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Taxonomic status of the ant *Lasius nipponensis* Forel, 1912 (Hymenoptera, Formicidae)

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Abstract. — Morphological and biochemical comparisons are held on among the European to East Asian populations of *Lasius fuliginosus* (Latreille). Those are divided into two populations : European, Caucasian and Asia Minor populations, and Far East Russian, Japanese and Korean populations. Head proportions and body pilosity and pubescence in the workers and queens—longer and more developed in East Asian population—allow for a specific separation of both populations. Major components of mandibular gland secretion also differed : both populations have dendrolasin as a major component but only East Asian population contained 3-formyl-7,11-dimethyl-(2E,6Z,10)-dodecatrienal. It is proposed to change the name to be applied to East Asian population, formerly known under the name *Lasius fuliginosus* (Latreille), and reinstate the name *Lasius nipponensis* Forel as a good species. The name *Lasius fuliginosus* var. *orientalis* Karavaiev should be considered a junior synonym of *L. nipponensis*.

Résumé. — Nous proposons de restaurer le nom *Lasius nipponensis* Forel, comme une bonne espèce. Ce nom doit s'appliquer aux populations asiatiques, connues auparavant sous le nom de *Lasius fuliginosus* (Latreille). Les proportions céphaliques, pilosité du corps, et pubescence chez les reines et ouvrières permettent une séparation des deux espèces. La composition de la sécrétion des glandes mandibulaires diffère aussi : bien que la dendrolasine est présente dans les deux espèces, *L. nipponensis* montre la présence d'une forte proportion de 3-formyl-7, 11-diméthyl-(2E, 6Z, 10)-dodecatrienal. Le nom *Lasius fuliginosus* var. *orientalis* Karavaiev doit être considéré un synonyme de *L. nipponensis*.

Key words. — Hymenoptera, Formicidae, Taxonomy, *Lasius nipponensis*, stat. rev., *Lasius fuliginosus*, mandibular gland.

INTRODUCTION

In 1912 FOREL proposed a new name *nipponensis* as a variety of *Lasius fuliginosus* (Latreille) for a sample of ants from Tokio (Tokyo). Differential characteristics as compared with European *L. fuliginosus* were its smaller body size, thinner petiole, narrower head in workers and longer and denser pubescence on the alitrunk and gaster in queens.