



Coltriciella dependens

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In Western Australia, *Coltriciella dependens* can be found in jarrah forest and woodlands throughout the southwest. It appears to be most common on pieces or sections of burnt jarrah branch wood or small logs.

Coltriciella dependens is a wood decay fungus and develops characteristically hairy, orange brown fruit bodies that hang from charcoaled crevices and hollows on the hollowed under surface of the wood. When you turn a burnt piece of wood over you may see patches of dark brown honeycomb-like structures that appear to be growing on the surface. This is the fertile lower surface of the fruit bodies; by looking at them side-on you can see that they are actually suspended from the surface of the wood by a number of short hairy stems. Several fruit bodies usually coalesce to form multi-stemmed structures (*inset above*). The fruit bodies look fragile but they have a tough fibrous texture. They generally develop about two years after fire and can be found from autumn through to early summer. *Coltriciella dependens* can sometimes be found on unburnt wood and has also been reported from other areas of southern Australia and New Zealand.

The scientific name describes its appearance and hanging habit. *Col-*: dweller or inhabitant and *trich-*: hairs or fibres, *-iella*: diminutive, *dependere*: to hang down. Thus, the small hairy dweller that hangs down.