

The following is a brief summary of a most informative presentation on Armillaria by Mr Jack Simpson of State Forest Research.

Jack opened his presentation by tabling a book "*Larger Fungi of South Australia*" by C A Crgurinov. This is the first comprehensive taxonomic work of Australian larger fungi since Cleland published "Toadstools and Mushrooms and Other Large Fungi of South Australia", Part 1, 1934 and Part 2 1935. It includes keys to Taxa (about 450 species in 19 orders). Attached is an information brochure and order form.

Three most common types of Root Rot Fungi in Australia are:

- a *Phytophthora*
- b *Gymnopitas* – Heartwood Rot – no instability – spores rust coloured
- c *Armillaria* – most common species *A luteobubalina* – white spots – not rust coloured. Most *Armillaria sp* have no associated taste sensations. An exception however is *A novaezelandiae* from Indonesia which has an Alkaloid taste similar to chewing tobacco (cap slimy, brown warts underneath slime).

Armillaria in Australia

Appear to have broken into two groups

A Gondwana group

B Asian group

- *Armillaria* results in Apical dieback, wilting and eventual death to host plants.
- *Armillaria fumosa* – fruit after bushfires – found in Royal National Park
- *Armillaria fuscipes* – origin Sri Lanka – possibly found in Queensland
- *Armillaria hinulea* – Gondwana group – gills and frills distinctly pink found in wet gullies and heavy soils.
- *Armillaria luteobubalina* – most common species found all over Australia, yellow olive in colour. Can be found in telegraph poles.
- *Armillaria mellea* – Tasmania and Adelaide Hills imported from Europe – believed to be extinct now in Australia

All are most common middle of winter May – June end of wet season when temperatures start to cool. They are long lived. *Armillaria* have a wide host range. *A luteobubalina* found on over 250 plant species including *Eucalyptus sp*, *Pinus sp* and even Canna lilies. *A luteobubalina* is found within all high rainfall forests of NSW but not usually associated with massive deaths of trees. In the northern beaches found in sandy soils which produce large amounts of decomposable material to keep the fungi going. *Armillaria* can colonise areas several hectares or more in size. These colonies may be 150 years old or more given a growth rate of 1m per year.

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Disclaimers

This information was believed to be correct at the date of its publication.

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