REVEGETATION

PUTTING THE FUNGI BACK - KICK START YOUR REVEG!

Neale Bougher and Inez Tommerup

FUNGI are vital to the long-term health of woodlands, as we explained in *Western Wildlife* in July 1999 (WW 3/3 pp 6-7). Unfortunately, in ex-paddocks where revegetation is taking place, there are very few fungi left. We have been trying to find out how to put the native fungi back, along with the planted seedlings. We think we have found a pretty easy way that everyone can do! If you are growing your own seedlings, just follow these easy steps:

1 get some fungal spores

- collect some soil from your proposed reveg site. Spread it out on a clean tray (such as a baking tray) about 2cm deep and leave to dry
- visit your remnant woodland, or your neighbour's woodland with their permission (as close as possible to your reveg site) and collect fungi. Take mushrooms, toadstools, corals, jellies and puffballs from the woodland floor. Don't collect brackets

from living trees or logs, as wood-rotting fungi are not needed at this stage.

- moisten prepared soil and then place the fungi on the moist soil, so that the spores can fall out. Cut the stem off toadstools, and put the cap gill-side down on top of the soil.
- remove the fungi after 24 hours.
- keep the soil + spores in a cool, dry place.

2 put the fungi in with the seedlings

- mix the soil + spores with your potting mixture
- plant seeds and raise seedlings as usual
- plant out as usual

There, you've put the fungi back into your reveg!

Easy, isn't it!

Hopefully there will soon be a book where you can read all the detail!

Neale Bougher and Inez Tommerup work with CSIRO Forestry and Forest Products at Floreat. This technique is the result of field work with Laurie Pitman of "Valema Farms" at Corrigin with support from NHT Bushcare. They can be contacted on 9333 6674 or 9333 6673.

Note for more recent LFW *members - if you would like a copy of earlier Western Wildlife articles, such as the one quoted here, ask the Editor to send you one.*