

from «Bas Himalaya» and by MENOZZI (1939), there are no confirmed records of *L. fuliginosus* for the Himalayan region.

### CONCLUSION

Based on morphological and biochemical arguments we propose to limit the use of the name *Lasius fuliginosus* (Latreille) for the European, Caucasian and Asia Minor populations, and reinstate the species rank of *Lasius nipponensis* Forel for the eastern (Far East Russia, Japan and Korea) populations. A further argument in that direction is that molecular differences of specific degree in DNA sequencing have been also recently found between European and Japanese samples (R. Savolainen, per. com.).

A nomenclatural question comes. KARAVAIEV (1912) described *L. fuliginosus* var. *orientalis* based on Korean material. This taxon was tentatively synonymized by WILSON (1955) under *L. fuliginosus* and this decision was adopted by subsequent authors. From our results, it follows that *L. fuliginosus* var. *orientalis* Karavaiev, should be treated as a synonym of *L. nipponensis* Forel. The publication date of FOREL's paper (3.10.1912) takes priority over KARAVAIEV's (28.12.1912) (WARD *et al.*, 1996).

*Lasius (Dendrolasius) nipponensis* Forel stat. rev.

*Lasius fuliginosus* var. *nipponensis* Forel, 1912 : 339 ; Santschi, 1941 : 278, raised to species ; Wilson, 1955 : 138, including synonymy of *L. fuliginosus* (Latreille).

*Lasius fuliginosus* var. *orientalis* Karavaiev, 1912 : 586 ; Wilson, 1955 : 138, including synonymy of *L. fuliginosus* (Latreille) **syn. nov.**

The two species can be separated as follows (measures on a minimum of two workers) :

1. Head wider : CI 100.0-103.3 ; scape proportionately shorter : SI 82.2-88.6. Longest hairs on petiolar dorsum < 0.1 mm length. Mesonotal hairs straight. Pubescence on the anterior surface of first gastral tergite and on pronotum diluted, widely spaced with the distance between pubescence as long as or longer than pubescence length ..... *Lasius fuliginosus* (Latreille)

– Head proportionately slender : CI 96.6-99.1 ; scape proportionately longer : SI 89.9-94.8. Longest petiole dorsal hairs > 0.1 mm. Some mesonotal hairs sickle-shaped. Pubescence on the anterior surface of first gastral segment usually much denser, with their interdistances less than the pubescence length ..... *Lasius nipponensis* Forel

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