

blackish, and thorax, petiole, postpetiole, and appendages noticeably lighter. The worker of *floricola* is easily distinguished from the other species of *Monomorium* by its unusually slender and very strikingly bicolored body.

Biology and Economic Importance

Under normal conditions *floricola* appears to be largely, if not exclusively, an arboreal species, nesting in twigs and branches or under the bark of trees and other plants. It may nest in dead as well as live wood. Colonies are of diverse size, but are frequently large. As with *destructor*, there are numerous fertile females, but they differ from females of most species in not ever having borne wings. Workers visit the floral and extrafloral nectaries of plants, tend honeydew-excreting insects, and feed on insects, many of which they doubtlessly kill. In Puerto Rico this is one of the most important ants associated with the pineapple mealybug *Pseudococcus brevipes* (Ckll.). The ants commonly infest houses and feed on household foods, but little is known about their food preferences except that on occasions they have eaten sugar and fed on fountain syrup in drug stores. I do not know whether the ants invade houses from outdoors or nest in the house, but they are probably capable of both. However, their small size prevents them from doing any appreciable damage to woodwork or masonry.

References: Wheeler, 1905a, pp. 87-88; Marlatt, 1916, p. 3; Wheeler, 1924, p. 108; Smith, 1936, pp. 833-834; Plank and Smith, 1940, pp. 59-60, 63.

Monomorium destructor (Jerdon)

This is an introduced species, the original home of which is probably the Oriental Region. The species is established in Tennessee and especially in a number of localities in Florida.

Taxonomic Characters

Subfamily and generic characters: Same as for *minimum* with the following exceptions: Workers variable in size, somewhat dimorphic.

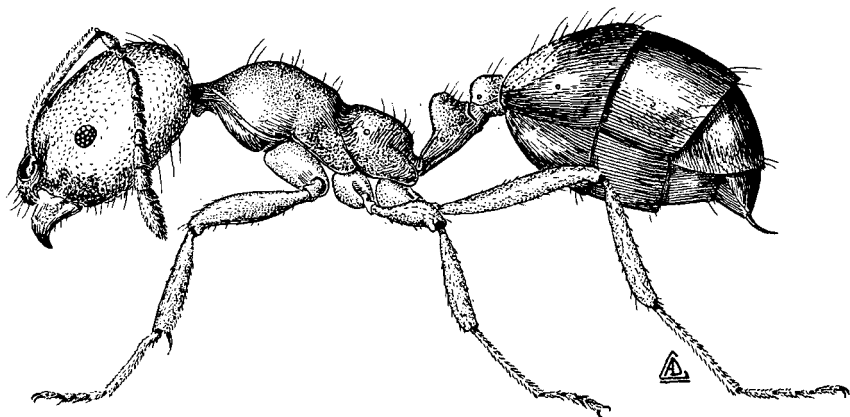


Figure 19.—*Monomorium destructor* (Jerdon), lateral view of worker.