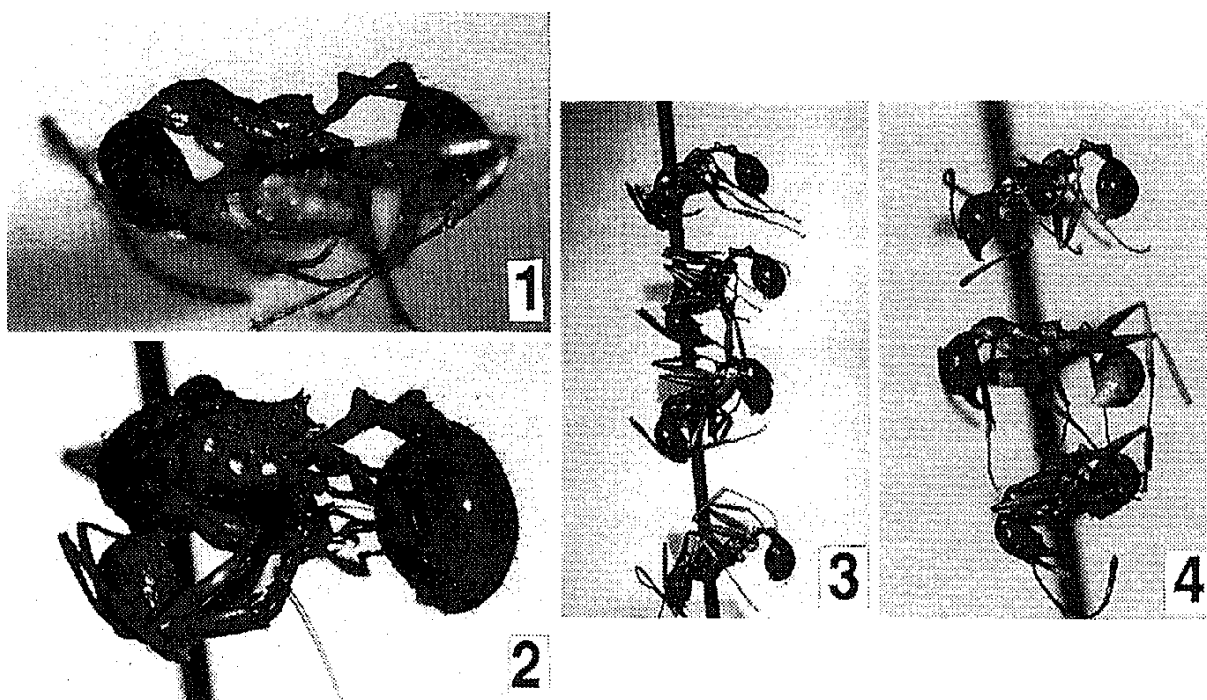


I examined one worker included in the type series of *A. verecunda* (Unzen, Japan, 5. 24. 25, Silvestri/ type/ Wm. M. Wheeler/M.C.Z., Type, 1-3. 20416). It is a very small worker (Tab. 1) with an appearance somewhat similar to *A. famelica*. Wheeler mentioned that the new species is very much smaller than *A. famelica* but with a head of a similar shape. However, in smaller workers of *A. japonica* the head tends to be proportionally narrower behind the eyes than in larger workers; the head shape in smaller workers is, thus, similar to that of *A. famelica*. The relative lengths of the syntype's antennal scape and hind femur, the most reliable characters distinguishing between some Japanese species, falls well within the range of *A. japonica*. All the other features stated by Wheeler also agree with those observed in smaller workers of *A. japonica*. The syntype examined is the smallest one I have ever seen of *A. japonica*, so it may have come from an initial colony and belonged to the first batch of workers.

Another problem concerns the relation of *japonica* to *smythiesii*; the former has been treated as a subspecies of the latter since Wheeler (1928). I have examined the type series of *Aphaenogaster smythiesii* (Forel, 1902) in the Forel Collection at the Natural History Museum, Geneva, and found that it is a species with a distinct worker dimorphism and gigantic queens (ca. 18 mm in body length vs. only around 12 mm in *japonica*). Although the minor workers are somewhat similar to those of *japonica*, the above mentioned fact alone indicates strongly that these two are separate species.



Figs 1-4. Type material of *Aphaenogaster* forms described by Wheeler from Japan. 1, *A. verecunda* (worker, Unzen, Japan; 5.24.25, Silvestri; MCZ, Type, 20416). 2, *A. famelica ruida* (female, Michino-o, Japan; 6.3.25, Silvestri; MCZ Type, 20599). 3, *A. famelica frontosa* (Arashiyama, Hondo, Japan; v.19.25, Silvestri; MCZ Type, 20598). 4, *A. rapida* (Michino-o, Japan; 6.3.25, Silvestri; MCZ, Type, 20615).