

Map 14. Distribution of *Leptothorax curvispinosus*.

and curved inward, although Wesson and Wesson (1940) mention that the propodeal spines may be as short as the distance between their bases. Note that the specimens reported by Wesson and Wesson (1940) differ in other aspects and may be a valid species. The propodeal spines are often narrow

and about the same diameter throughout (Fig. 104). The head is strongly punctured with delicate, longitudinal rugae. The long spines could result in it being confused with *L. longispinosus*. It can be easily separated from this black species by the nearly smooth and shining upper surface of the head of *L. longispinosus*.

The workers of some series (MS, Carroll Co., TN, Lincoln Co., in CWEM) have thickened propodeal spines (Fig. 41) and could be considered a separate species, but comparison of workers, females and males reveal no other significant differences and thus the thickness of the propodeal spines is probably of no significance.

**Biology:** The habits of this species are well known (Wheeler, 1916, 1917; Smith, 1924; Dennis, 1938; Cole, 1940; Wesson and Wesson, 1940; Headley, 1943; Buren, 1944; Gregg, 1944; Talbot, 1934, 1957, 1965; DuBois, 1985). Nests are found in plant cavities including hollow stems, under bark of living trees, in reeds, twigs, logs, acorns, nut shells, insect galls, puffballs, pine cones (Williams, 1989) and under rocks or in soil in forested areas (Wheeler, 1903a, 1905; Cole, 1940; DuBois, 1985). It is found at lower elevations in the southern Blue Ridge of Virginia (Van Pelt, 1963). Nest populations are about 80-100 workers with several queens (Wilson, 1974a), up to 113 workers in acorn nests (Talbot, 1957); average populations in Ohio were 235 (all castes), with the largest population of workers being 369 (total members 727), and nest densities of 0.6 nests per square meter (Headley, 1943). Alates are present from June-Aug. (Kannowski, 1959; Talbot, 1957; DuBois, 1985); flights occur in early July (Wesson and Wesson,