

## *Scleroderma polyrhizum*



*Scleroderma polyrhizum* © Pat Leonard

**Fruit body:** ovate; 60 – 80 mm diameter; peridium thick walled, smooth to slightly warty, yellowish brown, eventually splitting to form a star like body with 5 or more rays.

**Stipe:** appears to be more or less sessile and without a true stipe. It is however anchored by rhizomorphs, concolourous with the peridium.

**Gleba:** white at first turning purplish black to sepia as the spores mature, then dark brown as they are about to be released.

**Flesh:** the peridium wall is thick and is very tough, on cutting and exposure to air it turns a rusty red brown.

**Spore print:** dark brown.

**Spores:** subglobose; 6 – 8.5 × 6 – 8 µm, warty to echinulate.

**Basidia:** not seen.

**Habitat:** in soil, usually partially buried, in sandy locations and in sclerophyll forests under *Eucalyptus*.

**Notes:** this earthball used to be known as *S. australe*. The large size, thick peridium and the rusty colour change of the flesh are good field characters, but the spores need to be measured to separate if from *S. verrucosum* and *S. albidum* which both have larger spores. Note: Guzman synonymized *Scleroderma australe* with *Scleroderma polyrhizum*.

**Collections examined:** PL33313, Maroochy Bushland Botanic Garden, Pat Leonard, 7 Mar 2013.



*S. polyrhizum* ©  
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