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## Cryptogam of the Month-August 2009



### *Haematomma eremaeum*

*Haematomma eremaeum* is a crustose lichen that occurs mainly on the bark of *Acacia acuminata* (jam) and *Melaleuca hamulosa*. Occurring in open woodland areas where it is endemic to the dry inland and wheat belt regions of south-western WA.

The bright red to pink apothecia and the white rugulose or warty thallus, make this an easy species to recognise in the field. The long linear spores have 5-11 cellular divisions (septa).

Chemical spot testing shows that the thallus reacts with Potassium hydroxide (K<sup>+</sup>) and turns yellow. Application of Potassium hydroxide to the apothecial disc reacts positively to produce a dark red to blood red colour.

*Haematomma* is represented by 35 species with Australia and South America being the main regions. Australia has 11 species (WA has 4-5 species) occurring mainly on rock or bark

*Haematomma* is derived from Greek haema or haemat (blood) and omma (an eye) referring to the red apothecial discs.

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