Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Division of Forestry

QUESTION MARK WOODS

Location of the World's Third-Largest Organism

A report on *Armillaria Quaestio*.

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2019

Figure 1. Symptomatic glow of *Armillaria Quaestio*.

Armillaria Quaestio in the Question Mark Woods

A large circular individual *Armillaria Quaestio* resides in the Ohio River Valley, north and west of the Ohio River (Fig 2.) located between Willey Creek and the Question Mark Falls. It is currently the third-largest individual fungus in the world, and the only representative of its species as identified on the map (Fig. 3).

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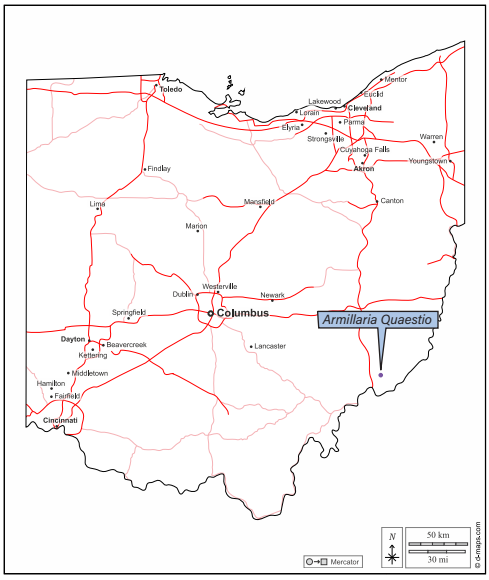

Figure 2. Vicinity Map, Question Mark Ohio.

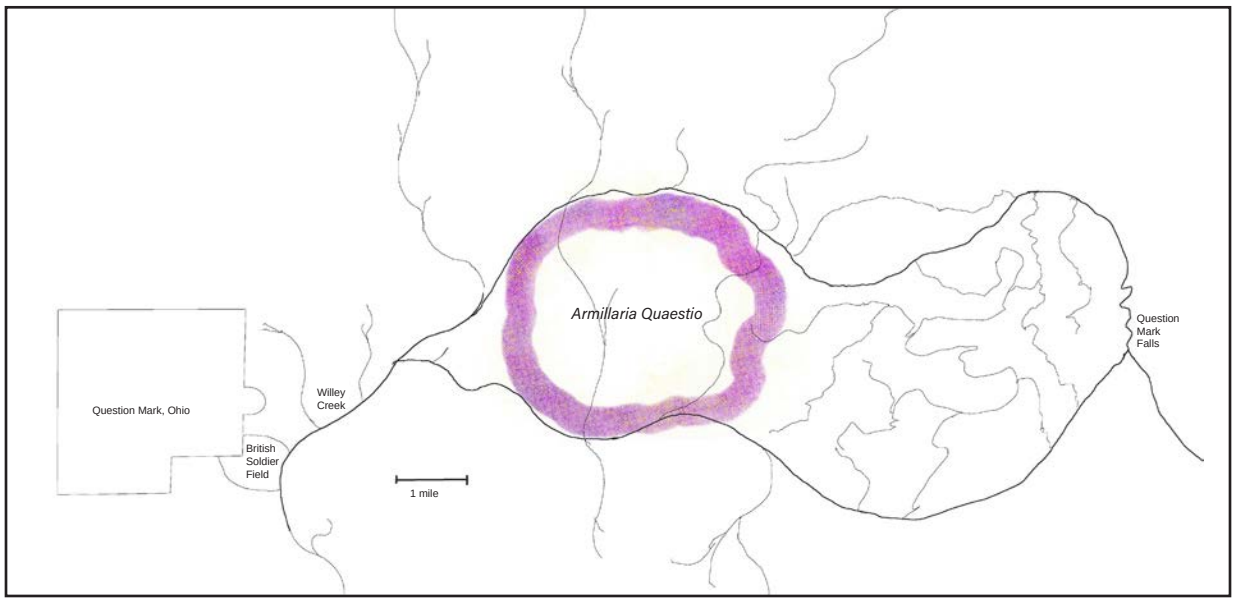

Figure 3. Vicinity map of *Armillaria Quaestio* in Question Mark Woods.

Armillaria Quaestio, commonly known as the Question Mark fungus, is parasitic in nature, and colonizes, kills, and destroys the root systems of a variety of tree hosts. The chemical consequence is the off-gassing of dead, woody material which results in a vaporous, purplish glow.

The individual *Armillaria Quaestio* has been described as an estimated 16,368 feet in width, with a possible total acreage of over 1,984 but research has yet to account for its total size or borders.

This individual *Armillaria Quaestio* is not only incredibly large it is also incredibly old. Based on its viewable-size, it is estimated to be between 4000 and 9000 years old, taking into account its current growth rate.

In addition, this individual *Armillaria Quaestio* also appears to give off a rare bioluminescence during its spore cycle, resulting in an eye-catching display of circular purple "flares" lifting from the ground.

This spore cycle is one of the few times the prescence of Armillaria Quaestio is visible.

Figure 4. An Armillaria Quaestio infection in an old-growth oak.

Scientists are uncertain how and why this particular individual fungus has become as large and as old as it appears to be. Researchers speculate it has to do with the location of the nearby Ohio River as well as the affect on local magnetic lay lines. The individual *Armillaria Quaestio* appears to be growing an increased rate over the last five years of research. It is estimated that by the year 2030, the organism may begin to extend its invisible presence into the populated regions of the local area. No adverse interactions have, of yet, been identified, although researchers have expressed concern about how it engages with other fungi, plant life, and animals native to the region as it continues to develop.

There is some evidence *Armillaria Quaestio* may feed on small woodland animals, including insects, mice, and, birds, which appear to be drawn to its otherworldly purple glow when it is active at night. But evidence of this feeding pattern is circumstantial at best and has not been conclusive at this time.

Figure 5. A squirrel transfixed by the glow of *Armillaria Quaestio.*