

Calvatia craniiformis



Calvatia craniiformis © Pat Leonard

Cap: fruiting body consists of a gleba (head) and stalk, the fruit body resembles a human brain; the head is 60 - 140 mm diameter; lobed; smooth at first, but upper surface cracking in to pentagonal pattern and developing indentations; spore mass; white with a slight yellowish tint at first.

Stipe: more or less tapering; 90 × 70 mm; white, with glabrous surface above, but pale brown below with substrate attached and with a distinct rhizoid.

Flesh: a distinct diaphragm separates the yellowish white spongy gleba from the more fibrous spongy pale tan to brown flesh in the stipe.

Spores: white; globose, warty; 5 - 8 µm; without pedicels.

Habitat: growing in soil amongst grass on roadside verges, but also reported from pasture and parkland habitats.

Notes: the distinctive brain shape, large size and cellular appearance of the cap surface define this fungus.

Collections examined: PL 160317, Pat Leonard, Willson's Downfall, Tenterfield, New South Wales, 8 Mar 2017.