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Campanella gregaria

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Campanella gregaria is an intriguing small shell-like fungus that fruits on the dead wood of banksias, sheoaks and jarrah in late autumn and early winter in the southwest of Western Australia. It can be found on either the bark surface or—particularly in the case of banksias—on the wood surface under loose bark.

Campanella gregaria generally fruits in large numbers. Caps are small, usually less than 8mm diameter, cup- or shell-shaped, dark brown, grey brown or sometimes grey, with a gelatinous texture and a smooth dry surface. The margin is often lobed or wavy. From the underside, caps are irregularly circular or sometimes fan-shaped, with sparse radiating main gills and a shallower reticulated branching between them forming a pore- or honeycomb-like pattern. The fruit bodies do not have a stem, but are laterally or centrally attached to the host wood via the upper or lateral surface of the cap.

A second, unnamed, species is similar but uncommon (*inset above*). It has a larger, more lobed cap, is purplish grey brown in colour and has a finer, shallower reticulated pattern within the gills. It is likely restricted to karri forest or the wetter regions of jarrah forest.

The scientific name refers to the habit, size and shape of the fruit body. *Campan-*: bell-shaped, *-ella*: diminutive, small, *gregaria*: the technical term for growing in groups, but not joined together.