



Figure 6.—*Aphaenogaster rudis* (Emery), lateral view of worker.

### Taxonomic Characters

*Subfamily and generic characters:* Same as for *lamellidens*. *Specific characters:* Workers 4.5–5 mm. long. Frontal lobe not bearing a flange which projects posteriorly in the form of a tooth as figured for *lamellidens*. Head varying in sculpture from longitudinally rugulose-reticulate (especially anterior portion) to mainly punctate. Pronotum varying from punctuate to transversely rugulose, more commonly punctate. Anterior border of mesonotum not in the form of a transverse welt or gibbosity that is cleft or impressed in the center, as described and figured for *fulva*. Epinotal spines short, seldom as long as basal half of epinotum. Erect hairs present on most of dorsal surface of body in contrast to *tennesseensis*. Body color light brown to brown, with antennae and legs usually lighter.

### Biology and Economic Importance

A very common and highly adaptable species. The ants may nest in exposed soil or under stones, logs, in decaying wood, leaf litter, hollow stems of plants, or under the bark at the base of trees. Nests occur in open fields and open and dense woods up to altitudes of at least 5,000 feet. The species is especially a woodland-nesting form. Colonies are seldom large, usually ranging from less than a hundred to several thousand individuals, one of the largest recorded having approximately 3,500 individuals. Population studies by Headley and Talbot showed that although most colonies contained only a single wingless female, a number had 2, 3, 4, or as many as 15 females. Fusion of colonies, in some instances, may account for the large number of females. The immature stages of this species pass the winter as eggs and larvae. Males and winged females reach maturity in late July, apparently from overwintering larvae. Headley found that nests excavated in the ground were composed of one to four galleries, ranging in length from 1 to 34 inches deep, from which 2 to 17 chambers radiated. This species is a host of the temporary ant parasite *A.*