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## Fungus of the Month - June-July 2008



### *Banksiamyces* species

*Banksiamyces* is a small stalked disc-shaped fungus that grows specifically on *Banksia* cones.

A number of species have been described, but all look very similar and are difficult to distinguish. The fruit bodies have the capacity to dry out in unfavourable conditions (*inset above: on *Banksia sphaerocarpa**) and then to resurrect during periods of suitable moisture (*main photo: on *Banksia quercifolia**). The discs range from about 2 to 5 mm in diameter and are generally dark charcoal-grey to light grey in colour. They are difficult to see in the dried state. Despite the large number of *Banksia* species in Western Australia, *Banksiamyces* do not appear to be common, or perhaps it is because they are easily overlooked. The fruit bodies may persist for some time but the most common time to find them in the fully expanded state is late winter to early spring.

The scientific name –what it means: *Banksia*:- refers to the host plant species, *myc*:- fungus or mushroom, thus *Banksiamyces* literally means ‘Banksia fungus’.

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