

ma in their ability to escape detection by this means in the forest gloom". Weber (1950) recorded a worker of *B. singularis* carrying a dead termite in Guyana, and Brown (1974) found headless termites inside a nest of the same species in Diamantino, Mato Grosso, Brazil.

Baroni Urbani & De Andrade (1994) synonymized Dacetini as well as Phalacromyrmecini under Basicerotini, and synonymized all subtribal names accepted at the time. Bolton (1995a) revived Basicerotini from synonymy of the then so-called Dacetoniini and, in 1998, listed and commented the apomorphies of the Dacetini tribe group and its components, including the Basicerotini, which he considers as monophyletic.

Creightonidris is a monotypic basicerotine genus established by Brown (1949), based on a single alate gyne. In the revision of Basicerotini (Brown & Kempf, 1960), *Creightonidris* was recognized as a valid genus by the authors based mainly on its very specialized and aberrant mandibles, although they also recognized its close relation to *Basiceros*. The only species of the genus, *C. scambognatha*, has been known up to now from very few alate gynes and a single not yet formally described worker (Castilho *et al.*, in press), captured exclusively in central-north Brazil (Delabie, 2000) and south Venezuela (Lattke, 1991).

However, since the original description by Brown (1949) and the revision by Brown & Kempf (1960), several undescribed males of *C. scambognatha* from different localities have accumulated in the Museu de Zoologia da USP ant collection (MZSP), from which two series also have some alate gynes. It was possible to associate males and gynes by comparing mainly the wing venation, the sculpture pattern, and considering the information on the specimens labels (Dietz, 2004).

Dietz (2004), in his Basicerotini revision, suggested the synonymy of *Creightonidris* with *Basiceros*, based on the comparison of the then undescribed *C. scambognatha* males with males of *Basiceros* species, especially as to the wing venation pattern and on the analysis of other characters variation among basicerotine ants. Our study of the second *C. scambognatha* worker ever found and here presented, corroborates Dietz's proposal.

Virtually nothing is known about the biology of *C. scambognatha*. The only dealate gyne, collected in southern Goiás, Brazil, and maintained in artificial conditions, died some weeks after confinement in the laboratory of the MZSP (Brandão, unpubl. observations). More recently (June, 2006), a party, including one of us (RMF), collected the second worker of this

species in the leaf litter of a semi-deciduous lowland forest in the Estreito county, Maranhão state (near the border with Tocantins state) in central Brazil.

The aim of this work is to establish formally the synonymy of *Creightonidris* with *Basiceros*, and add new information on its diagnosis. We take this opportunity to describe for the first time the male and the worker castes of *Basiceros scambognathus* and to record new information regarding the distribution and biology of this species.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Although *Creightonidris scambognatha* has been considered one of the rarest Neotropical ant species, we were able to find specimens in different collections, as follows:

- ANIC: Australian National Insect Collection, CSIRO, Canberra, Australia.
- INPA: Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas da Amazônia, Manaus, Amazonas, Brazil.
- MCZC: Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA.
- MZSP: Museu de Zoologia da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil.
- PSWC: Philip S. Ward Personal Collection, University of California, Davis, California, USA.

Morphological terms follow Brown & Kempf (1960) and Dietz (2004). Reproductive females are here called "gynes", as suggested by De Andrade & Baroni Urbani (1999). The measurements and indexes adopted are: TL total length, HL head length, HW head width, ML mandible length, SL scape length, CW Weber's length, HFL hind femur length, CI cephalic index (HW x 100/HL), and SI scape index (SL x 100/HW). All measurements are given in mm.

Photographs taken under the MZSP scanning electron microscope (SEM) (LEO 440[®]) were used to record morphological details of a gyne and a male of *B. scambognathus*. The specimens were previously cleaned in acetone, critical-point dried in a Balzer (Bal-Tec[®] CPD 030), and sputtered over with gold (Bal-Tec[®] SCD 050). After that, the specimens were mounted on the tip of metallic triangles using silver glue and then fixated on stubs for the electron microscopy. The images were obtained under several magnifications, according to the size of the specimen and/or structure observed. Finally, the images were