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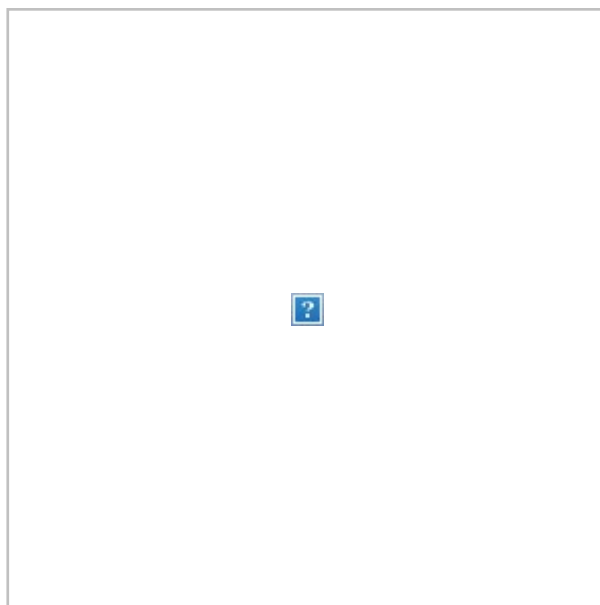
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## eNews 77 - November 2024

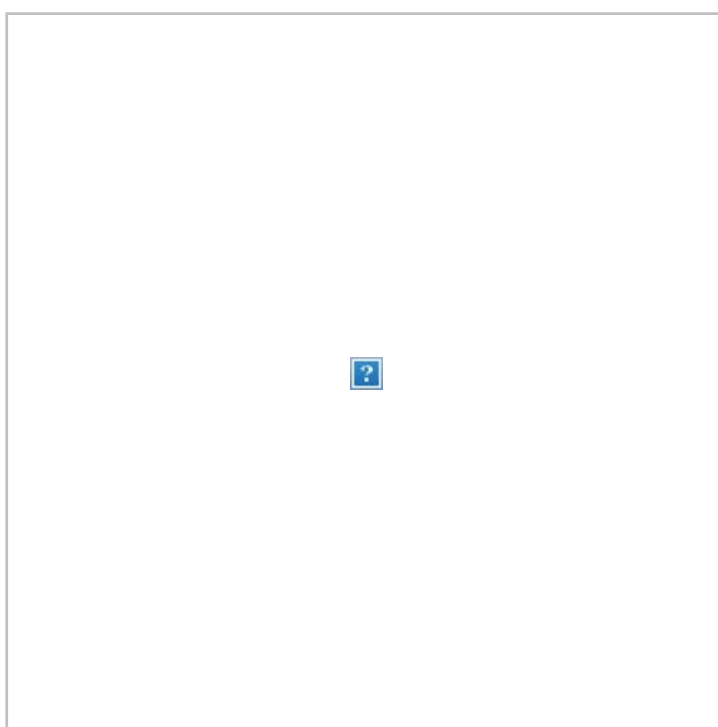


Image: Eleanor Brand and her children Finn (left) and Leif (right) discovered a new fungus in Australia (*Onygena corvina*) growing on a dead bird's beak and feathers. Source: AJT/Eleanor Brand

### In this issue...

- The Great Aussie Fungi Hunt 2024
- Citizen scientists wins: a first for Australia - *Onygena corvina* (Onygenales, Ascomycota) in New South Wales, Australia
- COP 16 - A Pledge for Fungi goes unheard

- Christmas for the fungi lover in your life
- Fungi for Function: end of season project update



## The Great Aussie Fungi Hunt 2024

Congratulations and many thanks to all who participated in the Great Aussie Fungi Hunt 2024. This year we ran the Hunt in collaboration with the clever folks at Planet Fungi who provided their expertise, video making skills and fabulous images to support the Hunt.

Despite the weather not always lending itself to fungi hunting for some of us we had nearly 8000 observations from over 1400 citizen scientists.

The most observed species included the Southern Cinnabar Polypore (*Trametes coccineus*), the Spring Polypore (*Lentinus arcularius*) and the Splitgill Mushroom (*Schizophyllum commune*).

And now to the stars - the most observations came from [andrew2285](#) with 924 observations (noting that there may be some issues with some species identifications) with very honourable mentions to [sarahlloyd](#), [celadonfern](#) and [jeremyhegge](#). The same four very committed observers also identified the most species [andrew2285](#) (88), [sarahlloyd](#) (83), [celadonfern](#) (76) and [jermeryhegge](#) (70), with [janeplainn](#) coming in fifth with 68 species observed.

The Most Research Grade observations was also hotly contested. Sarah Lloyd came out on top with 75 Research Grade observations followed very closely by [celadonfern](#) with 74 and [jeremyhegge](#) with 73.

Deciding what the most interesting/rare species observed was a hard one to determine - thanks to Tom May for some valuable advice here - so drum roll please, coming in at number one with the rarest/most exciting find was [nicklambert](#) with [Pterulicium fasciculare](#) not only was there just one report in the Great Aussie Fungi Hunt, but the observation from Karangi from near Coffs Harbour filled in a gap in the known distribution in New South Wales between Byron Bay and a little north of Newcastle.

Another rarely reported fungus was [Chaetocalathus cheelii](#), photographed by [cajqld](#) at Springbrook in Queensland.

One for the little fungi aficionados - [sarahlloyd](#) captured the tiny [Polycephalomyces tomentosus](#) growing on a tiny slime mould (*Trichia botrytis*) in northern Tasmania.

Honourable mentions also to various unidentified fungi in interesting genera, particularly the *Porpoloma* with yellow lamellae photographed by [tannar\\_coolhaas](#) and [jeremyhegge](#) from the Otway Range in Victoria and the maroon *Callistosporium* in the observation by [pattilou](#) from northern Tasmania - this looks quite like *Tubaria rufofulva* but has a white spore print and lacks the annulus that is characteristic of *T. rufofulva*; it may turn out to belong in another genus than *Callistosporium*, but interesting nonetheless.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge those who share their time and expertise to identify observations. Top marks go to [jeremyhegge](#) with a staggering 995 identifications and very honourable mention to [felix75](#). [Felix75](#) also takes the prize for an up-and-coming contributor/identifier.

Patrick Leonard and Susie Webster have graciously donated some prizes for the winners - a copy of Patrick's new book – *A Bolete or Two* which is also available in our bookshop (see below). With other winners to receive a copy of *Fungi Down Under*.

Thank you again to all who participated, and we will be in touch with the winners shortly.

Remember the Fungimap iNaturalist project (which includes the observations made during the Great Aussie Fungi Hunt 2024) represents a significant body of data going to the Atlas of Living Australia that we hope will be used for current and future research and conservation purposes.

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Image: *Onygena corvina*, Eleanor Brand

## **Citizen scientists win: a first for Australia - *Onygena corvina* (Onygenales, Ascomycota) in New South Wales, Australia\***

In a recent article in the Australian Journal of Taxonomy the role of citizen scientists was lauded as an observation and subsequent collection during the Aussie FungiQuest 2023 became the first confirmed record of *Onygena*

*corvina* in Australia.

In May 2023, three citizen scientists - Eleanor Brand, Leif Pegrem-Brand and Finn Pegrem-Brand (now co-authors on the paper) noticed unusual growths on feathers under a clump of coral fern while searching for fungi observations in Water Nymphs Dell a recreation area in Wentworth Falls, NSW to submit to The Great Aussie Fungi Quest 2023.

Once they loaded the observation onto iNaturalist the 'what did you see?' function suggested *Onygena corvina* but there were no other recorded observations in Australia. An internet search suggested the species was confined to the Northern Hemisphere.

Eleanor tracked down an independent researcher from America as a key *O. corvina* 'identifier' in iNaturalist and contacted him for his views. Eleanor also contacted Fungimap who passed her query onto Tom May and Jordan Bailey.

Needless to say, there was much excitement with Tom and Jordan assisting Eleanor to obtain the necessary permits to enable a sample to be taken - all within three days of the initial observation.

The next steps involved scientists and experts at the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria undertaking a process of identification that included an examination of the morphological characters as well as DNA sequences that allowed for confirmation of the species as *Onygena corvina*.

Congratulations to everyone involved. You can access the full article [here](#).

\*May TW, Vaughan LJ, Holmes GD, Brand E, Pegrem-Brand F, Pegrem-Brand L & Siegel N (2024). Citizen scientists detect the fungus *Onygena corvina* (Onygenales, Ascomycota) in New South Wales, Australia. *Australian Journal of Taxonomy* 72: 1–11. doi: <https://doi.org/10.54102/ajt.i1ogn>

An article about the find was also in [Yahoo News](#)

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## A Pledge for Fungi - COP16

At the request of the International Society for Fungal Conservation, Fungimap urged the Australian Government to sign on to a fungal conservation pledge that was to be presented by the governments

of UK and Chile at the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP16) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) which was held in Cali, Colombia from 21 October to 1 November.

The pledge read:

“Towards the recognition of fungi as an independent kingdom of life in national and international legislation, policies and agreements, in order to advance their conservation and to adopt concrete measures that allow for maintaining their benefits to ecosystems and people in the context of the triple environmental crisis”.

Fungimap, along with partner organisations, strongly encouraged the Australian Government to sign on to the Pledge. We also encouraged you, our members and supporters, to sign the Pledge and these were submitted to the Australian representatives at the meeting.

Unfortunately the meeting passed without a commitment from the Australian Government. In their response to Fungimap the Biodiversity Policy Section of CBD Australia (part of the federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water noted that there was "insufficient time to attain a thorough understanding of the potentially broad-ranging implications such a commitment may have across national legislation, regulations and policy. As a result, Australia was unable to sign onto the pledge at COP16.

The response also acknowledged that the Government does "recognise the incredible role of fungi in Australian ecology. They are unsung heroes of our ecosystems, and we welcome greater acknowledgment of the critical role that fungi play. A role that is already recognised by the Australian Government in several ways:

- The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) allows fungi species to be protected if they are found to be threatened.
- Fungi are already accepted as a separate kingdom through our official taxonomic reference points.
- Australia's National Species List is structured to recognise fungi as a separate kingdom."

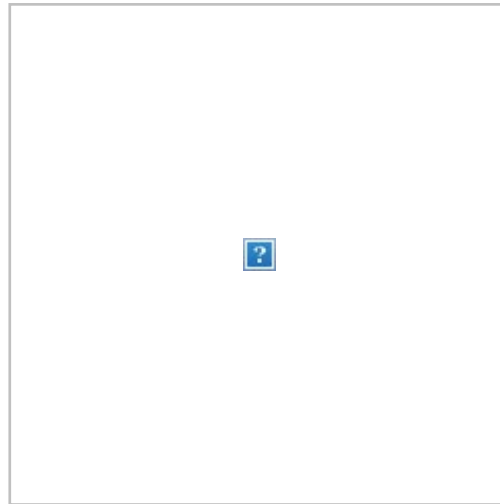
Fungimap will continue to work toward a commitment by Australia to fungal conservation through the Pledge as well as through our advocacy work on threatened species listings.

We will be contacting like-minded and conservation focused organisations across Australia to seek endorsement and continue to advocate with the Australian Government. Your support on this is always invaluable and we will keep you up to date with our progress.

If you would like further information on the background to the Pledge, please check out this [article](#) by our President Michael Priest.

A thank you also to all the members who signed on to the Pledge, your support on this is sincerely appreciated.





## Christmas for the fungi lover

Looking for some stocking fillers, or something more substantial for the Fungi lover in your life? We have some new and exciting releases in our bookshop.

First up, [A Bolete or Two](#) a wonderful new book from Patrick Leonard OBE with notes on Australian Boletes species and their lamellate relatives. Descriptions and trial field keys have been constructed to primarily aid identification in Queensland but include species found elsewhere in Australia.

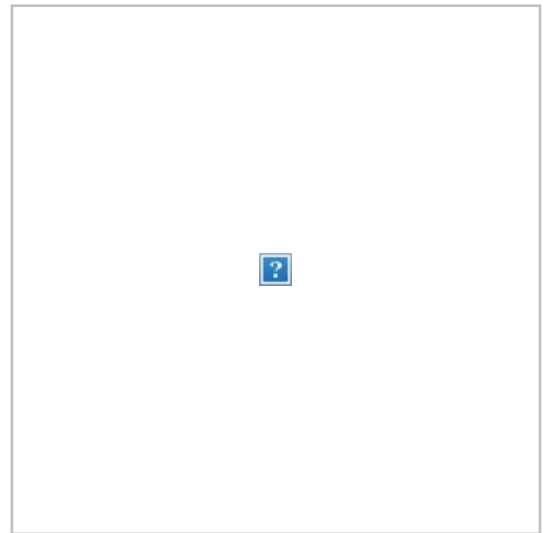
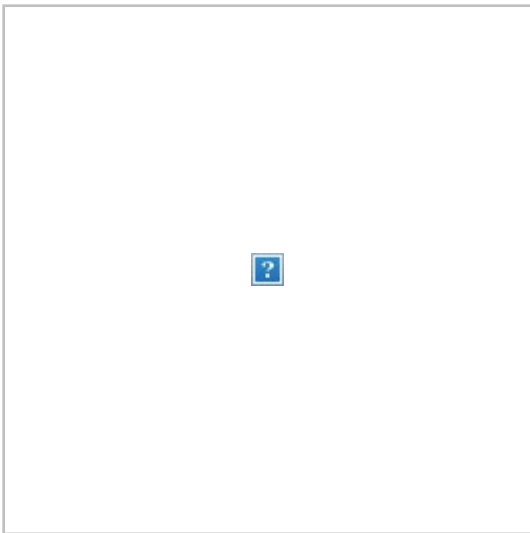
Next, we have some fun stocking fillers in the form of Glow in the Dark [mirrors and pins](#) as well as a small re-stock of Fungi mirrors which come in a pouch with a cleaning cloth for safekeeping from the clever people at Far South Fungi.

You might also like to consider a donation to Fungimap for the season. Donations can be made in values of [\\$20](#), [\\$50](#) and [\\$100](#). They come with a digital card along with a subscription to the Fungimap eNews. They make a perfect gift for those fungi enthusiasts who already have everything!

Or how about an annual membership for the budding mycologist in your life. Memberships come with a new member welcome pack, a guide to photographing and describing fungus, subscription to eNews and free access to our live zoom webinars and workshops as well as being eligible to apply for our biannual research grants. Check out our membership page [here](#).

Fungimap is a citizen science organisation that relies on book sales, memberships and donations to continue our work.



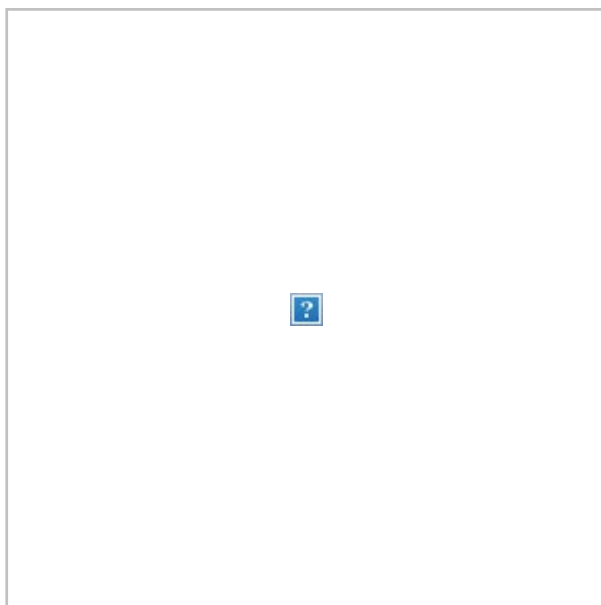


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## **Fungi for Function: end of season project update**

We've now successfully reached the end of our first Fungi for Function pilot season, our citizen science grant project in South Australia!

## Our key achievements to date:



We certainly had some challenging conditions for this first pilot year, with rainfall at some sites of only about half the average, and particularly low in May and June which is usually peak fungi fruiting time. Regardless, we were able to trial our survey methodology with an amazing team of citizen scientists, found 11 of our 26 target species within our survey areas across the 3 trial sites, and noticed some patterns emerging in the data in relation to our research question about whether target species across the four fungi functional groups (plant partners, recyclers, plant parasites and lichens) can be used as indicators of bushland condition.

[Continue reading full article here...](#)



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*As always, we welcome contributions to this eNews. Next cut-off date for submissions is Monday January 13th 2025. Please get in touch with your news, reports, stories, photos, and updates on anything relating to fungi in Australia! Send to the Fungimap Coordinator at [fungimap@gmail.com](mailto:fungimap@gmail.com)*

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## We need your support - [buy a book](#), [join Fungimap](#), [tell your friends](#).....

- We record and map fungi in Australia.
- We spread the word about the essential role of fungi in biodiversity.
- We advocate for fungal conservation and investment in mycology.
- We would love you to join us and help with this work.

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*We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians throughout this land, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.*

*We recognise the deep cultural and scientific knowledge of Australian fungi held by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples for millennia.*



**Our mailing address is:**

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