

4. Underside of body yellowish, frontal furrow indistinct . . . . . *flavus*  
Colour otherwise, frontal furrow more or less distinct . . . . . 5
5. Scape and tibiae with standing hairs . . . . . *niger*  
Scape and tibiae hairless . . . . . 6
6. Frontal area clearly defined, wings smoky . . . . . *brunneus*  
Frontal area indistinct, wings clear . . . . . *alienus*

### Notes on the Species

*L. niger* is widely distributed from Sutherlandshire southward. In the Scottish Highlands the species is restricted to river valleys and the sides of lochs such as Oykell, Sutherland, Garve Ross and Loch Ness. It becomes common on the coasts of S. Scotland and N. Ireland and is abundant and generally distributed throughout England, Wales and S. Ireland. This is one of the first species to colonize man-disturbed areas such as felled woodland and quarries. It is frequently populous in gardens, invading glasshouses, kitchens and larders during the summer months. It is an aggressive and active species nesting in the soil, under stones and in tree stumps.

*L. alienus* occurs sporadically as far north as SW. Scotland but is characteristic of dry uplands and heaths in S. Britain. Examples of habitats where the species is locally dominant are parts of the Malverns and Cotswolds, many areas of dry sandy heath in S. England and the coasts of S. England and S. Wales. It is recorded from a few coastal areas in Ireland and does not appear to occur inland in England further north than Northamptonshire and Warwickshire. It is less aggressive and conspicuous than *niger* and tolerates drier situations, nesting in the soil, in turfy banks but not in tree stumps.

*L. brunneus* has been recorded from Bedfordshire (Chambers, 1955), Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire (Pontin, personal communication). It is not uncommon in Windsor Great Park and in parts of Worcestershire and Gloucestershire (Collingwood, 1954). It is a tree inhabiting species nesting in mature oak trees in this country but also occasionally in trees of other species and in coppices. The species appears to be restricted to the S. Midlands and the Thames valley but will probably be found to have a wider range over S. England. Although colonies are populous, it is a fugitive ant and may easily escape detection. Marriage flights occur in June at least a month or more earlier than the other species of this sub-genus.

*L. flavus* occurs as far north as Berriedale in Caithness and is abundant in the Loch Ness area and on the coasts of Banffshire and Aberdeenshire, but does not become widespread inland until the S. Highland belt in S. Perthshire. Further south it is extremely common and is probably the most abundant ant in Britain. The species is characteristic of old pastures and grassy hillsides where it builds the well-known earth mounds, but is also not infrequent in woodlands nesting in tree stumps and along rides. Macrergates and pterergates are not uncommon with this ant, which is the most polymorphic of the whole genus. Large dark coloured workers and smaller paler workers are usually present together in well established colonies.