanita muscaria* tops the records, along with six of the other seven original targets. The eighth, *Battarraea stevenii,* is well down the list. There are almost twice as many records of *Amanita muscaria* as the next commonest species. Of the

targets added in 1997, *Schizophyllum commune* (as suggested by its epithet) is the commonest. Surprisingly *Agaricus xanthodermus* (which we consider a very common species) has only been recorded 31 times. Note that three species *Chlorovibrissea bicolor, Neolentinus dactyloides* and *Hericium clathroides* have not been recorded at all, and there are a number of species with less than 10 records.

Species	**Records**
Amanita muscaria	215
Amanita xanthocephala	116
Mycena interrupta	110
Aseroe rubra	102
Omphalina chromacea	99
Omphalotus nidiformis	99
Dermocybe austroveneta	81
Schizophyllum commune	78
Oudemansiella radicata	62
Gymnopilus pampeanus	50
Tremella mesenterica	43
Microporus xanthopus	37
Cordyceps gunnii	35
Tremella fuciformis	35
Agaricus xanthodermus	31
Armillaria luteobubalina	27
Cortinarius rotundisporus	27
Morchella elata/conica	25
Calostoma fuscum	23
Lepista nuda	23
Ileodictyon gracile	22

Amauroderma rude	20
Podoserpula pusio	19
Volvariella speciosa	19
Leotia lubrica	18
Fistulina hepatica	15
Marasmius oreades	15
Ascocoryne sarcoides	13
Battarraea stevenii	13
Boletellus obscurecoccine	11
Cyttaria gunnii	11
Poronia ericii	11
Anthurus archeri	10
Piptoporus australiensis	9
Podaxis pistillaris	9
Pseudohydnum gelatinosum	9
Mycena austrororida	5
Hygrophorus lewellinae	4
Macrotyphula juncea	4
Mucronella pendula	4
Piptoporus maculatissimus	4
Banksiamyces macrocarpa	3
Cortinarius austroalbidus	3
Cortinarius radicatus	3
Cordyceps hawkesii	2
Mycoacia subceracea	1
Panus fasciatus	1

Chlorovibrissea bicolor	0
Hericium clathroides	0
Neolentinus dactyloides	0

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Fungimap targets expand to cover rare species

Tom May

More knowledge is required about rare Australian fungi

One of the important goals of Fungimap is to advance knowledge of what species of fungi are rare, and where these species are found. At present there are only one or two fungi formally included in state and national lists of rare and threatened plants. Given that there appear already to be more species of fungi described than flowering plants, it is to be expected that there will be at least some (and possibly many) rare fungi. It is imperative that these be identified as quickly as possible. The list of Fungimap targets will be expanded to cover 50 species which have been identified as possibly being rare. Further information for these species is urgently required.

Suggestions for 50 rare targets

The following is a preliminary list of fungi which seem to be (1) rare throughout Australia, or (2) restricted in their distribution, and where there is a need to get a better idea of the precise boundary of their distribution. These latter species may thus be rare in some areas, common in others, and include species like *Entoloma virescens*, common enough around Sydney, but extremely rare in Victoria. Please let us know if there are any species which you consider from your observations to be rare (and not too difficult to identify in

the field), and they will be considered for addition to the list.

Amanita austroviridis, Barya agaricola, Beenakia dacostae, Calostoma fuhreri, Camarophyllus lilacinus (= Cantharellus lilacinus), Craterellus cornucopioides, Cyptotrama asprata, Entoloma virescens, Geastrum quadrifidum (= G. fornicatum), Helvella villosa, Hygrocybe graminicolor, Hypocreopsis sp. (see *Victorian Naturalist* **110**: 76-77), *Morchella esculenta, Mutinus cartilagineus, Mycena leaiana, Mycena nargan, Neolentinus dactyloides, Nyctalis mirabilis, Polyporus hartmannii, Rozites metallica, Rozites roseolilacina, Rozites symeae, Schizostoma laceratum, Underwoodia beatonii.*

Also to be added to the list of potentially rare species are those of the original 50 species for which we have received the fewest records (such as *Chlorovibrissea bicolor* and *Banksiamyces macrocarpa).*

A final list will be published in the next newsletter, along with some notes on the distinctive characters of each species, and where to find illustrations and further information.

Keep sending in records of common species

Many of the original 50 target species have turned out to be quite common. The choice to include common targets was a deliberate one, so that participants would have a good chance of encountering the species, and in addition, the targets were readily recognisable species for which colour illustrations were available. It is important that we continue to receive records of the common species for a number of reasons. Firstly, there are many gaps in distribution, especially outside of Victoria, and also the inland edge of the distribution of many species is yet to be firmly established. Records of common species are also vital in order to say with more certainty which species are rare -- they can be said to calibrate the system.

Records of common species calibrate the system

If we continue to receive a steady stream of records of common species, but few or no records of rare species, then we can be confident that the species suggested as rare are in fact rare. It should be possible to establish some minimum number of records per year that we might expect for a common species. If we don't keep getting records of common species, there might be few records of rare species just because overall we have received few records from a given area, or over a particular time. Records of common species will always be useful, even with more recorders, because we can calculate the number of records per recorder per year (and do this for specific areas). Of course, it is quite possible that there are some rare species that are so restricted in their distribution that their localities will not be visited by Fungimap recorders -- but there is little evidence so far that there are many fungi with this type of distribution, and different strategies will have to be developed to pick up these species.

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Fungimap needs more recorders

There are many gaps in the distribution of the target species -- especially outside of Victoria. Some areas where we would like to encourage recorders are western Tasmania, the north of Western Australia, the Northern Territory, and the areas inland of the Great Divide in Queensland and New South Wales. If you know of anyone in the these areas who might be interested, please pass on a newsletter to them, or drop us a line with their contact details.

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Two species in the same basket -- Ileodictyon gracile and Ileodictyon cibarium

Tom May

The record of *Ileodictyon* from Tumut sent in by Margery Smith prompted a look at the distinguishing characters of *Ileodictyon gracile,* one of the target species. The genus *Ileodictyon* (cage, net or basket fungi) is readily distinguished by the white receptacle which forms a hollow network, like a soccer ball with panels punched out of it. The receptacle is initially within an egg-like outer covering, but eventually becomes free, and then has no obvious top or bottom. The spores are in a slimy, olive mass on the inside of the arms of the network. There is an interesting recent article by Gooday & Zerning (1997) on the similarity of the receptacle of *Ileodictyon* to the 'buckyball' -- the polyhedral hollow cage of carbon atoms (buckminsterfullerene), the most stable form of which is a 60 carbon atom truncated icosahedron. These were named because of their resemblance to geodesic domes designed by architect Buckminster Fuller.

The genus is easy to recognise -- what of the species? According to Cunningham (1944) and Dring (1980) there are two species in the genus, both widely distributed in Australia and New Zealand. *Ileodictyon cibarium* has arms which are folded in the egg in a concertina-like fashion, and which after expansion usually retain a creased appearance. The arms are up to 10 mm broad, and are hollow (with 1-3 chambers) with relatively thin walls. In *Ileodictyon gracile* the arms are sinuously folded in the egg, and on expansion are quite smooth and often flattened and ribbon-like. The arms also differ significantly from *I. cibarium* in often being distinctly broader where they intersect. The arms are up to 5 mm thick, hollow (1-2 chambers) and have relatively thick walls.

There are illustrations of *I. cibarium* (some as *Clathrus)* in Cunningham *(Gasteromycetes of Australia and New Zealand),* Dring *(Kew Bulletin* **35**:196), and Young *(Common Australian fungi* -- doesn't show creasing of arms), and of *I. gracile* (some as *Clathrus)* in Bougher & Syme *(Fungi of Southern Australia),* Dring *(Kew Bulletin* **35**:196), Fuhrer *(Field Companion* misidentified as *I. cibarium),* Shepherd & Totterdell *(Mushrooms and*

Toadstools of Australia), and Young *(Common Australian fungi).*

For Fungimap, so far only records of *I. gracile* have been requested. It is possible that the species has been confused with *I. cibarium, so* henceforth records of either species are requested and recorders are asked to provide a photo or some notes confirming the identification to species. Records not confirmed as either species will still be retained, and used to map the distribution of the genus.

References

Cunningham, G.H. (1944), *Gasteromycetes of Australia and New Zealand.* Published by the author: Dunedin.

Dring, D.M. (1980), Contributions towards a rational arrangement of the Clathraceae, *Kew Bulletin* **35:** 1-96.

Gooday, G.W. & Zerning, J. (1997), *Ileodictyon cibarium:* the basket fungus as a buckyball, *Mycologist* **11:** 184-186.

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Maps

The maps are based on Fungimap records and indicate the progress being made to date. Maps for Victoria show distribution for 10' x 10' grids. those for Australia are based on spot localities. Remember that your record may be absent because some records are still to be processed and added to the distribution database (we are also yet to add information from the literature and from a number of Herbarium collections). The maps extend the distribution of most species significantly, but are also valuable in highlighting areas where more records are required.

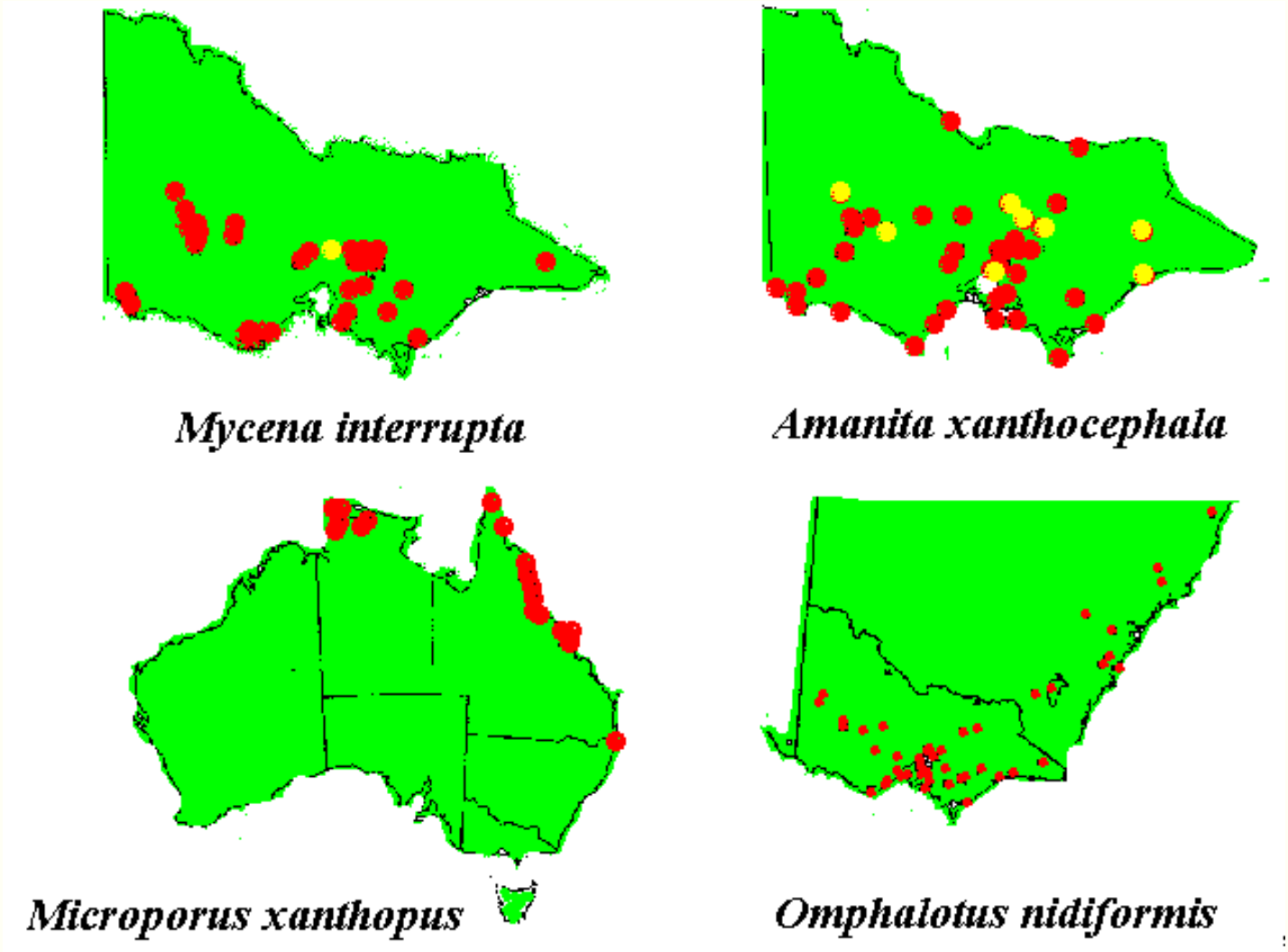
***Mycena interrupta*:** Distribution in Victoria -- Fungimap records in red, National Herbarium of Victoria records in yellow. With only one accessioned collection, from near Toolangi, there was not much to say about the distribution of this species based on

National Herbarium holdings. The numerous Fungimap records received have extended the distribution of this beautiful species across the state, although confined to higher rainfall areas (such as Central Highlands, Otways, Grampians, Portland area). We need more records from Gippsland, from alpine areas and from the north of the state (if the species is found further north).

***Amanita xanthocephala*:** Distribution in Victoria -- Fungimap records in red, National Herbarium of Victoria records in yellow. This species is turning out to be quite common, and is widely distributed across the state, including remnant urban bushland throughout greater Melbourne. The northern limit of distribution is interesting -- with a few records from the Murray, and in the west of the state records from as far north as the Little Desert (under Red River Gum at Kiata). Does this species extend further into the dry country with River Red Gum? As with all fungi, there are many gaps in the distribution yet to fill.

***Microporus xanthopus*:** Distribution in Australia. This polypore occurs over a large range along a narrow coastal strip from far north New South Wales to the north of the Northern Territory. Does it extend to the north of Western Australia, and perhaps further south in New South Wales?

***Omphalotus nidiformis*:** Distribution in south-eastern Australia. The ghost fungus is often noticed due to its luminescence, and so far has been recorded across a wide area of SE Australia. The inland limit in NSW is of interest, and there are also few records from South Australia.



Distribution of Mycena interrupta, Amanita xanthocephala, Microporus xanthopus and Omphalotus nidiformis based on selected Fungimap records

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Raymond Island Workshop

The Bairnsdale and District Field Naturalists Club will be hosting a Fungi Identification Workshop and Survey Weekend at Raymond Island in Gippsland, Victoria, over the 19-21 June 1998. There will be a talk on the evening of the 19th, as part of the Bairnsdale and district FNC meeting. On the Saturday Tom May will conduct a workshop on identification of macrofimgi, with a fungi survey the following day, tentatively on Raymond Island, depending on suitable rain. Accommodation on Raymond Island is available, Further details available from Andrew Bould, (03) 5156 6494.

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Poronia

Julie Strudwick (Benalla, Vic) writes that she has observed *Poronia ericii a* number of times, always on only one dropping of a pile. I have no answer to why this might be so. Perhaps someone who lives near to a spot where animals regularly leave droppings might be able to follow the occurrence of *Poronia* through the year, and also see how long it takes for the fruit bodies to appear after a dropping has been deposited, and how many droppings of a pile are host to *Poronia* over time. It is also of interest to note how many different types of dung are host to *P. ericii* at any site.

P. ericii is the correct name for the widespread Australian species previously called *P. punctata,* which is apparently not indigenous to Australia, but in an unusual twist occurs on dung of exotic animals (wild horses) in central Australia, while *P. ericii* seems to be introduced to Europe, where it is found on rabbit droppings. The two species are best separated on spore size. Records of *P. ericii* from native animals (wombat etc.) do not need to be accompanied by voucher collections, but dried specimens of *Poronia* from exotic animals such as rabbit, horse or camel are welcome (see above in Pat Grey's column for information on sending in dried specimens).

T.M.

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Recent publications on conservation of Australian fungi

May, T.W. & Avram, J. (1997). **The conservation status and distribution of macrofungi in Victoria.** A report prepared for the Australian Heritage Commission. Available from Tom May for $5 including postage (cheque to Royal Botanic Gardens

Melbourne). The report highlights how little we know about the distribution and conservation of macrofungi -- with an estimated half of the known species of Victorian macrofungi not represented among the collections of the National Herbarium, and most species (80%) represented by five or less collections. It is thus not possible at present to separate truly rare species from those which have merely been under-collected.

Scott, G.A.M., Entwisle, T.J., May, T.W. & Stevens, G.N. (1997). **A conservation overview of Australian non-marine lichens, bryophytes, algae and fungi.** Environment Australia: Canberra. This report deals in detail with why cryptogams (including fungi) are a vital part of ecosystems, what are the threats to cryptogams, and suggests ways to improve the conservation status of cryptogams. The report highlights the poor knowledge of the taxonomy, ecology and distribution of cryptogams -especially the fungi. Available from: The Botanical Bookshop, PO Box 351, Jamison ACT 2614, 06 257 3302.

Fungi of Southern Australia, by Neale Bougher and Katie Syme has just been published. This is a most useful work with 125 watercolour paintings of macrofungi, a very detailed text and lots of useful introductory chapters. RRP is $75, but this book will be available from the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria at a discounted price ($60 + $4.50 postage) orders to Ray White (03 9379 3602) or FNCV office (03 9877 9860), Locked Bag 3, PO Blackburn, Victoria 3130.

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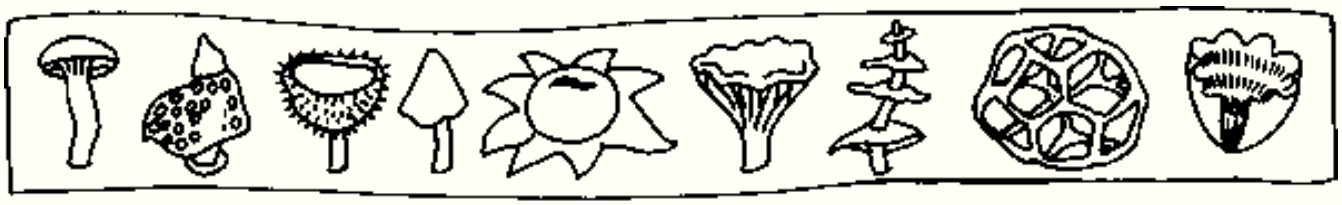

Putting Australian fungi on the map