

Distribution: USA: Nevada, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas (Brewster Co., Lubbock Co. Potter Co., Randall Co.) (Map 33).

Type series: Holotype in Cole collection, paratypes in Cole collection and USNM, MCZC, AMNH [seen].

Discussion: This species is easily recognized and separated from all other known North

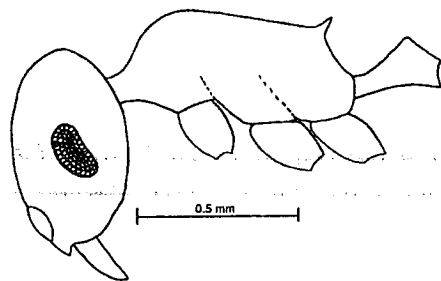
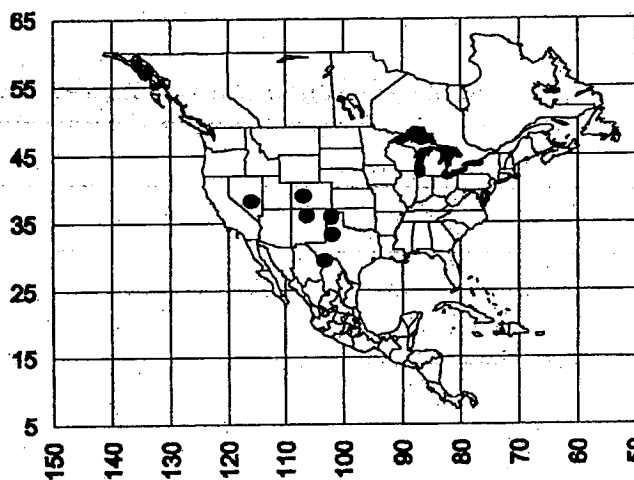


Fig. 141. Head, mesosoma and petiole of a paratype worker of *Leptothorax obliquicanthus*.

America *Leptothorax* by the large, oblong eyes. It could only be confused with *L. liebi*, which is pale yellow, with black eyes and has a completely smooth first tergum of the gaster. The sculpturing of the gaster would serve to further confirm the identity of this species. This species was independently discovered by Gregg (1953), but Cole described it first.

Biology: Found in dry grassy areas (Cole, 1953; 1954; Gregg, 1953; Mackay, pers. obs.) to semi-moist meadows (Gregg, 1953) and to sagebrush or highly disturbed areas (Mackay *et al.*, 1987) and high, dry short-grass plains above a river valley (Gregg, 1953). One nest was in an exposed area surmounted by a 10-cm crater (Wheeler and



Map 33. Distribution of *Leptothorax obliquicanthus*.

Wheeler, 1986). One nest in New Mexico was in the soil together with *Pheidole* sp. Nests are monogynous (Frumhoff and Ward, 1992). The large eyes may be connected with the diurnal habitats of the ants in open areas, where the workers could scan the surrounding area before exiting the nest (Gregg, 1953). Cole (1954) was unable to

locate this species at the type locality in 1952 (year after initial collection).