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Cryptogam of the Month – February 2008



***Funaria hygrometrica* (Fire Moss)**

Funaria hygrometrica is a common yellowish green cosmopolitan moss species that grows on soil and is often found in unstable habitats. This species usually dominates after a fire, forming extensive dense mats on the ash beds. As the ash ages and becomes depleted of potash the dominance of this species declines and in long unburnt and undisturbed areas is reduced to small scattered clumps. This species can survive severe desiccation and produce abundant spores, especially after a fire. The spores develop in stalked often pendent red brown capsules with orange twisted teeth on the edging mouth opening.

R.J. Cranfield. Science Division. DEC Manjimup