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Fungus of the Month - November 2010



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Russula neerimea

Russula neerimea is found in most eucalypt and other forests and woodlands in southern Australia. In the south west it is quite a common species found in the wetter areas of jarrah, karri and tingle eucalypt forests. It appears in the early autumn, being one of the first species of *Russula* to fruit, usually amongst deep well-rotted litter. The caps are honey brown and quite slippery or viscid when fresh and expand to about 8 cm. The margin of the cap has a distinct grooved or striated pattern corresponding to the gills underneath. The gills are crowded, creamy white to creamy yellow sometimes with brown blotches or bruising. The stem is white, up to 7 cm tall, fragile (will 'snap' quite easily when bent) and feels hollow but cutting it lengthways reveals a characteristic chamber-like internal structure (see above).

The scientific name has a mix of Latin/Greek and Aboriginal elements. *Russ-*: reddish (likely referring to the colour of the Northern hemisphere type specimen for *Russula*, *Russula emetica*, which has a red cap); *-ula*: pertaining to; *neerim-*: is an Aboriginal word meaning *high* referring to Mt Lofty where the type specimen for this species was found; *-ea*: pertaining to or belonging to.