

flatwoods, J. R. King, collector; 1 worker: same locality, habitat, collector as previous, site: 30°17.100'N, 82°28.813'W, 27-30-VIII-2001; 1 worker: same locality, habitat, collector as previous site: 30°17.077'N, 82E28.770W.

Deposition of Type Material

Holotype, 2 paratype workers from nest of holotype, dealate queen and male from nest of holotype, 9 paratype workers: Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts; 8 workers, one queen, one male: National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.; 3 workers, one queen, 1 male: Los Angeles County Museum, Los Angeles, California; 7 workers, one queen: Florida State Collection of Arthropods, Gainesville, Florida; 4 workers, one queen: The Natural History Museum, London; remaining type material temporarily in the arthropod collection of the Archbold Biological Station, Lake Placid, Florida.

Etymology

palustris, Latin, from *palus* (feminine) = marsh, and the suffix *-tris*, = belonging to, or a place where; feminine ending in apposition to *palus*, not *Leptothorax* (masculine).

Position in Taxonomic Guides

In Creighton (1950) workers key to *texanus davisii*, couplet 17 of *Leptothorax* key. In Mackay (2000) workers dead-end at couplet 43, as the dorsum of the postpetiole is neither "reticulo-rugose" nor "punctate or granulose."

DISCUSSION

The collections of this species are from a marsh or from low flatwoods. We believe it is a wet-site species from the same lineage as the dry-site species *Leptothorax texanus*, which it strongly resembles in size, pilosity, and general morphology (Fig. 3). The two species differ in the shape of the profile of the petiole (in workers, queens, males), in the relative length and width of the postpetiole of the worker (Figs. 1 and 3), and in color.

Leptothorax palustris is presently known from the Apalachicola and Osceola National Forests. In these preserves it probably benefits from the management practices of low stocking and occasional fires. Its populations would probably suffer from attempts to promote dense stocking of trees or heavy site preparation, as occur in many privately managed pine stands. We appreciate the enlightened, multi-use management of the forests that provides a rich diversity of species, including native ants. It is probable that the species

occurs in marshes and flatwoods in Georgia and Alabama.

The first known specimens were collected in pitfall traps, and this seems a good way to sample for the species. In a site where the species is known to occur, it can be baited with cookie crumbs. Our experience is that members of this species accept shortbread cookie crumbs with an enthusiasm not always seen in *Leptothorax* species, and immediately return to the nest. This may be the only practical way to find a nest, because the nest entrances that we have seen are completely unmarked holes about 2 mm in diameter.

Synonymy of *Leptothorax texanus* Wheeler
and *L. davisii* Wheeler

Preparation of a diagnosis for *L. palustris* led to an examination of *L. texanus* and *L. davisii*, which are the species most similar, and probably most closely related to *palustris*. In Mackay's useful recent revision of a large portion of North American *Leptothorax* (2000), the former subspecies *L. texanus davisii* is raised to species level, on the basis of several character states. These include differences in the sculpture of the head (*texanus* is described as having the central region "nearly smooth and shining," *davisii* "punctate, with the central region covered with longitudinal striae"); the postpetiole of *davisii* is covered "with poorly defined punctures," while that of *texanus* is "coarsely reticulo-rugose or punctate." The term "punctate" as used in MacKay's descriptions of these species and other *Leptothorax* in his revision refers to sculpture that would traditionally be considered granulate, or inscribed with fine reticulations. There are no actual punctures, except for those from which hairs emerge. The "striae" involved are not impressed lines, but fine, irregular carinae, often superimposed on the reticulate background. Allowing for these variances in terminology, the differences in surface sculpture used by Mackay to define *texanus* and *davisii* can be found within populations and within nest series in Florida. The postpetiole of *davisii* is described as "wider." This is not upheld by examination of specimens from the non-overlapping supposed ranges of the species. The difficulty surrounding this feature is shown in Mackay's diagnostic line drawings: the supposedly narrower postpetiole of *texanus* is actually shown as wider in relation to its length and wider in relation to the petiole, than that of *davisii*. The shape of the petiole in profile is described as "definitely truncate" in *davisii*, "not really truncate" in *texanus*. Although all specimens we have seen show some evidence of a "truncate" petiolar node, the sharpness of the anterior and posterior angles is highly and continuously variable within sites (such as the Archbold Biological Station) and through the ranges of *texanus* and *davisii*. For all these charac-