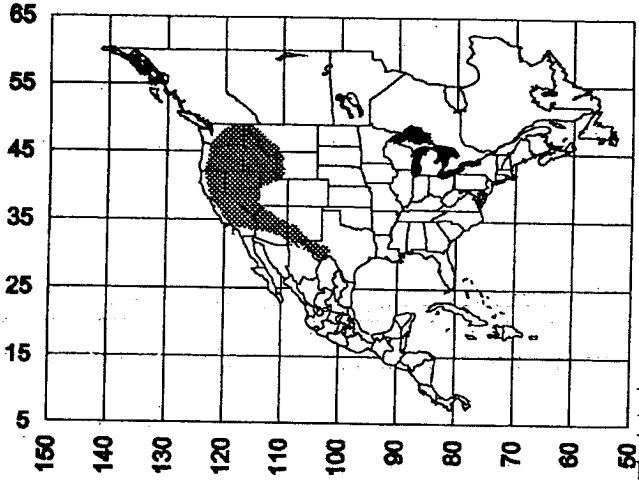

Map 32. Distribution of *Leptothorax nitens*.

propodeal spines are nearly always relatively small, which would distinguish it from other species with smooth sculpture, such as *L. schmittii*. This species appears to be closely related to several others, including *L. mariposa*, *L. melinus* and *L. adustus*. Based on the holotype, it can be separated from these other species by the nearly smooth and polished dorsum of the mesosoma, as all of the other species have mesosomae that are densely sculptured. I am not convinced that we really know the true identity of *L. nitens* and it is possible that some of the records from the literature are based on misidentifications.

Biology: This species nests under stones (Wheeler, 1906; Cole, 1942; Moody and Francke, 1982; Wheeler and Wheeler, 1986), or logs (Wheeler and Wheeler, 1973a). One nest was found in a termite nest (Wheeler, 1903a). Nests contain 69-276 workers (Cole, 1958a). Nests are monogynous (Frumhoff and Ward, 1992). This species occurs in ponderosa pine and, pinyon-juniper forests (Gregg, 1944; Wheeler and Wheeler, 1986; Mackay et al., 1987). Cole (1958a) reports sexuals in the nest from June to August. It is one of the last ants to colonize an area (Mackay, 1993b).

Leptothorax (Myrafant) obliquicanthus Cole
Figs. 16 & 141; Map 33

Leptothorax (*Myrafant*) *obliquicanthus* Cole, 1953:28-30 worker, USA, NM, 10 mi S Santa Fe, 6,500'; *Leptothorax* (*Leptothorax*) *obliquicanthus*: Gregg, 1953:2-3

Species complex: *tricarinatus*

Diagnosis: The worker of this species is easily recognized due to the large, kidney shaped eye (Fig. 141). In addition, nearly all surfaces are densely and coarsely punctate. The entire first tergum is punctate, but the punctures are fine and difficult to see unless the light is placed to reflect from the surface. The antenna has 12 segments.