

***BOLTONIDRIS* GEN. NOV., THE FIRST EXTINCT STENAMMINI ANT GENUS (HYMENOPTERA, FORMICIDAE) FROM THE LATE EOCENE ROVNO AMBER**

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Abstract.— The new extinct ant genus and species, *Boltonidris mirabilis*, are described from the late Eocene Rovno Amber (Ukraine). This genus belongs to the tribe Stenammini of the subfamily Myrmicinae. It possesses the plesiomorphic characters of the tribe Stenammini, e.g. 12-segmented antennae with 3-segmented apical club, characteristic structure of the clypeus and frontal lobes, absence of gastral shoulder, but it has a series of autapomorphies, e.g. modified mandibles with the only two teeth on the masticatory margin, well developed longitudinal medial groove on the head dorsum, somewhat depressed areas lateral to the frontal carinae (like "vestigial" antennal scrobes), and finely swollen postero-lateral area of head, close to the occipital corners. Additionally, it has two short blunt teeth on the pronotum.



Key words.— *Boltonidris mirabilis*, ants, taxonomy, Formicidae, Myrmicinae, Stenammini, palaeontology, European ambers, Ukraine, late Eocene, new genus, new species.

INTRODUCTION

The ant fauna of the late Eocene European ambers (ca. 40 Mya) is the best studied among all fossil global myrmecofaunas. Up to now, more than 17,000 ant specimens have been examined in these ambers, and this material includes more than 170 species from 63 genera and 15 subfamilies (the subfamily concept is treated according to Bolton 2003). Material from the Baltic Amber is the richest and the best studied – it includes ca. 75% of all ant specimens found in the European late Eocene ambers. However, intensive accumulation and investigation of the ant material from the Rovno Amber (western Ukraine) was started in the last decade or so (see review of Perkovsky *et al.* 2007), and in total more than 60 species from about 30 genera have now been found in the Rovno Amber (Dlussky and Rasnitsyn 2009, our unpublished data).

At the same time, diversity of the subfamily Myrmicinae in all European ambers is low: only 12 genera, comprising just 20 species, are known (this total excludes *Agroecomyrmex* Wheeler, which was transferred to the subfamily Agroecomyrmecinae by Bolton 2003, 2011). Moreover, no new myrmicine genera or even species were described from the European late Eocene ambers between the time of Wheeler's (1915) monographic revision of the ants of Baltic Amber and the beginning of twenty-first century. However, in the last decade we were fortunate to gain access to the rich new amber collections from the Baltic, Bitterfeldian (= Saxonian), Scandinavian (= Danish), and Rovno ambers. As a result, we described several new species from the different ant subfamilies, including Myrmicinae, and even described four new myrmicine genera (Dlussky 2002a, 2002b, 2008a, 2008b, 2009, 2010, Dlussky and Perkovsky 2002, Dlussky and Radchenko