

Amanita muscaria



Amanita muscaria © Patrick Leonard

Cap: convex becoming appanate with age; 60 - 180 mm diameter; glabrous; bright scarlet, red or orange covered with white pyramidal patches of veil which wash off during periods of rain.

Stipe: cylindrical with a bulbous base; 80 – 150 × 10 – 20 mm; glabrous; white; with a large, thin membranous ring; bulb often with granular velar remains in girdles.

Gills: free, crowded; white.

Spore print: white.

Spores: broadly ellipsoid; 9.5 – 11.5 × 5 – 7 μm; inamyloid, smooth.

Basidia: clavate; 34 – 50 × 10 – 15 μm; four-spored.

Pleurocystidia: not observed.

Pileipellis: an ixocutis, clamp connections occasional.

Substrate: in soil.

Habitat: in pine plantation under *Pinus radiata*.

Distribution: widespread in southern States, but in Queensland only known from *Pinus radiata* plantations in the Granite Belt and a park in Toowoomba, and under isolated *Pinus radiata* in Springbrook.

Notes: A very distinctive *Amanita* because of the brilliant scarlet cap and white patches of veil which make it unmistakable. It is known as the 'Fly agaric' because it was used by dairy farmers in olden times to trap flies in the milking parlour: gills from the fungus were placed in an open saucer of milk to attract flies, which died on contact with the milk. The fungus is hallucinogenic and dangerous and should not be eaten. In southern states the fungus has jumped over to native hosts and is spreading in native forests. That has not yet been reported in Queensland.

Collections examined: Old School Road, Springbrook, Warwick Nash, 23 Mar 2014; PL1000421, Passchendaele State Forest, Amiens, Pat Leonard, 23 Apr 2021.