



Laetiporus portentosus

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Laetiporus portentosus is a common but seldom encountered fungus in the jarrah forest. That's because it generally fruits high in the crown of either living or recently dead jarrah and marri trees. However, it's common throughout forests and woodlands in southern and eastern Australia and has also been recorded in the far northern tropics.

The large fruit bodies, or brackets, can be up to 40cm diameter, thick, shelf-like or hoof-shaped, dry, smooth, grooved or lobed, light creamy brown with a thick wavy or grooved margin. The texture is firm but spongy. The underside is a pore layer, light yellow to citrus yellow in colour, often with clear droplets of liquid attached (*see above*).

The brackets form in late autumn. They are long-lasting, often looking fresh for several months. Over spring and early summer they dry out and become quite light with a chalky texture. They are usually seen in this state at the foot of the tree on which they were growing. If conditions are right, a new bracket will develop in the same place the following autumn.

The scientific name refers to its characteristic features. *Laet*:- bright, pleasing, *por*:- pore or pores, *portentos*:- portentous, prodigious.