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## Fungus of the Month - December 2009



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### *Trametes versicolor* - rainbow fungus

*Trametes versicolor*, or the rainbow fungus, is a common bracket or fan-shaped fungus that fruits on either dead wood on live trees or logs and dead branches on the ground. The individual fans or brackets are up to 7 cm across, and many may develop on a single piece of wood to form colourful cascading tiers. They are distinctly coloured in contrasting bands ranging from combinations of orange, blue-grey and brown (above) to brown and grey (inset). Sometimes they may even be almost uniformly black, but still display the concentric banding.

The rainbow fungus usually fruits in the autumn through to late winter in all habitats, including coastal heath, native forest, eucalypt plantations, orchards, and even on wooden fence posts. It is a cosmopolitan species and perhaps one of the most common wood decay fungi found throughout the world. In the northern hemisphere it is known as the turkey tail fungus.

The Latin/Greek scientific name refers to either the pattern or structure and the variable colouring of the brackets; *tram-*: the woof (or weft as in weaving), or *trametes-*: the thin one, *vers-*: changing (colour).