

ABRS REVIEW

The AMS made a detailed submission to the ABRS Review Committee as did numerous other Societies. The Review Committee has completed its report and copies are available gratis from Ms Liz Visser, ABRS, GPO Box 636, Canberra 2601.

In so far as the document goes we would support the recommendations. At a meeting with Senator Robert Hill on 13 May in Canberra that was the view expressed by Dr Andy Austrin (ASSB), Dr Tim Entwistle (ASBS) and Mr Jack Simpson (AMS). That meeting took place the afternoon after the Federal budget was brought down. In the Budget, funding for ABRS for 1998/99 was reduced by \$1.3m compared with the 1997/98 figure. Following our representations, Senator Hill agreed to guarantee the 1997/98 level of funding for the present year. Since that meeting, Senator Hill has appointed a new Chairman to the ABRS Advisory Board, Professor Hugh Possingham from Adelaide University. This is a significant development as Professor Possingham is a taxonomic user rather than provider.

From a purely mycological standpoint the review document is very disappointing. The concerns of AMS and the Australian Society of Microbiologists were ignored and are not addressed in the Review Document.

J. A. Simpson

SYSTEMATIC STUDIES IN *DERMOCYBE* (AGARICALES: CORTINARIACEAE)

At a time when biological diversity is being lost at an unprecedented rate, the need for sound, scientific research on the diversity of and relationships between different organisms has arguably never been so important.

I am fortunate to now find myself in a position to make a positive contribution to our knowledge on the diversity of Australian agarics. Having completed an Honours year in systematics under the joint supervision of Assoc. Prof. N. Prakash and Dr Jeremy Bruhl at the University of New England, I was offered, and accepted, the Australian Biological Resources Study-Postgraduate Scholarship-1998. Commencing in June 1998, the PhD will be undertaken through the University of Melbourne under the joint supervision of Prof. Pauline Ladiges and Dr Tom May.

The project will involve a systematic study of *Dermocybe* (Agaricales: Cortinariaceae). Multivariate analysis, based on traditional morphological characters as well as other characters of potential taxonomic value, will be used to investigate the delimitation of Australian taxa. Results will be compiled in a monograph on the genus.

A comprehensive monograph requires examination of all available collections from across Australia in order to adequately record the range of variation within and between taxa. To achieve this I will be approaching directors of State and Regional herbaria to access material, but would also be grateful to hear from mycologists willing to allow me access to personal herbaria or to send me relevant collections. It is my intention to develop an information package to distribute to those interested in participating, and some form of assistance and reciprocation on my part would obviously be in order.

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