

GIRRAWEEEN NATIONAL PARK

11th April 2015

A QMS foray in Girraween National Park had been tentatively planned for April this year. The area is usually fairly dry, so the chance of the foray going ahead was totally dependent upon rain.

So when the foray organisers heard that there had been some good rain on the Granite Belt, they decided at short notice to cancel the planned visit to Cunningham's Gap and have, instead, a foray in Girraween on the Saturday and another, second, foray on the Sunday at Wilson's Downfall, which is just across the border in northern New South Wales.

The Granite Belt's distance from Brisbane is the reason why the organisers chose to make the foray a two day event.

You can camp in Girraween, but our forayers chose to stay overnight in local motels or took up Ronda and Peter Warhurst's kind invitation to stay at their home in Warwick.

Some people just came for the day trip on the Saturday and didn't stay for the Wilson's Downfall foray on the Sunday.



<http://www.rymich.com/girraween/>

Some of you might know that I've got a website about Girraween.

Because I have such a special interest in the national park and was there on the Saturday, I have been asked to give this report tonight on the Girraween foray.

Hopefully, my familiarity with the park and its fungi will add an extra depth to this report.

Next month, Megan Prance will give the report on Wilson's Downfall.

FORAY SUMMARY

- 😊 10 people attended
(8 QMS members + 2 others)
- 😊 Forayed for about 2½ hours
(10.30am to about 1pm)
- 😊 22 specimens collected
 - 😊 16 agarics, 2 boletes, 2 puffballs, 1 leather, 1 polypore
 - 😊 6 specimens identified to species
 - 😊 4 are possibly new to my list for the park
 - 😊 10 identified to genus
 - 😞 1 went mouldy
 - 😞 6 not yet identified

Ok, here's a summary of the Girraween foray...

It was held on Saturday the 11th of April. Ten people attended – 8 of whom were QMS members. The foray went for about 2½ hours.

This was the second time the QMS has visited the park. The first time was back in 2011, also in April, and that had been a successful foray, with 47 fungi collected.

This time, 22 fungi were collected.

Of those, 16 were agarics, 2 were boletes and 2 were puffballs. The other two were a leather and a polypore.

So far 6 of the collections have been identified to species, 4 of which are possibly new to the list I've been putting together for the park.

10 have been identified to genus. Of these, one fungus has since gone mouldy and had to be thrown out.

The remaining 6 collections are still to be worked on.



Before I get into talking about the fungi, here's a little about Girraween National Park to set the scene.

It's situated about halfway between Stanthorpe and Tenterfield, right on the border of Queensland and New South Wales.

It takes about three hours to drive there from Brisbane.



Girraween – a Granite Landscape

Eastern side of Mt Norman

Girraween is quite different to many of the QMS's regular foray sites.

As I mentioned at the start, its climate is usually fairly dry. In Summer, temperatures can get to 40°C. and, in Winter, it sometimes gets cold enough to have light snow.

As it's located on the Granite Belt, it has a rocky terrain with poor, acidic soils.

It has a variety of habitats – including swamps, heaths, grassy paddocks and Eucalypt forests.

A lot of the park's landscape is pristine, but some of it is reclaimed farmland that is slowly being rehabilitated by the park rangers with revegetation programs.

Many of the native plant and animal species that live there are quite different to those found in coastal areas.



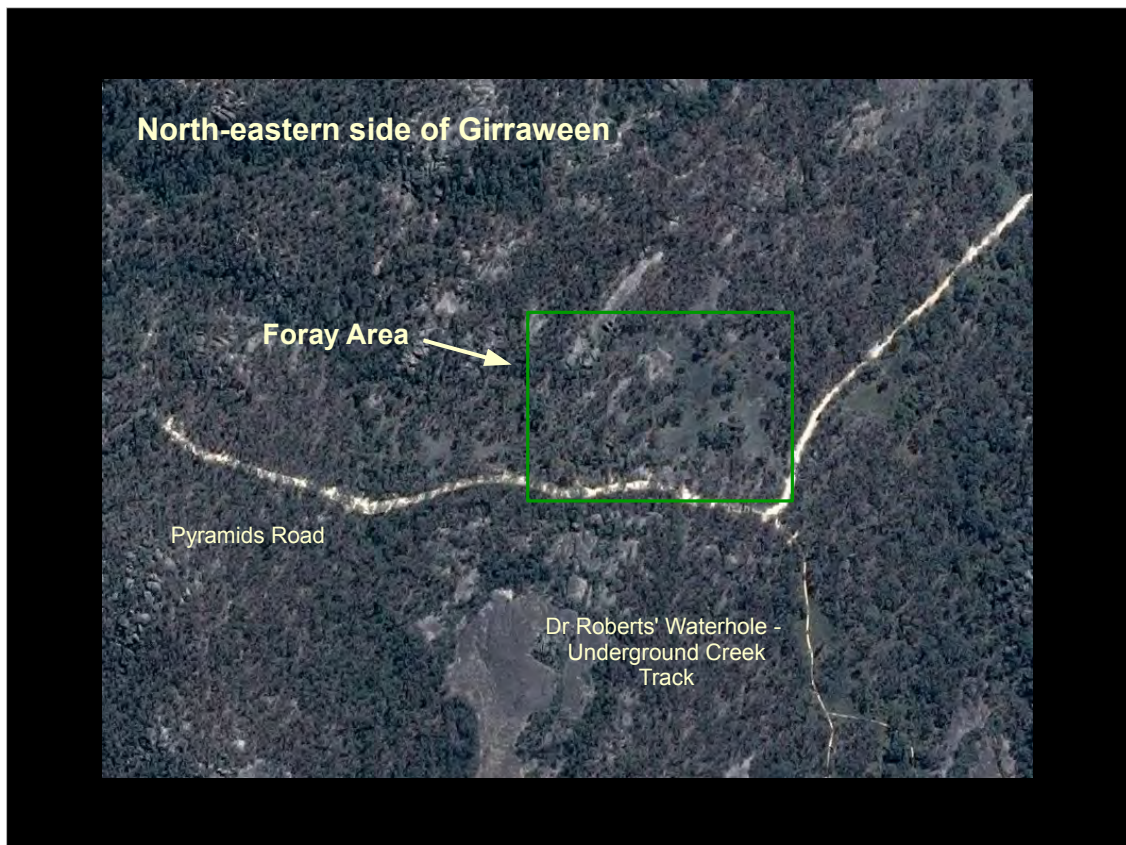
10th April, 2013

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14th October, 2014 © <http://www.thechronicle.com.au/>

In October last year, about 3,000 hectares - which is roughly a quarter of the park's total area - was burned out in a bushfire.



The area we chose to foray in had been at the southern edge of the fire.

The soil is still littered with bits of charcoal and many of the trees have blackened bark at their bases.

Most of the lower story plants are regrowing and are well on their way to recovery.

The location of the foray was just north of the 2011 foray, which had been held (here) along the Underground Creek track.

We started our foray in an open, grassy paddock (here) and worked our way down a slope into a forested area (here). At the bottom of the slope was a marshy area that was a creek channel.



And now we get to the fungi... This pretty little thing was the first to be collected.

Pat Leonard, our foray leader, identified it as *Lichenomphalia umbellifera* because of its funnel shape, decurrent gills and brownish-yellow colour.

There are two species of *Lichenomphalia* known to be in Australia and both of them have been found in Girraween.

As the genus name suggests, *Lichenomphalia* is one of the kinds of fungi that make lichen. You might remember, lichen are symbiotic organisms made up of a fungus and an algae living together.

You can clearly see in the photo the algae growing in a crust on top of the soil.

We also found patches of lichen growing on the algae, close to the fungus' fruiting bodies.

I was really interested to see the fungus, algae and possibly the resulting lichen growing together in the same small area. We made sure to get collections of all three.



Lichenomphalia chromacea

Bright yellow funnel-shaped cap,
waxy surface, downturned wavy margin,
bright yellow decurrent gills,
bright yellow stipe.

As a quick comparison, this is the other *Lichenomphalia* species that's in Girraween.

Lichenomphalia chromacea is about the same size as *L. umbellifera* – a centimeter or so across – and has a similar smooth, waxy-looking surface and decurrent gills.

The main differences between the two is that this species is a pure, bright yellow colour and has a downturned margin.

Chromacea grows in a couple of places in the park.

I found this one a few years ago near the Bald Rock Creek day use area. It's interesting to note the patch of lichen growing on the algae covered soil at the base of the fungus' stem.



***Lichenomphalia* sp. or something else?**

Brown funnel-shaped cap, velvety surface,
downturned wavy margin,
brown decurrent gills,
brown and white stipe.

Back to our foray.

Lil found a small troop of this little brown mushroom growing very close to some more *Lichenomphalia umbellifera*.

Initially, we thought it was the same fungus, but another look showed it was a lot bigger, almost twice the size of the others we'd seen.

It also has a very different surface texture – quite velvety instead of smooth or waxy.

We definitely need to do more work on this collection.



Little Brown Mushroom

Now here's a quite different looking little brown mushroom that Peter found.

With the limited information I have about it, I tried to identify it with FunKey and it came out as a *Galerina* species.

I think, however, it is more likely to be an *Inocybe* species. The name of that genus means “fibre head” and that certainly describes this little fungus perfectly.

I would really like to know what its spores look like and have a closer look at that amazing cap structure.



Lactarius eucalypti

Here's another little brown mushroom. I think Peter also found this one.

It was very easy to identify and Pat could put a name to it straight away.

Even though it's quite a common fungus in Queensland, this is the first record that I know of it being found in Girraween.

It was growing at the bottom of the slope, in the damp creek bed.



Amanita xanthocephala

I think this is a pretty little *Amanita*.

Pat identified it as *Amanita xanthocephala*.

It has already been recorded as being in the park, but it was nice to see it for myself.



***Amanita* sp.**

Cap surface pale grey-buff colour, with patches of white felty fragments of universal veil.
Gills white.
Single ring present and hanging downwards.
Stipe tapering to top, surface with a zig-zagging pattern.



Not all the agarics we found were little. We also found some quite large ones.

This *Amanita* was one of them.

I've had a quick look through my books and it best fits the description I found for *Amanita umbrinella*, but again, much more information from the collection is needed to be able to get a proper identification.



Phlebopus marginatus

Now we come to the boletes.

We actually found three on the day, but this first one was in too poor a condition to collect, even though we gave it a number.

Both fruiting bodies were rotting and full of tiny maggots, a common hazard when collecting boletes.



This one, which Megan found, was in much better condition. It's probably an *Austroboletus* of some sort.

The cap's upper surface was a smooth, pinkish-brown colour with streaks of red.

Its stunning golden-yellow pores instantly turned a bright blue when bruised.

Its lemon-yellow stipe was moderately reticulated and also bruised blue.

The flesh turned blue on cutting.

We don't have a name for it yet, as it needs further study.



***Austroboletus* sp. 3 (Watling)**

Light golden-brown cap
with a suede-like surface texture,
cream-coloured reticulate stipe,
pale pink pores.



I think this is definitely the find of the foray. I knew that something wonderful had been discovered from the chorus of loud “oohs” and “aaaahs” people made when they first approached it.

As you can see from the number tag, it was quite big. It was also in near perfect condition.

From the deeply reticulated stipe, it's another *Austroboletus*. I believe Pat did the identification. It's a yet unnamed species that has been described.

The cap was a beautiful golden brown colour and the surface texture was like suede.

At first we thought the pores were white, but they were actually a very, very pale pink.

The top of the stipe was mostly white, turning to golden yellow at the base.



Bovista sp.

This is one of the two puffballs we found.

The identification was given to me as *Bovista brunnea*, but I'm not so sure it is that.

Looking at the puffball notes that Adrian and Leesa put together for the 2013 Gastromycetes workshop, the outer skin of that species is supposed to be white to cream in colour, with a thin, powdery coating that washes off. I think this puffball is just too dark and too spiny-looking to be a *brunnea*.

I think it matches the description of *Bovista aspera* much more closely. That species is described as being bay brown in colour, with stout pallid spines.

However, I could be quite wrong. Looking at its spores and internal structures would give a more accurate identification.



Podoscypha spp.



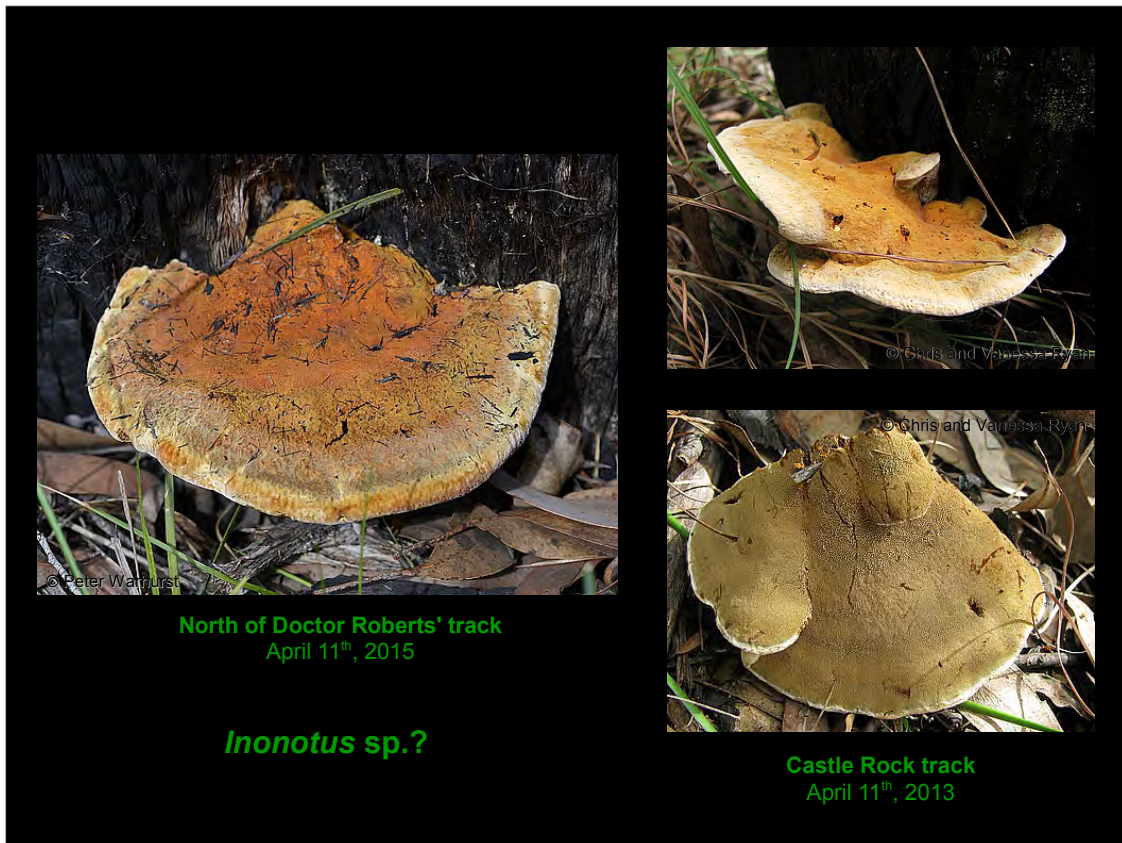
The top two photos are of the leather we found. The blackened one on the left looks as if it went through the bushfire.

It's some kind of *Podoscypha*, but I'm not sure which species. According to the Atlas of Living Australia, there are seven species in Australia and at least three of them are known to be in Queensland.

The photo on the bottom left is of a *Podoscypha* I found in another part of the park later that same afternoon, after the foray was over. With its thick, fleshy folds and white margin, I think it looks similar to the first one. I didn't take it as it was far too small for a good collection.

The photo on the bottom right is of a specimen I collected from the park in April 2013. It looks quite different to the other ones – the flesh is much thinner and a lot more wrinkled. I suspect it could be a different species.

It is interesting to note that all of these *Podoscypha* were growing on ground that had been previously burned.



Finally, this is the one and only polypore we found and collected.

It is an *Inonotus* species.

The photo on the left is the one we found on the foray, growing at the base of the trunk and on some exposed roots of a large Eucalyptus that had been scorched by the bushfire.

The ones on the right I found a couple of years ago in another part of the park, also growing at the base of a large Eucalyptus that had been through fire.

Even though it was quite large and tough, it was surprisingly very light in weight.

The pores underneath appeared, from some viewing angles, to be greyish in colour and brownish on others. The spores are supposed to be brown, so that might be why.



Lunch on the Rocks

The foray came to an end not long after we had lunch.

Here are some of the participants having a picnic in the bush.

We had to bring our food and drinks with us as there were no nearby facilities, apart from a small area for car parking.

After we finished up, some people went back to Warwick with Ronda and Peter to process the fungi and begin identifying them.

Others began the long drive home.

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

😊 13 more specimens collected:

- 😊 6 agarics,
- 😊 2 boletes,
- 😊 2 corals,
- 😊 1 earthball,
- 😊 1 polypore,
- 😊 and 1 puffball.

As I have mentioned, I have a special interest in Girraween and my husband, Chris, and I try to visit the park a couple of times every year. Before we had known there was going to be the QMS foray there, we'd already organised to visit the park that same weekend.

So, after everyone had left, we went back to the main picnic area and I went for a walk along the creek.

On Sunday morning, instead of going to Wilson's Downfall with the others, we returned to Girraween and did a short foray on the southern side.

As you can see, we collected 13 more fungi – 6 agarics, 2 boletes, 2 corals, an earthball, a polypore and a puffball.

Unfortunately, because I've been working on this report, I haven't had much time to identify them yet, but here are some of our more interesting finds.



Pisolithus sp.

On the way in to the park on the Saturday morning, Chris and I had noticed some strange-looking things like whitish rocks dotted along the side of the road.

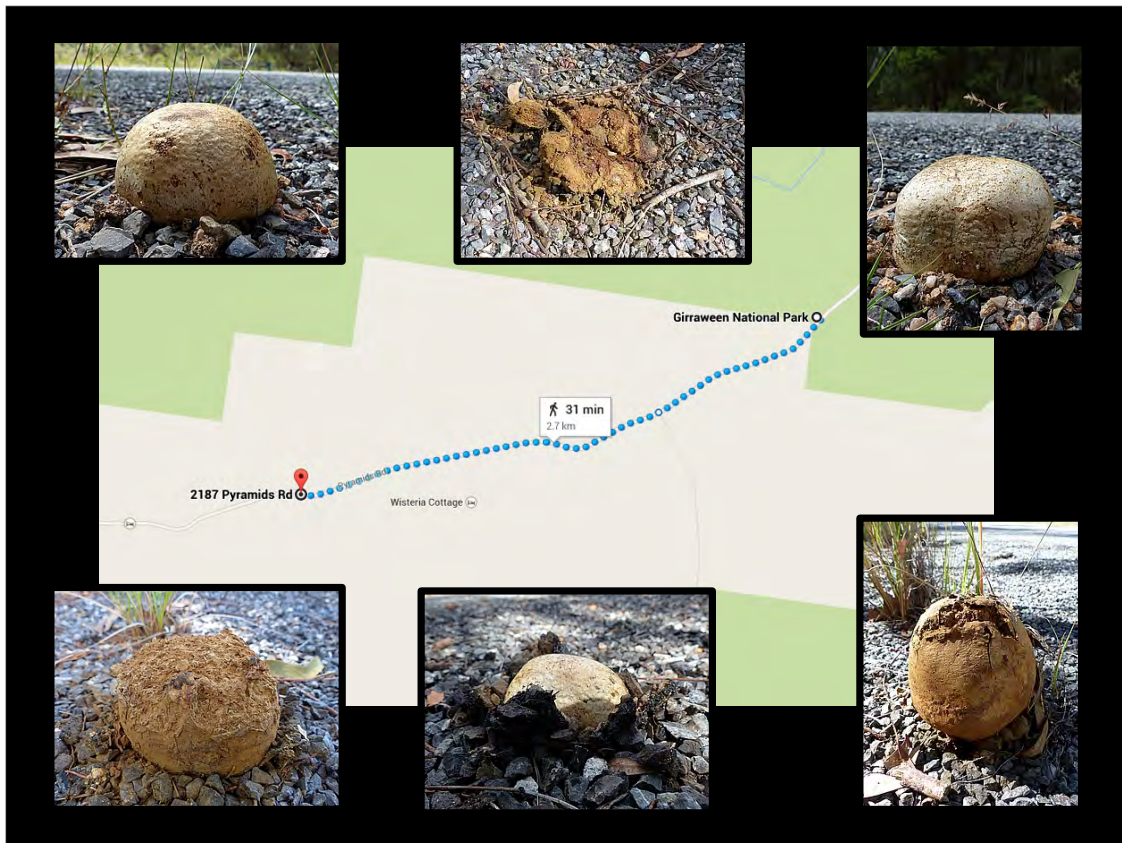
They were a species of *Pisolithus*, an Earthball fungus, otherwise known as a Horse Dung Fungus.

The fruiting bodies were in almost a continuous line along the road, usually spaced just a few meters apart. They were mostly on the same side of the road, but occasionally there were some on the other side as well.

Some of the other forayers on Saturday had also noticed them, but, like us, hadn't stopped to collect any.

So, on the Sunday morning, Chris and I did stop and we got two good collections - one from near the start of where they were growing and one near where they finished.

I've since entered the two GPS locations of where we made the collections into Google Maps.



This is the result. A distance of 2.7 kilometers.

It would be amazing if it was just one huge fungus, but I suspect it was multiple fungi, probably all the offspring of one that had its spores spread along the road by traffic.

Even though there was open ground less than half a meter away, for some reason, just about all of them had chosen to force their way up through the tough bitumen at the side of the road.

I think it might be because the soil under the road was protected and dried out more slowly than the nearby exposed earth.



Ok, this isn't a fungus, but it is a reminder to be careful when you are on a foray.

Girraween might not have ticks or leeches, but it does have other nasty things, like scorpions and centipedes.

A centipede like this one was inside this hollow in the base of one of the *Pisolithus* I collected.

It crawled out as I was digging the fungus up.

Fortunately, it was only a small one, but it still gave me a scare as this kind of centipede can have a very nasty bite.



Ramaria sp. (*samuelsii*?)

Images © Chris and Vanessa Ryan

On to some nicer and prettier things!

As I mentioned, Chris and I collected two corals. They were from two different parts of the park, but I think they are both the same species.

I've done some preliminary work on them with the help of fellow QMS member, Tony Young, and we think it might be *Ramaria samuelsii*.

I need to do some more work on the spores, but if it is *samuelsii*, then – according to Tony - it is the first record of it being found in Queensland.

Pat had collected a *Ramaria* on the Friday before the foray. He thought it was *Ramaria ochraceo-salmonicolor*, but I think it might have also been a *samuelsii*.

Unfortunately, we won't ever know as it was one of the weekend's specimens that went mouldy and had to be thrown out.



Aurantiporus sp.?

Cap surface white with golden brown margin,
pores pale yellow,
oozed a golden "tea",
very soft texture,
easily bruised a dark cinnamon-brown.

Images © Chris and Vanessa Ryan



This is the polypore we found. It was growing just above ground level on the bark of a burned Eucalyptus.

I'm pretty sure it's an *Aurantiporus* species, but I'm not very good with identifying polypores, so please correct me if I'm wrong.

I only got a very light spore print from the specimen, but it appears to be white, which I think is the right colour for *Aurantiporus*.

The 2014 Queensland Plant and Fungi Census lists only one *Aurantiporus* for Queensland, *Aurantiporus pulcherrimus* but I don't think it's that, as I understand that species is usually a distinctive bright red colour.

Austroboletus sp.

Images © Chris and Vanessa Ryan



This is the more interesting of the two boletes Chris and I found.

Its reticulated stipe makes me think it is an *Austroboletus* species.

It was a bit wrinkled around the edges, but otherwise it was in pretty good condition, with no sign of maggots.

The cap's surface was a golden yellow-brown and quite fibrous.

It had very large pores. They were a delicate, fleshy-pink colour and bruised a rusty brown.

The stipe was pinkish too, but it also easily bruised a rusty brown on handling.

I was really lucky in that it had already been dropping quite a lot of spores on the grass beneath its cap. You can see some of them here – that rusty-brown colour on the grass blades. I collected some of the spore-coated grass along with the fungus, so I didn't have to worry about getting a spore print.



Bovista sp.

Growing in soil,
pale creamy-brown colour,
bulbose shape without a false stipe,
gleba a light olive-brown colour,
strong mycelium beneath.

Images © Chris and Vanessa Ryan



And here's our puffball. I think it's another *Bovista* species.

It's a bit different to the one Adrian found on the group foray.

It is a lot paler in colour and it has a distinctive bump on its apex.

The five puffballs in the photo were joined at the mycelium, but they fell apart during transport.

Something obviously thought they were tasty. There were tiny scoop marks on the inner surface of the one that had been gnawed at.



Xerula

Hymenopellis

Oudemansiella



Images © Chris and Vanessa Ryan

And finally, it wouldn't be a talk about Girraween's fungi without mentioning one of these.

In the short time I've been learning about fungi, I've had to refer to it by three different genera names.

Whatever it is called, it is a very common genus of agaric in Girraween. It's easily identified by its brown cap with a blackish bloom to it, white gills, long whitish stem and, when you dig it up, the long “root” structure at the base.

So far, I've already found three different species of this genus in the park. This could be one of those three, or another yet again. Time will tell.

THANKS TO

Adrian Harris,
Chris Ryan,
Megan Prance,
Pat Leonard,
and Peter Warhurst

for sharing their photos.

That's all for now.

Before I go, I would like to thank the following people for sharing their photos:

Adrian,
my husband, Chris,
Megan,
Pat and
Peter.

Between all of us, we took photos of every specimen we collected on the foray.

Thank you!

And thank all of you. :-)