

while they did attack the skin of the fingers little harm was done since the skin was not broken. The larger sizes could bite perceptibly.

ATTA

The Venezuelan term for *Atta* is "bachaco" and the ants are among the best known of insects. It is possible that the leaf-cutting activities of *Atta cephalotes* in the Orinoco Delta may be partly responsible for the nomadic habits of the Indian tribes (e.g. the warrau). The Indians laboriously clear a small area in the rain forest and plant it to maize and cassava. Sooner or later the *Atta* find the cassava and proceed to strip the leaves so that the plants may be stunted if not killed. The Indians may leave the area for a new part of the forest rather than attempt to combat the pest. They have other reasons for leaving, of course, including plagues of mosquitoes. During the dry season in the Delta from October to April mosquitoes are so numerous that the people may at least locally move elsewhere to escape them.

The same three species of *Atta* that occur in British Guiana are to be found in Venezuela, *laevigata*, *sexdens* and *cephalotes* (see Weber, 1946). In British Guiana *laevigata* is found in the savannah areas of the interior while *cephalotes* occupies the northwestern portions and *sexdens* the eastern part of the colony. In the lower Orinoco basin *cephalotes* appears to be the species of the forested Delta while *sexdens* occurs at Ciudad Bolivar in more mesophytic, grass-woodland type of country. Here also *laevigata* appears to be a savannah or llanos species and was taken a few kilometers north of Ciudad Bolivar. *Sexdens* and *cephalotes* are both found at the junction of the Cuyuni and Mazaruni rivers in British Guiana and similarly along the Orinoco a meeting place of the two species will be discovered.

Atta laevigata F. Smith

Atta laevigata, Weber, Rev. Ent., 17: 164 - 165.

The above reference cites the present llanos record and one from the Kukenan River in the Mt. Roraima district.