

## New Species of *Pheidole* (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) From Guyana, With a List of Species Known From the Country

JOHN S. LAPOLLA AND STEFAN P. COVER

[DSL] Department of Entomology, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, POB 37012, NHB, CE518, MRC 188, Washington, D.C. 20013-7012 —  
email: lapollaj@si.edu

[SPC] Department of Entomology, Museum of Comparative Zoology  
Harvard University, 26 Oxford Street Cambridge, MA 02138  
email: cover@oeb.harvard.edu

### ABSTRACT

Two new species of *Pheidole* from Guyana are described, *P. funki* LaPolla and *P. schultzi* LaPolla. One species, *P. funki*, belongs to the *scrobifera*-group and is only the second member of the species-group known from South America. The other species, *P. schultzi*, belongs to the *tachigaliae*-group. *P. tachigaliae* is also illustrated to identify morphological differences with *P. schultzi*. Modified versions of Wilson's (2003) key are provided. Recent biotic survey work across Guyana revealed that at least 86 *Pheidole* species are present in the country.

Keywords: Formicidae, Guyana, Myrmecinae, *Pheidole*, *scrobifera*-group, *tachigaliae*-group.

### INTRODUCTION

The ant genus *Pheidole* is cosmopolitan, with nearly 900 species distributed around the world (Wilson 2003). *Pheidole* is a common component of most ant faunas. Wilson (2003) appropriately called *Pheidole* "hyperdiverse" with 624 species described from the New World alone in his recent monograph of the genus. *Pheidole* species are found in rainforests to deserts from habitats such the leaf litter to forest canopies. As Wilson (2003) stated, the genus has undergone an adaptive radiation into a wide array of ecological niches, and this in part explains their tremendous species diversity.

Wilson anticipated that new *Pheidole* species remained to be discovered in the New World. In fact, new species continued to come to him even as he finished his monograph. Recent biotic survey work in Guyana provides further evidence that more *Pheidole* species await discovery. Here we describe two new species of *Pheidole* from Guyana. We also provide a list of *Pheidole* currently known from Guyana, though many species could not be identified because they are known only from minors (see discussion). At least 86 *Pheidole* species are now known from Guyana (table 1). Wilson established 19 species-groups, though the groups await phylogenetic analysis to test questions of monophyly. The two new species here described are from two species-groups: one from the *scrobifera*-group (previously with 12 species) and the other from the *tachigaliae*-group (previously with 5 species).