

## Diagnosis

The eye-catching coloration of *T. flavithorax*, with black head, waist segments, and gaster that strongly contrast with the whitish-yellowish mesosoma and appendages, makes it easily recognizable within the species complex and the whole group.

## Description

HL 0.500–0.544 (0.521); HW 0.467–0.522 (0.493); SL 0.317–0.367 (0.339); EL 0.122–0.133 (0.128); PW 0.372–0.411 (0.389); WL 0.544–0.600 (0.580); PSL 0.144–0.183 (0.168); PTL 0.067–0.089 (0.079); PTH 0.200–0.256 (0.224); PTW 0.189–0.233 (0.215); PPL 0.111–0.144 (0.127); PPH 0.194–0.244 (0.213); PPW 0.222–0.278 (0.253); CI 92–97 (95); SI 66–73 (69); OI 24–28 (26); PSLI 29–36 (32); PeNI 51–62 (55); LPeI 31–42 (35); DPeI 260–286 (272); PpNI 60–69 (65); LPpI 54–69 (59); DPpI 192–209 (200); PPI 107–126 (118) (25 measured).

Head longer than wide (CI 92–97). Anterior clypeal margin entire. Frontal carinae strongly developed and sinuate, shortly before posterior margin of head curving down ventrally to form the posterior and ventral margin of antennal scrobe. Scrobe well-developed, broad and relatively deep, with distinct sharp margin all around. Antennal scape short (SI 66–73). Eyes moderate to large (OI 24–28), with 7 to 9 ommatidia in longest row. Metanotal groove in profile never impressed. Propodeal spines long, spinose with an acute apex (PSLI 29–36). Propodeal lobes small and triangular with a very broad base. Petiolar node squamiform, in dorsal view between 2.5 and 3 times wider than long (DPeI 260–286) and in lateral view between 2.4 to 3.2 times higher than long (LPeI 31–42). Postpetiole usually sharply cuneiform, sometimes rounded cuneiform, in dorsal view around twice as wide as long (DPpI 192–209); in profile around 1.4 to 1.9 times higher than long (LPpI 54–69). Mandibles unsculptured, smooth and shiny. Clypeus with 3 longitudinal rugae, median ruga always strongly developed, lateral rugae variable. Head unsculptured except for 1 median longitudinal ruga between frontal carinae and 1 median longitudinal ruga anteriorly within the antennal scrobe, the latter usually reaching posterior eye level, rarely traces of short rugulae present between median ruga and frontal carinae. Dorsum of mesosoma with 4 to 6 very fine longitudinal, widely spaced rugulae; lateral mesosoma mostly unsculptured. Ground sculpturation on head and mesosoma smooth and shiny. Both waist segments and gaster completely unsculptured, smooth and shiny. All dorsal body surfaces with simple, fine, long, and erect hairs. Fine pubescence on tibiae and antennal scapes appressed to decumbent. Head, petiole, postpetiole, and gaster very dark brown to black contrasting with whitish-yellowish mesosoma and appendages.

## Notes

*Tetramorium flavithorax* appears to be restricted to the rain forests of Ghana, Ivory Coast, and Nigeria, where it commonly and abundantly occurs in the forest leaf litter. The striking coloration of this species is exceptional in the whole species group and makes it almost impossible to misidentify with any other species group members.

## Material examined

**GHANA:** Aburi, leg. F. Silvestri; Akosombo, 2.III.1969, leg. C. Collingwood; Bobiri Forest, Res. nr. Kumasi, 8.IV.1992, leg. R. Belshaw; Bunso, II.1992, leg. R. Belshaw; Esunkawkaw Forest Reserve, 27.X.1992, leg. R. Belshaw; Kade, 14.VIII.1969, leg. D. Leston; Mampong, 19.I.1970, leg. P.M. Room; Mampong, 25.VII.1970, leg. D. Leston; Mampong, 3.VIII.1970, leg. D. Leston; Mt. Atewa, 1.XII.1968, leg. B. Bolton; Nkawanda, nr. Nkawkaw, 12.XII.1991, leg. R. Belshaw; Southern Scarp Forest, 23.X.1992, leg. R. Belshaw; Tafo, 22.XI.1968, leg. B. Bolton; Tafo, 16.VI.1970, leg. B. Bolton; Tafo, 18.VIII.1970, leg. B. Bolton; Tafo, 20.VIII.1970, leg. B. Bolton; Tafo, 30.X.1970, leg. B. Bolton; **IVORY COAST:** Abidjan, Banco National Park, 5.III.1977, leg. J. Löbl; Abidjan, Banco National Park, 14.III.1977, leg. S. Löbl; Abidjan, Adi-opoume, 20.III.1977, litter, leg. J. Löbl; Banco Forest, nr. Abidjan, 11.I.1963, leg. W.L. Brown; Bingerville,