

A CRUSTACEAN-EATING ANT (LEPTOGENYS ELONGATA BUCKLEY).

WILLIAM MORTON WHEELER.

There are few more profitable fields for the comparative study of instinct than the larger genera of the social Hymenoptera. This is especially true of the larger genera of ants, such as *Camponotus*, *Formica*, *Myrmecocystus*, *Leptothorax*, *Pheidole*, *Atta* and *Crematogaster*. To these genera, each of which embraces species presenting a considerable range of ethological peculiarities while differing but little in morphological characters, we must also add *Leptogenys*, with its subgenus *Lobopelta*, a rather large tropicopolitan congeries of species belonging to the primitive Ponerine subfamily.<sup>1</sup>

Only a single member of this genus, *Leptogenys (Lobopelta) elongata* Buckley, is known to occur north of the Rio Grande River. It is not uncommon in the semiarid regions of Central Texas (Travis and Comal counties) and has been taken even as far north as Colorado and the District of Columbia. Frequent observations during the past three years have enabled me to confirm and extend my former account of the habits of this very interesting ant.<sup>2</sup>

I am now able to state positively that the peculiar apterous females, indistinguishable from the workers except for the shorter and more rounded petiolar node and the more voluminous gaster, are the only females produced in the colonies of *L. elongata*. Each colony contains only a single one of these females and no other is tolerated in the nest. Even the young virgin females leave the formicary very soon after hatching and acquiring their

<sup>1</sup> *Lobopelta* differs from *Leptogenys sensu stricto* in having broader mandibles which, when closed, leave little or no space between their inner borders and the anterior margin of the clypeus.

<sup>2</sup> "A Study of Some Texan Ponerinae," BIOL. BULL., Vol. II., No. 1, Oct., 1900.