

**Ramaria pyrispora** R.H.Petersen & Watling, *Notes Roy. Bot. Gard. Edinburgh* 46: 149 (1989)

A.M.Young, May 2014

*Preliminary Notes:* Only a single collection of this species exists and it has been taken out of Australia and lodged in Edinburgh (E). As far as this author knows, no colour images of the species exist. The macrocharacter description has been obtained from Petersen & Watling (1989) while the microcharacter description has been from examination of the holotype when on loan from Edinburgh but with reference to the information in the Petersen & Watling paper.

## Description

*Fruiting body* –13 × –6 cm, *apices* finely divided, cristate (see note at end of the description), clustered, minutely conical, concolorous with the branches or slightly paler; *major branches* several, flaring as they ascend and not cylindrical, pale cream colour, then straw coloured to pale ochraceous; *axils* rounded; *stipe* –2 × –1 cm, white, tapering to an acute base, strigose to thickly tomentose, with “significant substratum” attached; rhizomorphs present, white and sparse; aborted branches present. *Flesh* colour not recorded, solid, dry, not gelatinous or slippery. *Odour* or *taste* when fresh, not recorded; a smell of “fenugreek” after drying. No record of colour changes when bruised.

*Macrochemical reactions:* unknown.

*Basidiospores* 7.0–9.0 × 4.5–5.8 μm; mean 8.3 × 5.2 μm; Q: 1.4–1.7 (–1.9); mean Q: 1.59; very broadly lachrymiform to ellipsoid; finely to moderately rough in profile; ornamentation of randomly scattered, small warts or short ridges; *basidia* 60–65 × 7–8 μm, clamped; sterigmata 4, slender, straight, apical, –7 μm long; *branch tramal hyphae* 2–5 μm diam., clamped, hyaline; ampulliform septa 11–13 μm diam., with stalactitic ornamentation, thin-walled; *stipe tramal hyphae* 3–4 μm, clamped, hyaline, mostly thin-walled but some thick-walled, tightly interwoven with ampulliform septa similar to those in the branch trama; rhizomorphs similar to stipe hyphae.

*Habit:* on soil in burnt area. *Habitat:* dry sclerophyll forest.

*Known distribution:* Vic.

*Notes:* Because no other material of this taxon is known, the macrocharacters must come solely from the description made by Watling at Olinda in May, 1982. This has proven difficult because the colour description (as presented) of *R. pyrispora* is somewhat confusing, however a mature specimen should be more or less wholly “straw-coloured to pale ochraceous” with the apices either concolorous or slightly paler. Watling would have been well aware of the Colour Identification Chart published by the Royal Botanic Gardens at Edinburgh (1969) and there is a colour chip in that chart which seems to be directly applicable: “50 Straw”. This particular chip is a pale gold-tinted yellow, so *R. pyrispora* seems to be a pale golden-yellow species that begins to display brownish or “ochraceous” tints as the spores mature.

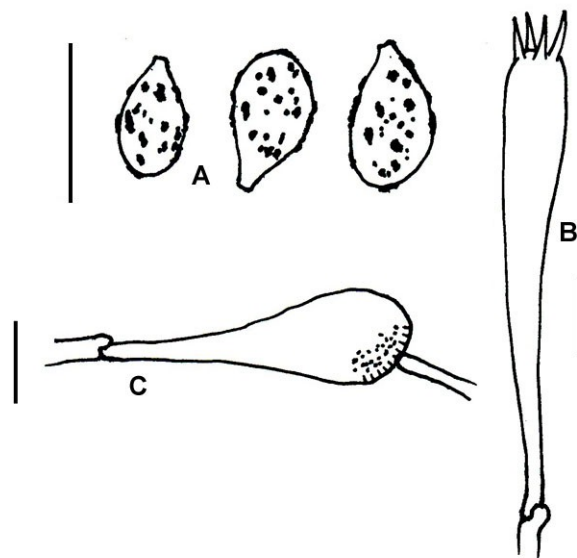
This is a species that could be difficult to distinguish, however it does not display the reddish “plum-coloured” stains of *R. xanthoderma* var. *australiana* are absent and *R. pyrispora* has clamp connections which are absent in *R. xanthoderma* var. *australiana*. The strigose stem of *R. pyrispora* is also a distinguishing character and the cristate apices are very distinctive. Nevertheless, this is a species where microdetails will prove to be very useful when coming to a species determination.

The locality and date of the single known collection has been provided above in the hopes that new collections may be made from an area where the species is known to occur.

Cristate: Literally “crested”, but this term has a special meaning in the coral fungi. It is where the apex of the branch does not have a single growth point, but instead separates into a (usually) considerable number of small, randomly arranged growth points which are all clustered together at the top of the branch where the normal apex would be. Usually these growth points are short, but they can be “longish”. While many species have acutely tipped cristate apices, some species are similar but bluntly rounded.

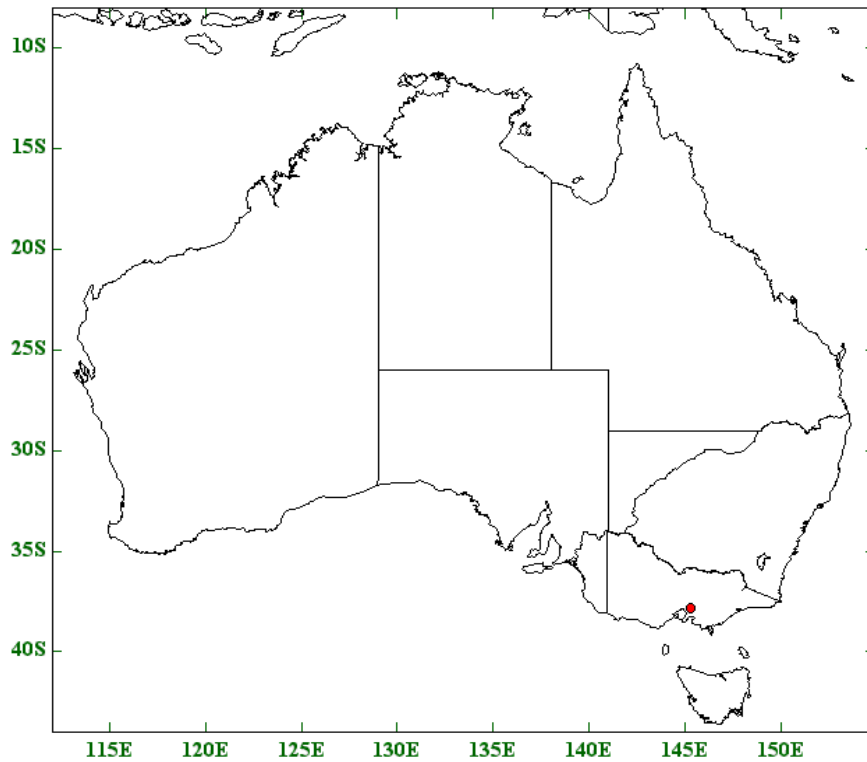


*Ramaria pyrispora*, type collection material held in E. While this is shrivelled, it does display the overall structure of the collection and the interesting characteristic that the branches are not "cylindrical" but "flaring", and actually become wider in diameter towards the top of the branch. The strongly rooting stipe is also clearly displayed. © A.M.Young.



*Ramaria pyrispora*, micro-details. A. basidiospores; B. basidium with clamp connection; C. ampulliform septum with clamp connection and stalactitic ornamentation. Each scale bar = 10 $\mu$ m. © A.M.Young.

### Ramaria pyrispora



*Ramaria pyrispora*. Known Australian distribution.

### Acknowledgements

This document was produced from material contained in the 2007 Interim Submission (The Taxonomy of genus *Ramaria* in Australia: coralloid macrofungi) forwarded to ABRS at the cessation of the *Ramaria* project. ABRS is both acknowledged and thanked for their kindness in permitting me to make this information available to the Australian mycological community.