

## *Ileodictyon gracile*



*Ileodictyon gracile* © Johann Jacobs

**Fruit body:** white, open-lattice ball, diameter to 200 mm, often detaching from the volva upon full maturity; the arms are joined to create a cage-like structure with up to 30 fairly regular polygonal-shaped spaces in the net; the arms may join so symmetrically that, if the receptacle detaches from the volva, it is not possible to tell the top from the bottom; the arms widen where they join; 2 - 5 mm wide and flattened in cross-section; the outer surface is typically smooth and may have a groove, the inner surface may be smooth or finely wrinkled across the width. Internally the arms consist of 1 – 4 thick walled tubes.

**Egg:** dingy white, up to 30 mm diameter, with white rhizomorphs at the base. The egg remnants are seen as a whitish volva at the base, however, the receptacle often detaches from this and may be carried by the wind for some distance from its place of origin.

**Stipe:** absent.

**Flesh:** brittle and spongy.

**Gleba (Spore mass):** olive-brown or sage-green, thick and slimy, carried on the entire inner surface of the arms.

**Smell:** foetid, of rotting meat or faeces, and “faint, smelling of cheese”.

**Spores:** elongate/cylindric;  $3.5 - 6 \times 1.5 - 3.1 \mu\text{m}$ ; smooth, hyaline or very pale brown.

**Substrate:** forest litter, compost or woodchip mulch.

**Habitat:** Appears on forest litter, compost, woodchip mulch or even house lawns, where it may be solitary or occur in small groups. Fruits year-round in tropical and subtropical areas.

**Notes:** this species has often been confused with *Ileodictyon cibarium*. It is of similar size, shape and colour, but it differs by having smooth arms, which are appreciably thickened near their junction with one another, and which are quite flattened in cross-section.