



Figure 13.—*Crematogaster cerasi* (Fitch), lateral view of worker.

### *Crematogaster cerasi* (Fitch)

A native species, which ranges from southern Canada through the eastern Rocky Mountains to New Mexico and east through the Black Hills to the Ozarks and Georgia. It is occasionally called the cherry ant. This species has been frequently confused with other species of *Crematogaster*, especially *lineolata*.

#### Taxonomic Characters

*Subfamily and generic characters*: Same as for *ashmeadi*. *Specific characters*: Workers 2.6–4 mm. long. Scape when fully extended usually noticeably surpassing posterior border of head. Promesonotum subopaque, bearing fine longitudinal striae or rugulae, the sculpture from some aspects or in certain lights, however, appearing to be finely punctulate. Mesonotum with a median carina (best seen in profile). Mesepinotal impression usually strongly defined. Epinotal spines divergent, long and acute, straight or occasionally curved. Sides of thorax sculptured, subopaque. Erect hairs on thorax normally confined to a small cluster on each pronotal shoulder. Body pubescence closely appressed. Head and thorax varying from reddish brown to dark brown or almost black.

#### Biology and Economic Importance

*C. cerasi* nests in small-to-large colonies in the ground beneath objects, and in rotting stumps and logs, branches, and empty nuts on the surface of the soil. Nests occur in diverse habitats such as open fields, pastures, marshes, and woods. Van Pelt reports the species as occurring in the Blue Ridge Mountains in occasional colonies at altitudes from 5,100 to 5,500 feet, and rarely from 5,600 to 6,000 feet. Workers in large colonies are aggressive and emit a repulsive odor. They tend honeydew-excreting insects, and feed on both live and dead insects. Winged forms commonly emerge from their nests from late June to mid November. *C. cerasi* appears to be the most common house-infesting form of *Crematogaster*, at least in Virginia and Maryland. The