



Figs. 17 - 18: *Meranoplus dimidiatus*, worker, see text for details.

somewhat smaller than either. Promesonotal shield a further variant of the same apparent underlying theme (cf. Figs. 4, 9 and 16); strongly transversely arched (Figs. 11, 12), much as in *M. schoedli* sp.n. Petiolar node more massive and rounded than in the other species discussed here, but with vestiges of the transverse crest seen in the others. Cephalic sculpturing more intense than in *M. hirsutus*; more strongly reticulate and without underlying longitudinal elements. Promesonotal shield very distinctively sculptured; anterior section (approximately half the surface) sculptured similarly to head; posterior section spectacularly different – smooth and strongly shining, with extremely superficial traces of rugosity, which is more distinct in a narrow band following the periphery of the shield; fenestrae much as in *M. schoedli* sp.n. Petiole and postpetiole strongly sculptured, much like anterior surface of promesonotal shield. Gastral dorsum more-or-less shining, but with effaced traces of fine superficial rugosity. Pilosity as illus-

trated, the hairs less dense and much shorter than in the other species described here. Anterolateral margins of first gastral tergite somewhat longitudinally angular, unlike the other species discussed here. Colouration as in *M. beatoni* sp.n.

**Diagnosis:** The remarkable sculpturing of the promesonotal shield immediately distinguishes *M. hoplites* from all other known *Meranoplus* species.

**Etymology:** The name is a noun in apposition (*hoplites* (Gr.) – an armoured soldier).

***Meranoplus dimidiatus* F. SMITH, 1867** (Figs. 17 - 20)

*Meranoplus dimidiatus* F. SMITH, 1867: 527: worker. Type locality: Champion Bay (= Geraldton) (28 / 114), Western Australia.

**Remarks:** The specimen illustrated here is one of those from Katherine, Northern Territory, discussed by TAYLOR (1990). Nomenclature is based on the ANIC holotype-compared vouchers from Barrow Island (20 / 115), Western Australia, established in that paper, which also cites dimensions and other distribution records.

Figs. 13 - 16: *Meranoplus hoplites* sp.n., holotype worker, standard views, see description for dimensions.