

**Material examined. Holotype-worker:** Iran, Khorāsān-e Razavi Province, Mashhad, Shāndiz, 985m a.s.l., N 36° 24', E 59° 19', 15.V.1999, No: 29-22 (leg. M. Ghāsemi). Holotype was found in mixed pome fruit orchards (apple and pear) and observed on the bark of an apple tree. **Paratypes:** 4 workers, Iran, Semnan Province, Khoshyeylāgh, Beh-Cheshmeh station, 1554m a.s.l., N 36° 43' 30.14", E 55° 22' 30.09", 09.VI.2007, No: 1954 and 1978 (leg. O. Paknia). All paratypes were collected in morning before sunrise by hand from arid areas around human habitations.

The holotype is deposited in the Collection of the Biological Department of the Trakya University, Edirne, Turkey (TU); one paratype is deposited in the National Museum of Natural History, Tehran, Iran. Three paratypes are deposited in the private collection of the last author (OP).

Etymology. Named after Iran, where it was found.

#### Key to workers of *Aphaenogaster* species from Iran

1. Scape surpassing occiput by more than one-fifth of its length (Fig. 1A, 2A) .....2  
— Scape surpassing occiput by less than one-fifth of its length (Fig. 3) .....4
2. Body colour dark brown to black, occipital corners more-or-less distinct in full-face

view, promesonotum evenly convex in profile (Fig. 4) .....*gibbosa*

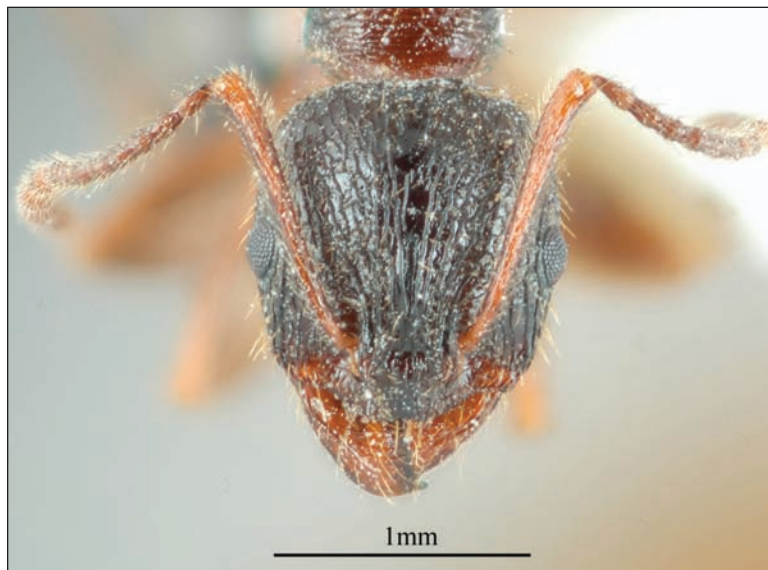
— Body colour light, occipital corners indistinct in full-face view, mesonotum rises above the level of pronotum in profile (mesonotum distinctly raised, domed to angular in profile) (Fig. 1B, 2B) .....3

3. Sides of head parallel in full-face view, funicular segments 2-6 nearly 3 times as long as broad, gaster without dark band ...*iranica*  
— Sides of head oval in full-face view, funicular segments 2-6 at most 2 times as long as broad, gaster with a dark band .....*syrriaca*

4. Whole body rugulose, body colour black .....*obsidiana*  
— Body sculpture finer, body colour light reddish brown .....*kurdica*

#### DISCUSSION

We have placed *Aphaenogaster iranica* in the *rothneyi* species-group based on the following features: its slender body, elongated head with almost parallel sides in front of the eyes, length of funicular segments (segments 2–6 nearly 3 times longer than broad), and generally reduced body sculpture. In detail, *A. iranica* differs from other known species from Iran (see key) and from other species in the *rothneyi* group by the following



**Fig. 3.** Head of *Aphaenogaster obsidiana*, frontal view (From Trabzon-Uzungöl, Turkey, leg. and det. K.Kiran).