

excised, sides straight, parallel. Masticatory border with five stout teeth. Clypeus narrow, medial portion slightly concave. Frontal triangle well-defined. Frontal lobes somewhat continued posteriorly as short longitudinal rugulae. Scapes very short. Ocelli and eyes absent. In lateral view mesosoma flat, mesonotum slightly higher, propodeum lower. Pronotal suture feebly impressed dorsally. Metanotum narrow. Dorsal face of propodeum sloping and then curving into the posterior face, without spines or angles. Propodeal spiracle relatively large, rounded, close to metapleural gland bullae. Petiole with short peduncle, lateral swellings and ventrally with strong spine. Postpetiole in posterior view campanuliform, ventrally with anterior carinae. Body smooth, somewhat shining. Head, promesonotum, sides of pronotum and mesopleura with longitudinal rugae. Metapleuron, propodeum, petiole and postpetiole (except dorsal sides) with fine reticulation. Pubescence very sparse over body except propodeum. Long hairs (about 0.13 mm) dense on head; several on promesonotum, petiole, postpetiole and gaster. Body brown.

Holotype major worker measurements: HW 0.48 HL 0.64 SL 0.25 PW 0.25 WL 0.53 GL 0.49 TL 2.03 CI 75 SI 52.

Description (minor worker). Head longer than wide. Posterior border slightly concave, lateral margins faintly concave. Mandibles with 4 teeth. Median portion of clypeus nearly flat. In frontal oblique view, clypeal lateral carinae strongly narrowed posteriorly and between frontal lobes, then continued as frontal triangle. Scapes fail to reach posterior border by 1/2 of head length. In side view, mesosoma slightly convex, interrupted by deep metanotal groove. Dorsal face of propodeum curving into posterior face. Propodeal spiracle relatively large, circular, high and very close to propodeal margin. Propodeal metapleural lobes reduced to narrow lamellae that reach the propodeal dorsum. Petiole with short peduncle, evenly continuous with the dorsal rounded node. Subpetiolar process produced as anterior spine directed forward, spine normally not visible in mounted specimens. Postpetiole dorsally concave, lower than petiole. In dorsal view petiole longer than wide, postpetiole globose, more or less as long as wide. Anterior margin of first tergum in side view straight. Body smooth and shining. Mandibles with several scattered punctures, head with scattered punctures (except in the central longitudinal area), each punctum

with a small hair. Anterior sides of head with very fine longitudinal striation. Sides of mesosoma (except pronotum), petiole, postpetiole and dorsum of petiolar peduncle with a faint to moderate reticulation. Short curved hairs (less than 0.03 mm) relatively abundant over body, especially dorsum. Medium length hairs (about 0.04 mm or longer): Four on clypeus projecting forward, four on promesonotum (two anteriorly, two posteriorly), two on petiole, four on postpetiole. Body yellow brown.

Minor worker measurements (n=1) Paratype. HW 0.26 HL 0.31 SL 0.18 PW 0.15 WL 0.29 GL 0.35 TL 1.04 CI 84 SI 69.

Female, Male: Unknown.

Type data. Holotype major worker: Colombia: Caquetá, Chiribiquete National Park, Mesay River, "Blue Green" Forest, site 5, 00°14'N 72°56'W, 8.ii.2000, Winkler 64 in Terra Firme forest, 300 m.o.s.l., F. Quevedo (Deposited in IAVH). Paratypes: 1 major worker, 2 minor workers, same data (Deposited in IAVH).

Distribution. Known only from the type locality.

Comments. The major worker of this species is smaller than that of *C. tenua* or *C. coeca*, and on the basis of size is more closely related to *C. panamensis*. Nevertheless, *C. panamensis* is even smaller (according to Wheeler 1925) with total length of 1.30 mm (vs. 2.03 mm in *C. coqueta*). The sculpturing differs between the two species, and is more extensive in *C. coqueta*. The *panamensis* major worker/ergatoid has eyes and a median ocellus, although this might be associated in some way with its ergatoid condition. The minor workers of the two species are undistinguishable, at least based on Wheeler's (1925) description. As I pointed out in a recent paper (Fernández 2004:212), there are several undescribed species in this complex whose limits and variation are not well understood, additionally, the minor workers are practically useless for species identification. Thus, I think that is better to postpone a key to species until more material (with soldiers and minor workers associated) are studied.

Longino (2004) calls attention to the paucity of samples of *Carebara (lignata)* group) with both workers and soldiers. In other myrmicine ants like *Pheidole* or *Solenopsis* it is not difficult to find workers and soldiers in the field, which suggests that soldiers of *Carebara* are not

present in the same foraging strata as workers. This suggests that, to obtain soldiers of *Carebara*, we need to dig in the soil or look for them in rotten logs (Longino 2004). The fact that many museums only have minor workers of the typical *Carebara* (that is, the *lignata* species group) could be due to the reason pointed out above, and in reality all of the species of this complex may be dimorphic. The exasperating monotony of the minor workers of the *lignata* species group (some of them only 0.90 mm long!) makes it desirable to obtain and to study collections that include soldiers, besides females and males. If my prediction is correct, and all the species of the *lignata* group possess major workers (although difficult to collect), it should be possible to revise the group on a global scale.

Finally, I want to call attention to the interesting intercaste phenomenon in this group. Kusnezov (1952) and Wheeler (1925) pointed out and described cases of intermediates between major workers (soldiers) and females. The great plasticity in the external attributes of the soldiers of the *lignata* species group (such as the presence / absence of ocelli and eyes, and vestigial alary sclerites) make this an ideal group for the study of the evolution of caste intergradations; as proposed by Baroni Urbani and Passera (1996), who suggest that in some cases the soldier developed not from the worker, but from the female (see Ward 1997 for a reply).

Escherischi species complex

The species in this complex (except by the enigmatic *C. intermedia* Fernández) correspond to the previously recognized genus *Paedalgus sensu* Bolton & Belsaw (1993). The head is slightly narrower anteriorly, the eyes, always present, are reduced to a few ommatidia and the propodeum is very short. In the treatment of the species of this complex (Fernández 2004) there is an error in the description of *Carebara reina*; moreover, new recent evidence throw suspicion on the validity of *Carebara semistriata* as good species. For these reasons, it is included the complete description of *C. reina*, below.

Carebara reina Fernández

Carebara reina Fernández, 2004:228 (worker)

= *Carebara semistriata* Fernández, 2004:229 (worker) **syn. nov.**

Eyes reduced to 1 ommatidium. Lamellae of metapleural lobes low. Dorsum of head densely sculptured with very small,