

Russula brunnea



Russula brunnea © Pat Leonard

Cap: applanate with a slightly depressed centre; 55 - 70 mm diameter; slightly viscid, pale buff (5A3) in outer half with brown (6D7) centre, margin entire; not peeling.

Stipe: cylindrical with a slight central waist or tapering downward; 30 - 40 × 8 - 15 mm, white at first but browning readily when handled.

Gills: adnate; cream, browning at edge and drying a distinctive grey; no lamellulae.

Flesh: white, browning, sometimes rapidly.

Taste: mild.

Smell: strong of cooked shellfish.

Chemical reactions: FeSO₄ on stipe: strongly green; guaiac on stipe base: n.r.

Spore print: cream.

Spores: globose to subglobose; 7.2 – 8.9 × 6.5 – 8.1 μm, average 7.7 ± 0.4 × 7.2 ± 0.4 μm, Q = 1.01 – 1.15, average 1.07 ± 0.04; with connectives forming a complete reticulum, apiculus hyaline, large oblique and ± triangular.

Cheilocystidia: numerous, 45 - 55 × 10 μm, contents strongly dextrinoid.

Dermatocystidia: absent.

Pileipellis: an ixotrichoderm.

Habitat: growing in soil, singly or in small groups with *Eucalyptus* in a mixed rainforest habitat.

Notes: this fungus is a member of the *Xerampelinae*, and recognisable by the combination of the pale brown cap, browning of the stipe on handling and the green reaction to ferrous sulphate. There are several records of this fungus in Victoria under the American name of *R. compacta*; the Queensland and NSW collections differ from the American species by having smaller more globose spores and no red colouration in the staining.

Collections examined: PL 88607, Linda Garrett Park, Montville, 30 Jun 2007; PL 15509, Wallerawang, NSW, Pat Leonard 24 May 2009; PL 9509, Wallerawang, NSW, Pat Leonard 24 May 2009.