

ANBG fungal course - 2006

Is this course for you? It is aimed at anyone who is curious about what fungi are and the roles they play. If your only interest is eating - this course is **DEFINITELY NOT** for you.

You don't need any previous fungal or botanical knowledge. I will carefully explain the few essential technical terms.

There will be one lecture per week for **9 weeks**, as well as some time looking at fungi in the ANBG. We'll arrange those dates during the course.

There will be two streams of lectures:

Thursdays and Sundays **The Sunday lecture will repeat the Thursday lecture.**

The two streams are there simply to cater for different groups of people: some cannot come on weekdays, others cannot manage weekends.

Starting dates and times: Thursday May 4, at 2:30pm and Sunday May 7 at 11am

Where: the theatre at the ANBG

Cost: a gold coin donation to the Friends of the ANBG.

Bookings: To be made at through the Visitor Centre.

Here's an outline of the sessions and topics.

Session 1 - The basics

What is a mushroom?

Hyphae: the thread-like building blocks.

The mycelium: the out-of-sight network of hyphae that produces mushrooms.

What are macrofungi and microfungi? The course will deal mostly with macrofungi.

Ascomycetes and basidiomycetes - two classes of macrofungi.

Session 2 - Spore release & dispersal

Review of the fundamentals from Session 1.

A look at how spores are released - the mechanisms vary from passive to explosive.

Session 3& 4 - Reproduction, lifestyles and habitats

Reproduction, survival strategies and life cycles.

Fungal lifestyles - an introduction.

Habitats and some biogeography - where and why do you find fungi?

Sessions 5 & 6: Some aspects of fungal ecology

Fungal lifestyles - in detail. The essential ecological roles of fungi.

How fungi interact with plants, animals and other fungi.

Session 7 - (i) Classification & identification; (ii) Australian fungi

How do we go about classifying and identifying fungi?

Finally - What is a fungus?.....The full, scary definition.

What's known about Australian fungi? Some useful books.

Session 8 - Some history, mostly 1500-1850

The development of our understanding of the basics of fungi.

Session 9 - Fungi and humans

A look at some of the economic, social and cultural impacts of fungi.