



Hygrocybe austrolutea

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Hygrocybe austrolutea appears to be an uncommon or rare fungus. It has only been recorded twice in the southwest of Western Australia—fruiting in karri forest near Pemberton and jarrah forest north of Walpole in late autumn. The only other records are from eucalypt woodlands in southern Queensland. The distance between records and the extent of suitable habitat between them suggests it is more widespread than currently known. However, fruiting may depend on a combination of strict climatic conditions and to find them takes being in the right place at the right time.

Hygrocybe austrolutea develops distinct, brightly coloured mushroom-like fruit bodies. Caps are up to 4cm broad, with a distinct peak in the centre, smooth, moist to viscid, bright yellow or golden yellow. The margin is generally even but splits in older specimens. Gills are white at first, close together and have a waxy texture. They become pale yellow-white as they mature. Stems are generally about 8cm tall, cylindrical, smooth, hollow, moist to dry and bright yellow to golden yellow turning white near the base. The fruit bodies generally grow singly amongst moss or in litter on the forest floor.

Species of *Hygrocybe* are commonly referred to as 'wax caps'. The scientific name refers to its colour and southern hemisphere distribution; *Hygr-*: moisture, humidity, *cybe*: head, *austr-*: southern, *lute-*: yellow.