

Hi Ulrich,

Here are some photos showing ants attacking the fungus, changes in time, a transect that we made and a fungus that we placed in an ant-free container so that it might grow without interference.



Nov. 15 6:45PM The above figure shows ants attacking an older body (recessed) and a newer whiter body at the right. Notice, however, that the density of ants does not appear to be particularly greater on the fungal bodies than elsewhere in the nest.

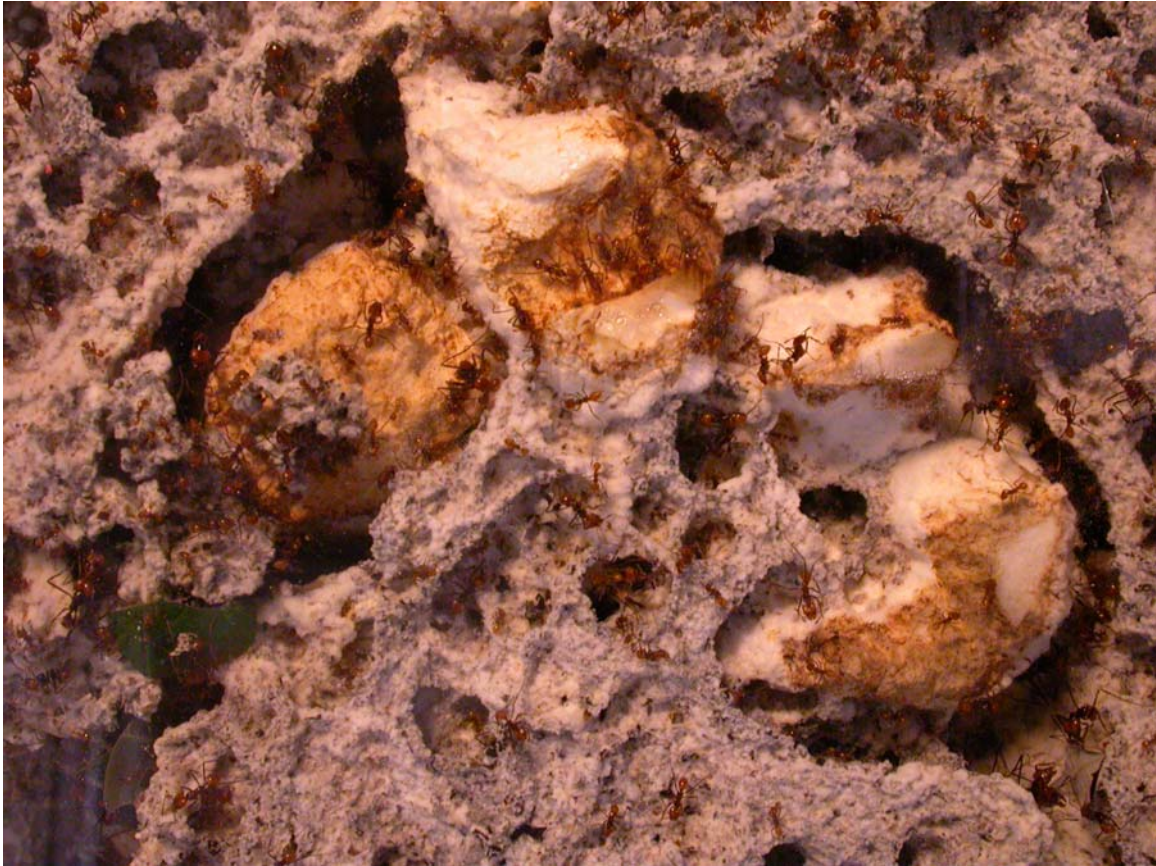


Nov 15 8:40 PM This is a close up of a forager-sized ant cutting a piece off of the recessed body in the above photo. The ants appear to struggle, taking a minute or more to cut out a piece. They then carry off the piece, but I haven't been able to follow where they go.





Nov. 15 10:14 PM This forager-sized ant is actually holding the piece it just cut off. I have also seen generalist-sized ants cutting off pieces with their mandibles.



Nov 17 11:07 PM The fungal bodies shown in the first image are at the upper left. Notice how the ants have begun to cover the recessed fungal body with new nest material. Notice also that the newer fungal body that was white in the first image now has an other region where ants are attacking it. These colored regions all have a texture like the regions in which I have observed ants cutting off chunks. I think that the colored regions are produced by the ant attack. This conclusion is supported by the lack of such regions in the isolated fungus below.





Nov. 17 11:05 A picture of the ants attacking the fungal body that is immediately to the right of the recessed body (this was white in the first image).



Nov 29 10:38 PM Here is what the region looked like 2 weeks after the first image. Nest material has covered more of the recessed fungal body (located at center left). New white bodies are showing up.





Nov 16 7:52 PM Here is another nest of our single colony. A fungal body is located at "5". We did a transect of 8 samples, that we have stored in alcohol, at each of the numbered locations.



Nov 16 7:52 PM We have not seen any gills develop (for spore prints). So we isolated this fungal body and removed most of the ants so that they wouldn't attack it.





Nov 29 11:32 PM Here is the fungus 13 days later. It grew some, and parts became grayish (spores??). Should we wait longer or preserve it now? Set it on black and white paper to look for spores?

Robert and Kristen