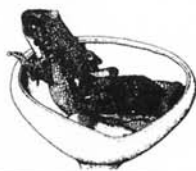


FUNGI IN SCHOOLS

for
CHILDREN
TEACHERS
PARENTS

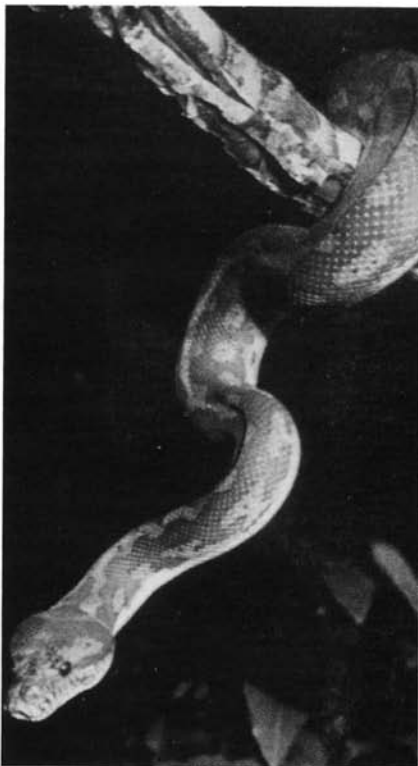
and other
interested parties



FORAY 3

The third foray is hot and we are in Queensland in the northeast corner of Australia. The best time for collecting is late summer — autumn, after the summer rains, but the rain at other times can produce 'flushes' of mushrooms. The maximum temperature even in winter is often over 20°C, and in midsummer will be around 30° or higher. The main concern is to keep everything as cool as possible, yourself, your food and your fungi. You will be wearing a hat, loose cotton clothing and strong shoes or boots (you'll see why later). The food, drink and fungi travel in a portable lightweight ice box. Specimens are often placed in plastic bags to prevent drying out, and arrive home in far better condition if stored in these boxes.

There are a few precautions to take before setting off into the bush or forest. The first is a good insect repellent as there may be mosquitoes or flies to annoy you. The strong shoes or boots help guard against leeches which often occur in rainforests. They can be very unpleasant if they get inside socks and help themselves to some of your blood. The third warning is to keep a lookout for snakes which can be dangerous and are best avoided. A carpet python about four metres long (like the one in the picture) glided between John and me when we were walking in single file along a path in a national park at Mt Tamborine, near Brisbane.



With these few precautions in mind, if you are lucky enough to visit Australia you will enjoy walking in a beautiful country surrounded by plants and fungi that look strange and unfamiliar to European eyes.

Sheila M Francis
John Alcorn