

Fungi Workshop / Sullivans Dam trip.

By Allison Knight

Welcome to all the new members who turned up for this interesting trip. A good turnout decided to go to Sullivans Dam and spent a very pleasant morning peering round tree trunks and under rotting branches - or sitting by the dam in the sun.

Collectively we found quite an assortment of different fungi. The brightly coloured *Amanita muscari* (fly agaric), found under *Pinus radiata*, in all their stages of veil formation, were particularly striking.

Some wished they had found fewer species, (and more specimens of the same species), by the time we got back to the lab after lunch and found out just what was involved in the identification process. First step was to start making a spore print, then to sketch the fruiting body whole and in transverse section while it was still fresh. Some very professional looking sketches emerged, to be put in the herbarium along with the dried specimens and the spore prints.

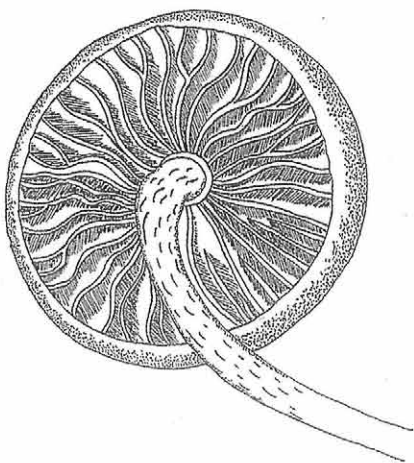
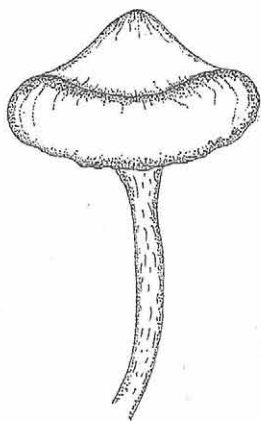
Further identification required searching through the wide selection of reference books and papers that were made available. The birdsnest fungus, *Nidula candida*, on *Leptospermum* twigs in the regenerating forest, stood out with its little nest filled with 'eggs' of spore masses.

Identification of other specimens required the cutting of thin sections, then looking under the microscope at such features as gill formation and how the spores attached to the basidia. Some of these were quite spectacular, magnified on the big TV screen.

Many thanks to David Orlovich for sharing his interest with us, and to Peter Bannister for making the Botany laboratory available. Such a successful day deserves repeating.

'Autumne, the barber of the yeare, that shaves bushes, hedges, and trees: the ragged prodigall that consumes al and leaves himself nothing; the arrantest begger amongst al the foure quarters. This bald-pated Autumnus wil be seen walking up and down groves, meadows, fields, woods, beating leaves from their trees, when common highways shall be strewed with boughs in mockery of summer and in triumph of her death. Then say that Autumnne raignes, then is the true falle of the leafe, because the world and the yeare turne over a new leafe.'

Thomas Dekker *Raven's Almanack* 1609,
taken from the *The Gardener's Perpetual Almanack*; under November 7.



Field Notes

Mushroom Cap = light orange
 w a darker orange rim + peak
 Gills = orange / brown
 Stalk = orange w white flecks
 Location = growing on rotted bark
 under trees
 -Sullivan's Dam, In.