

## FUNGI

# Perth Urban Bushland Fungi Project

Roz Hart and Neale Bougher

THE Perth Urban Bushland Fungi Project is underway and all those interested in fungi are invited to participate. The project will run for 18 months which will cover 2 fungi seasons. It has been generously funded by Lotterywest to enable the project to employ Dr Neale Bougher as Mycologist, Roz Hart as Community Education Officer and Jac Keelan Wake as Project Support Officer. The aims of the project are to raise awareness of the importance of fungi to bushland health and to increase the level of scientific knowledge of fungi in this state by collecting and preparing specimens for lodging in the Western Australian Herbarium.

During the 2004 fungi season, we are concentrating on the coastal plain area of the Perth metropolitan region. We are working closely with Bush Forever and the Perth Biodiversity Project to gather relevant and useful data on fungi which will satisfy the requirements of all three projects. The initial area is being restricted in the interests of working with a manageable quantity of information. We will be conducting many types of fungi events to cover the various needs of community groups and the project, and aim to survey and collect fungi from a wide range of vegetation and soil types. The season is centered around June and July, depending on the weather and the rainfall.

Initially there will be a 'Train the Trainers' workshop, for training volunteers to assist us by leading small groups in the field for our four teaching workshops and the numerous fungal forays. Most of these people are already involved in the Fungi Study Group of the Western Australian Naturalists' Club. This event will be by invitation but if you are interested in training as a fungal foray leader please contact Roz Hart.

The four teaching workshops are going to be held on a Saturday or Sunday in June and July and will run all day. We are conducting these workshops to educate as many interested people as we can reach. We will teach how to choose what is collected versus what is recorded, information that needs to be captured in the field; important details to be aware of when taking photos, so that they will assist in identification; and, how to assist us in our quest to work out what fungi we have in Perth's urban bushlands and what role they play in the health of this bush. We are setting out to build inventories of fungi for Perth bushlands, in many cases for the first time. Each workshop will cater for a maximum of 40 people so it is essential that you book your place. Workshops will be conducted at Star Swamp bush, Forrestdale Lake bush, Talbot Rd bush and Baldivis Reserve. Contact Roz for details.

In addition to workshops, we will also be conducting a number of forays, both biodiversity surveys in selected bushlands and short walks. During the surveys we will undertake a detailed fungi study of that site for that day. We will be photographing and comprehensively describing the fungi that we find. People who are keen to spot fungi and assist us with this are invited to come along. We all have a lot to learn and can enjoy the learning and working together.



*Omphalotus nidiformis* to record its habitat and beauty



A good collection of *Cortinarius* species photographed in a manner to keep as a quality image record for reference

We intend to prepare fungi specimens for permanent lodgement at the WA Herbarium, as a basis for key scientific studies from these events.

Short walks will take the form of an hour or two walk in an area of urban bush to point out the existence of a diverse range of fungi and how to find them, and to raise awareness about the importance of fungi to the environment. These events will cater for everyone from beginners to enthusiasts. At the same time, while visiting these sites, we intend to collect some specimens to lodge in

## FUNGIBANK

WESTERN WILDLIFE readers who are interested in revegetation and fungi will also be interested in a new fungi website, Fungibank at [www.fungibank.csiro.au](http://www.fungibank.csiro.au)

Fungibank has been developed to improve the availability of information about Australia's resource bank of native fungi. It provides information on the benefits of incorporating native fungi into revegetation and advice on sourcing and propagating native fungi. It also contains superb photographs - both of the pics in this article, taken by Neale Bougher, come (with permission) from this website.

the WA Herbarium and register the bush site as a collection area.

The purpose of having different types of forays is, firstly, to extend the range of our collecting and to hold many events that Community groups can attend and, secondly, for accurate scientific determination of what species are present in Perth's urban bushland. We need to collect in as many areas as is physically feasible and all helpers are a real bonus. In addition we are conducting a scientific survey in Bold Park and a UWA Extension Course, to increase knowledge and awareness of fungi and their importance to urban bushlands. We also invite volunteers to help on weekdays in the Fungi Lab at the WA Herbarium, to record detailed information about the fungi and assist us in the huge task of drying and preparing the specimens for permanent vouchering. A single day, half a day a week, a regular commitment or whatever you choose, we would appreciate your assistance and we have many opportunities for you to learn more about this fascinating kingdom of organisms.

Keen photographers are especially invited to participate.

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There will be endless opportunities for you, as photographs are the best record of fresh specimens. Digital cameras have opened up a whole new realm while film cameras still have a role to play. It seems to us that here is a great chance to display all our work and artistry with a PUBF Photography Competition once the season finishes. We would really appreciate ideas and assistance with this concept.

Although a number of events will have already taken place by the time you receive this newsletter, you would be very welcome at any of the July events listed below. Looking forward to foraying with you! The most up-to-date information about the forays will be posted on the WA Naturalists' Club website at [www.wanats.iinet.net.au](http://www.wanats.iinet.net.au).

*Contact Roz Hart, the PUBF Community Education Officer on 9334 0500 weekdays.*

## EVENTS

### Workshops:

- 3 Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> July  
Talbot Rd Bushland
- 4 Sunday, 25<sup>th</sup> July  
Baldivis Reserve

### Biological Surveys

- 2 Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> July  
Bold Park

### Walks

- 5 Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup> July  
Wanneroo, Bushlinks walk
- 6 Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup> July  
Joondalup, Bushlinks walk
- 7 Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> July  
Yellagonga Regional Park
- 8 Saturday, 24<sup>th</sup> July  
Dianella Bushland
- 9 Saturday, 31<sup>st</sup> July  
Neerabup National Park