



Armillaria luteobubalina — honey fungus

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Armillaria luteobubalina, or Australian honey fungus, is an endemic parasitic fungus that can infect the roots of most shrub and tree species, eventually killing them. In natural forests it infects and kills trees that are over mature or have been weakened by some other factor, such as drought or lack of light. It is also common in many parks and gardens throughout southern and eastern Australia. This is because the fungus has survived on the stumps and roots of native trees from the former bush and then infected plants within the recently established gardens. Honey fungus fruits, often in large clusters, at the base or along the roots of infected or dead plants in early autumn.

Caps can be up to 10cm broad, convex, lemon yellow to honey brown, with a rough covering of sparse to dense brown scales in the centre. Gills are pure white and produce copious white spores that can often be seen dusting the surface of other mushrooms in the cluster. Stems are generally 10–15cm tall, white with a prominent and membranous ring-like veil 10–15mm below the cap. Below the veil the stem is distinctly scaly, above it is smooth, sometimes with a pinkish blush.

The scientific name refers to the colour and distinctive characters of the fruit body. *Armill-*: bracelet or ring, *-aria*: pertaining to, *luteo*: yellow, *bubalinus*: buff.