

***Amaurodon* sp.**

(akin to *Amaurodon sumatranus*)

Many fungi have markedly three-dimensional fruiting bodies. To give just three examples, think of caps on stems, puffballs or the tough, shelf-like outgrowths from trees. By contrast the fruiting bodies of corticioid fungi could be called two-dimensional since, from a distance, a corticioid fruiting body looks much like a coat of paint. The word corticioid is derived from the Latin *cortex*, meaning bark (of a tree) or rind. Corticioid fungi show themselves mostly on the underside of dead wood that is lying on the ground. Many are quite smooth but others have bumps, spines or are intricately ridged. However, the bumps, spines or ridges rarely extend more than a millimetre or two so you will sometimes need to use a magnifying glass or a hand lens to see them clearly. Texture varies from cobwebby to leathery.

Amaurodon is a corticioid genus. The fruiting body has a soft texture (somewhat like compressed fairy floss) and, depending on species, the surface may be smooth, pored or with short 'teeth'. When fresh it is bluish but it dries to yellowish green and I once watched as a specimen changed colour.

I have twice collected a species of this genus on Norfolk Island and below I show part of one collection. Both collections are stored at the Australian National Herbarium in Canberra.



Collection details: H.Lepp 1054, 17 April 1994, Norfolk Island National Park, West Palm Glen Track.
On the lower side of a rotting log.

The photo shows dried material. In my collection notes I recorded the fresh specimens as showing various shades of greyish blue to dark blue (close to Prussian blue). You can see that at the upper margin the fruitbody is fairly featureless and becomes a little wispy. Closer to the ruler you see some areas with well-developed teeth. Below I give a closer view to better show the numerous, closely-packed teeth and you can see that some have broken and are a little askew. The fruitbody is not markedly fragile, but it doesn't take much pressure to break a bit.



The next time I found this fungus there was much less material and I show the second collection in full in the following photograph, again of dried, herbarium material.



Collection details: H.Lepp 1674, 15 May 1997, *Eucalyptus* plantation, off Anson Bay Road. On the underside of long-fallen *Eucalyptus* bark.

In this collection the teeth are still very rudimentary as you see in the following closer view.



Two toothed species of *Amaurodon* have been reported from tropical areas. *Amaurodon hydroides* (with cylindrical teeth) was described in 1997, based on material collected in Venezuela. Since then the species has been found in Brazil, Costa Rica and Ethiopia. During a brief visit to Canberra the Swedish mycologist Sten Svantesson looked at the Norfolk Island collections and pointed out a similarity to *Amaurodon sumatranus*, first found in Indonesia and described in 2007, in which the teeth are described as somewhat flattened. However, for now the two Norfolk Island collections remain named just to the genus.

Reference

O. Miettinen & U. Kõljalg, 2007, *Amaurodon sumatranus* (Thelephorales, Basidiomycota), a new species from Indonesia, *Mycotaxon*, **100**, 51–59.

The paper is freely available on the Biodiversity Heritage Library:
<https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/page/64586811#page/455/mode/1up>
and there are two black-and-white photographs on page 55.

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