

**Description.** Posterior margin of head nearly flat in full face view, extending laterally of the occipital collar before passing through a distinct posterolateral corner into the lateral margin of the head. Majority of hairs on venter of head located laterally and forming a distinct psammophore, only scattered hairs on central portion. Mandibular sculpture composed of irregularly sized striations. Erect hairs on mesosomal dorsum tapering to sharp points. Propodeal spines reduced to small denticles or sharp angles. Petiolar node (in dorsal view) wider than long;

**Measurements.** Worker (n = 11). CI 86–98; EI 16–21; EL 0.16–0.22; HL 0.93–1.28; HW 0.85–1.18; ML 1.30–1.86; MTL 0.68–1.00; SI 90–105; SL 0.85–1.16.

**Material examined** (in ANIC unless otherwise noted). **Western Australia:** 100km E Norseman (Lowery, B.B.); 10km S Mullewa (Lowery, B.B.); 10mi. W Mullewa (Riek, E.F.); 160km ENE Esperance (Ward, P.S.) (ANIC, PSWC); 180km N Geraldton, nr. Billabong Roadhouse (Lowery, B.B.); 20km S Norseman (Lowery, B.B.); 20km W York (Lowery, B.B.); 26mi. NW by W Norseman (Taylor, R.W.); 3.2km SSW Dongara (Feehan, J.E.); Beenup [Beenyup] (Clark, J.); Beyerley (du Boulay, F.H., MCZC); Brookton Hwy, 20km E Boulders (Lowery, B.B.); Bungulla (Greaves, T.); Caron (Darlington, P.J., MCZC); Darlington (Glauert, G., MCZC); Geraldton (Lowery, B.B.; Mercovich, C.T.; Weatherill; Wheeler, W.M. (ANIC, MCZC); Gayamin Pool, Lower Chittering (Wilson, E.O. and Douglas, A., MCZC); Israelite Bay (T.G.); Kalbarri Nat. Park (Lowery, B.B.); Kings Park, Perth (Clark, J., Lowery, B.B.) (ANIC, MCZC); Moora (Lowery, B.B.); Mullewa (Wheeler, W.M., MCZC); National Park, Darling Range (Wheeler, W.M., MCZC); Perth (Clark, J.; Greaves, T.; Keirath, A.R.) (ANIC, MCZC); Perth, Kings Park (Lowery, B.B.); Rockingham (Glauert, L., MCZC); Toodyay (Lowery, B.B.); Toolinna (Brooker, M.G.); Woongondy, 300mi. N Perth (Mercovich, C.T.).

**Comments.** This species is restricted to a narrow semi-arid band across south-western Western Australia (Fig. 29) and is sympatric with *A. mediterrae* in south-central Western Australia (see Fig. 28). It is found in coastal scrub, Jarrah forests, dry sandy sclerophyll, mulga woodlands and mallee. Nests are in soil generally with a large crater at the entrance. An exceptionally large mating swarm was noted by McMillan (1977) (as *A. barbigula*).

### ***Aphaenogaster pythia* Forel**

(Figs 15, 16, 23, 30)

*Aphaenogaster (Deromyrma) pythia* Forel, 1915: 76.

*Aphaenogaster longiceps*: Mayr, 1876: 96 (misidentification recognised by M. R. Smith, 1961: 229).

*Aphaenogaster (Deromyrma) longiceps*: Forel, 1915: 75 (as *A. ruginota*, misidentification recognised by M. R. Smith, 1961: 229).

*Aphaenogaster (Nystalomyrma) pythia* Forel: Wheeler, 1916: 219.

**Types.** Neotype worker, Australia, Queensland, Millstream National Park, near Ravenshoe, 6 August, 1975, B. B. Lowery, dry sclerophyll (ANIC) (ANIC32-031018) (additional non-type material from this nest series includes 40 workers, two queens (one dealate) and one male) (ANIC32-000767) (ANIC, MCZC, QMBA).

**Diagnosis.** Hairs on venter of head randomly distributed and not forming a distinct psammophore (Fig. 16); posterior margin of head nearly flat in full face view, extending laterally of the occipital collar before passing through a distinct posterolateral corner into the lateral margin of the head (Fig. 15); propodeal spines short (Fig. 16); scape relatively short (SI less than 125, Fig. 23). This species is most similar to *A. reichelae*, and can be separated from it by the relatively shorter scapes and in having distinct dorsal and posterior petiolar node faces.

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