Lysurus cruciatus

***Lysurus cruciatus* © Wikipedia**

Egg: ovoid, diameter to 50 mm, with white rhizomorphs at the base; may have vertical grooves in the surface which correspond to the developing arms of the fruiting body inside; the egg remnants are seen as a white-coloured volva at the base of the mature fruiting body's stem.

Fruiting body: cylindrical; consisting of a stipe with 4 - 7 fluted relatively thick, short, vertical arms; up to 150 × 25 mm; may be amber brown, cinnamon brown, reddish, fleshy pink, orange or white; a smooth furrow or groove runs down the entire length of the outer surface of each arm, a diaphragm is attached to the lower portion of the arms; the arms are joined together at the tips at first, but upon maturity they spread apart and curve slightly outwards; the inner face of the arms is wrinkled horizontally across the surface and covered with the gleba; the arms are hollow and composed of 1-5 regular, thick-walled tubes.

Stipe: cylindrical; 90 – 110 × 15 - 20 mm; white, yellowish, pinkish or a creamy buff at the top, turning to pale cream or white at the base; hollow with the cavity to 6 mm diameter and open at the bottom and top, or nearly closed over at the top by a thin, dome-shaped diaphragm; a horizontal furrow runs around the top of the stipe, just below the arms; the wall is fragile, consisting of two or three layers of interconnecting tubes or chambers.

Smell: weakly foetid.

Spore print: olivaceous brown.

Spores: cylindric, baciliform; 3.5 – 4 × 1 – 2.2 µm; smooth.

Habitat: grows alone or in groups on the ground; often in lawns, gardens, in agricultural fields, under trees, on humus, woody debris, straw and even herbivore dung.

Notes: *L. cruciatus* is identified by the fertile surface of its arms being wrinkled and running the entire inner length of the arm. Its arms are usually free at the top. *Lysurus gardneri* can be identified by the fertile surface of its arms being quite shaggy in appearance and covering only the upper portion of the arm, leaving the base bare. The arms are also usually joined together at the top.

There are only eight records for this fungus in Australia.