

## Four New Species of the Ant Genus *Ponera* Latreille (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) from Yunnan, China

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**Abstract:** Four new species of the ant genus *Ponera* Latreille are described from the Gaoligongshan Mountain Nature Reserve of Yunnan Province. Up to date, 12 species of the genus are recorded in China, i. e. *P. sinensis* Wheeler, *P. alisana* Terayama, *P. chiponensis* Terayama, *Ponera pentodontos* Xu, *Ponera menglana* Xu, *Ponera nangongshana* Xu, *Ponera longlina* Xu, *Ponera baka* Xu, *Ponera xantha*, sp. nov., *Ponera pinmana*, sp. nov., *Ponera bawana*, sp. nov., *Ponera diodonta*, sp. nov. A key to 12 species in China based on worker caste with figures is provided. All the type specimens are deposited in the Insect Collection, Southwest Forestry College.

**Key words:** Hymenoptera; Formicidae; *Ponera*; new species; systematics; Yunnan

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The ant genus *Ponera* Latreille is distributed in Holarctic, Oriental, Indo-Australian and Australasian regions. According to Bolton (1995), 37 valid species of the genus were recorded in the world. Twenty-seven species were known in East Asia and Southeast Asia. Taylor (1967) had a monographic revision of the genus, 28 living and 1 extinct species were treated. The *Ponera* species are usually small and living seclusively in the soil. According to the taxonomic and distributional data, the *Ponera* species have distinct geographical division, local species group is often observed in a certain place, such as in Japanese Islands, Taiwan Island, Philippines Islands, New Guinea Islands. In China, even the species group of western Yunnan is different from that of southern Yunnan.

Wheeler (1928) firstly described 2 species of *Ponera* in China; *P. sinensis* from Hong Kong and *P. excoecata* from Taipo, but the latter was moved in *Hypoponera* Santschi by Ogata in 1987. Terayama (1986) recorded 2 species of *Ponera* from Taiwan Province, i. e. *P. alisana* and *P. chiponensis*. Xu (2001) had a systematic study on the genus of China and 5 new species were described from Xishuangbanna Nature Reserve in southern Yunnan Province. In this study, 4 new species are described from Gaoligongshan Mountain Nature

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