

FUNGI, FUNGI, FUNGI ... Neil Tucker

From May 19 to 21, ANGAIR hosted the Field Naturalist Club of Victoria Fungi Group for their annual weekend trip. We had many interesting sightings, and discussions amongst the experts over various possible identifications, even for common species. There was also much discussion about recent name changes; DNA analysis is overturning many of the old concepts, with species being split into several, or several being lumped together because they are too difficult to separate. This is not to mention discussions about the merits of different cameras!

Arriving after lunch on Friday, 20 participants were all keen to see *Hygrocybe persistens*. *Hygrocybes* are the 'orchids' of the fungi world – everyone loves them. This one (see right) only grows on calcareous dunes. We found a patch of 20 at Point Roadknight with no visible source of food (fungi can't photosynthesise so they have to get their energy from plants or animals, dead or alive).



We spent the rest of the afternoon on the Distillery Creek Nature Trail. *Lactarius clarkeae* (lactea = milky) was a notable find there. There are milky droplets on the gills in the picture (see left). We also saw a White Worm Coral, *Clavaria fragilis*, first photo L-R below.

Saturday was in the wetter forests behind Lorne, first at Sheoak Picnic Area and the nature trail. There was so much to see we didn't get very far. There was a baby earthstar not yet split open, and another uncommon fungus with tendrils about 1 cm long, *Deflexula fasciculata*, growing on a treefern trunk. No one in the group could identify some tiny (2 – 3 mm high) balls on stalks – they may be a fungus or a slime mould (photos 2-4 below).



In the afternoon we looked along the Cora Lyn Track at Blanketleaf Picnic area. Highlights here were the Blackening Brittlegill, *Russula ingens*, and two very different *Mycenas*, both unnamed as yet. The first was the biggest I have seen, at 12cm tall and 5cm diameter. The other was one of the smallest, at 2mm tall and 3mm diameter, growing on a Tall Sword-sedge, *Lepidosperma elatius*. Near the carpark were two fairy rings of coral fungi, *Ramaria pyrispora* (see photos L-R below).



On Sunday morning we visited three sites on Forest Rd. After seeing some Ghoul fungi, *Hebeloma aminophilum*, growing by the bones of a road-kill kangaroo, it was a day of large fungi. Three species, all with caps over 20cm across were in abundance: *Amanita ochrophylla*, some large *boletes* (*boletes* go mouldy quickly), and *Cortinarius australiensis* (see photos L-R below).



Over the four sessions, everyone found new species for their lists, and I collected 21 specimens, 13 of them new records for the Surf Coast. It was a great weekend. More pictures and information about many of our fungi can be found in the ANGAIR library herbarium folders.

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