

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria launches Planet Fungi



With National Fungi Day around the corner, Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria is hosting the launch of *Planet Fungi: A Photographer's Foray* on Thursday 23 October at Melbourne Gardens. The event will be hosted by co-author and leading Australian fungi expert Dr Tom May, who will guide guests through the extraordinary world of fungi and their vital role in nature.

Planet Fungi features breathtaking photography by internationally acclaimed team Stephen Axford and Catherine Marciniak, capturing glowing mushrooms, alien-like forms, and newly discovered species from remote forests across Australasia, Asia and South America. The book highlights the essential contribution of fungi to ecosystem resilience, especially in the face of climate change, and reveals their deep interconnections with plants, animals and people.

"Fungi are some of the most extraordinary yet overlooked organisms on Earth" said Dr Tom May. "This book and event celebrate their beauty, diversity and importance for our shared future."

Guests at the launch will enjoy an evening of drinks and canapés, hear directly from Dr May, and have their fungi questions answered. Standard tickets include entry, drinks and canapés, while premium packages also include a tote bag, bookmark, and a signed copy of *Planet Fungi*. Books will also be available for purchase on the night and proceeds from this event support the critical role of Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria in understanding and safeguarding fungi and plants.

Planet Fungi: A Photographer's Foray, by Catherine Marciniak, Stephen Axford and Dr Tom May, is published by CSIRO Publishing and available from Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria gift shops and online via CSIRO. Photos courtesy of the authors.

Event details

Date: Thursday 23 October 2025

Location: Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne

Tickets: Available via <https://www.rbg.vic.gov.au/planetfungi>

Author Background

- **Catherine Marciniak** is an award-winning documentary filmmaker, photographer and journalist. She co-wrote the IMAX documentary *Fungi: Web of Life*, directed *Follow the Rain*, and has been recognised in broadcast and journalistic spheres including as a two-time Walkley Awards finalist.
- **Stephen Axford** is internationally known for fungi photography; his work has appeared in major documentaries and publications. He is deeply involved in video production under the *Planet Fungi* banner and works to bring visual science to broad audiences.
- **Dr Tom May** has been a mycologist at Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria for three decades. He has a distinguished research career and a passion for communicating and educating about fungi. Former President of Fungimap, he co-authored *FunKey* and *Wild Mushrooming: A Guide for Foragers*. Tom is a Fellow of the International Mycological Association and his contributions, spanning science and citizen science, have been recognised by award of the Nancy T. Burbidge Medal and the Australian Natural History Medallion.

Photos: <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/7w3arb8l8p15ko3rheaug/APZ-Hp5yJRmPVNjGU9x6GjQ?rlkey=3zf4jvka7v5z0l7m23e3y2xoc&st=7pyzu7ky&dl=0>

Media Contact

Maraika van Wessem

Director Marketing, Communications and Stakeholder Relations

Phone: 0497200989

Email: Maraika.vanwessem@rbg.vic.gov.au

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