



Figure 16.—*Monomorium minimum* (Buckley), little black ant, lateral view of worker.

some weak sculpturing on cheeks, anterior border of head, and meso-metapleuron. Body dark brown to black, typically black. Body pubescence sparse, closely appressed, most evident on dorsum of gaster.

### Biology and Economic Importance

*M. minimum* is one of the most common and best known of our house-infesting ants, but no detailed biological work has been done on the species. Under natural conditions the ants are highly adaptive in their nesting and feeding habits. They may nest in exposed soil or under cover of objects and in rotting or faulty wood. Van Pelt has found colonies of this ant rare in the Blue Ridge Mountains at altitudes of 4,100 to 5,000 feet. Colonies are generally moderate to large in size, and contain numerous fertile females. Males and winged females have been recorded from June to August. Workers are predacious and carnivorous on other insects, tend plant lice or other honeydew-excreting insects, visit floral and extrafloral nectaries of plants, and may even feed on the pollen in flowers of certain plants. The ants may invade houses from outdoors, or nest in the woodwork or masonry of the building. Because they are small, the ants are not capable of doing any appreciable damage to building materials. Workers feed on a wide variety of household foods such as sweets, meats, bread, grease, oils, cornmeal, fruits, and fruit juices. I have received reports of recently hatched bluebirds and kingfishers being killed by these ants.

*References:* Marlatt, 1898, p. 3, fig.; Dennis, 1938, pp. 271-272, 274, 279-280; Metcalf and Flint, 1939, p. 770; Cole, 1940, pp. 14, 29, 40; Gregg, 1944, pp. 454, 456, 466; Smith, 1950, p. 281; Hess, 1958, pp. 26-27, 55-60, 62, 63; Van Pelt, 1963, p. 212.

### *Monomorium pharaonis* (Linnaeus)

Pharaoh ant. An introduced species which is thought to be native to the African Region. The ant has been widely distributed to all parts of the world by commerce. It is one of the most common and best known of all house-infesting ants. The Pharaoh ant probably occurs in every town or city of commercial importance in the United States. Although not widely or uniformly distributed in such localities, it is