

A REVIEW OF THE ANTS OF THE GENUS *LASIUS* FABRICIUS, 1804, SUBGENUS *DENDROLASIUS* RUZSKY, 1912 (HYMENOPTERA: FORMICIDAE) FROM EAST PALAEARCTIC

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Abstract.— The taxonomy of the ant subgenus *Dendrolasius* Ruzsky, 1912 is reviewed on the base of the investigation of types and of non-type material of several species. *L. fuji* is described as a new species, which includes former *L. fuliginosus* (Latreille, 1798) from the East Palaearctic. *L. nipponensis* Forel, 1912, proposed by Espadaler et al. 2001 as the replacement name for "oriental *fuliginosus*", actually is a good species and the senior synonym of *L. crispus* Wilson, 1955; *L. orientalis* Karawajew, 1912 is revived from synonymy and is considered as the senior synonym of *L. teranishii* Wheeler, 1928; *L. capitatus* Kusnetzov-Ugamsky, 1928 is considered as a good species, different from *L. crispus*. A key to *Dendrolasius* workers and queens from the Eastern Palaearctic is also given.



Key words.— Ants, taxonomy, *Lasius*, *Dendrolasius*, new species, new synonyms, East Palaearctic.

INTRODUCTION

The ants of the subgenus *Dendrolasius* Ruzsky, 1912 are the most peculiar both morphologically and biologically among all *Lasius* Fabricius, 1804 species. These so-called jet black ants have a quite high level of social organisation, form large colonies, usually build big carton nests in living trees, and are characterised by their specific, strong smell. All of them are distinctly bigger than other *Lasius* species (workers' body size up to 4.5 – 5.5 mm), have shiny black or dark brownish-black body, and a distinctly emarginate occipital margin of the head in most species.

This subgenus includes eight species only (taking into account the present revision), two of which distributed in the Western Palaearctic (as far east as the Altai Mts.), and six others found in the eastern part of the Region, e. g. in the southern part of Russian Far East (as far west as the Amursky Region), north-eastern China, Korean Peninsula, and Japan; one species was also found in Taiwan.

Ruzsky (1912) described the subgenus *Dendrolasius* including one species – *L. fuliginosus* (Latreille, 1798). In the same year, two new forms belonging to this subgenus were described: *L. fuliginosus* var. *nipponensis*

Forel, 1912 from Japan, and *L. fuliginosus* var. *orientalis* Karawajew, 1912 from Korea. A little earlier Wheeler (1910), based on the single very peculiar queen found in Japan, described *L. spathepus*, which also belongs to the subgenus *Dendrolasius*.

Later on, several *Dendrolasius* species and infra-specific forms were described: *Acanthomyops fuliginosus* var. *capitatus* Kusnetzov-Ugamsky, 1928 from Russian Far East; *L. teranishii* Wheeler, 1928 from Japan; *L. ouchii* Teranishi, 1940 from Japan; *L. buccatus* Störcke, 1942 from Bosnia; *L. crispus* Wilson, 1955 from Japan and Korea; *L. morisitai* Yamauchi, 1978 from Japan.

After complete or local revisions and reviews of the genus *Lasius* or its subgenus *Dendrolasius* (Wilson 1955; Yamauchi and Hayashida 1968; Yamauchi 1978; Kupyanskaya 1989, 1990; Espadaler et al. 2001; see also Bolton 1995) the number of the valid *Dendrolasius* species was reduced to seven.

Despite the presence of many publications dealing with the subgenus *Dendrolasius*, there were still quite a lot of unresolved taxonomic questions. I had the opportunity to investigate the types of several species and infraspecific forms, what allowed to me to solve some problems and clarify the taxonomic situation of this Palaearctic subgenus.