

Scleroderma verrucosum



Scleroderma verrucosum © Pat Leonard

Fruit body: ovate; 30 – 40 mm; peridium thin walled; weakly verrucose (warty), yellowish brown; ochraceous; opening via an irregularly shaped hole at the apex which gradually becomes larger as if torn open.

Stipe: a very short stipe, merging in to a mass of rhizomorphs which are paler than the gleba.

Gleba: olivaceous in young specimens becoming a dark brown, umber.

Flesh: very thin, no colour change observed.

Spore print: dark olivaceous brown.

Spores: globose to subglobose; $9.5 - 12 \times 9.5 - 12 \mu\text{m}$, $Q = 1 - 1.15$; ornamented with quite thin pointed spines about $1 \mu\text{m}$ long which are often curled at the ends.

Basidia: not seen.

Habitat: partially buried in sandy soil in dry *Eucalyptus* forest including on sites that have been burnt.

Notes: this earthball appears to be less common than *S. polyrhizum*. The small to medium size, thin peridium and the ragged opening to release the spores are good field characters, but the spores need to be measured to separate it from *S. polyrhizum* which has smaller spores.

Collections examined: PL61313, Crows Nest National Park, John Dearnaley, 14 Mar 2013.

