

determined as 'pale' or 'transparent' because of light coming through the seta rather than reflected from it.

Morphometric Characters

Size and shape characters were quantified and are reported as lengths or indices. Measurements were made with a stereo microscope using a dual-axis stage micrometer wired to digital readouts. All measurements were recorded in thousandths of millimetres, but are expressed here to the nearest hundredth. All head measurements (EL, EW, HL, HW) were taken in full-face (dorsal) view without moving the head between measurements (Fig. 1). Longitudinal mesosomal length measurements (PnL, ML, PpL) were taken in lateral view, parallel to a line ('measuring axis') drawn between the anterior-most point of the pronotal collar and the posterior-most point of the propodeal process dorsal of the petiolar insertion (Fig. 2).

- CI Cephalic index: HW/HL.
- EL Maximum eye length measured in full face view (Fig. 1).
- EW Maximum eye width measured in full face view (Fig. 1).
- HL Maximum head length in full face view, measured from the anterior-most point of the clypeal margin to the midpoint of a line drawn across the posterior margin of the head (Fig. 1).
- HW Maximum head width in full face view, excluding eyes in workers and queens, including eyes in males (Fig. 1).
- ML Mesonotal length measured from the pronotal-mesonotal suture to the metanotal groove parallel to the measuring axis (see above and Fig. 2).
- PnL Pronotal length measured from the anterior edge of the pronotal collar to the pronotal-mesonotal suture parallel to the measuring axis (see above and Fig. 2).
- PpL Propodeal length measured from the metanotal groove to the posterior-most point of the petiolar insertion parallel to the measuring axis (see above and Fig. 2).
- REL Relative eye length: EL/HW.
- SI Scape index: SL/HW.
- SL Length of the scape (first antennal segment) excluding the basal radicle (Fig. 1).

Abbreviations used are as follows:

Collectors: BBL, B. B. Lowery; CAK, C. A. Kirkby; JED, J. E. Dowse; JEF, J. E. Feehan; PJMG, P. J. M. Greenslade; RSM, R. S. McInnes; RWT, Robert W. Taylor; TG, T. Greaves.

Museums: ANIC, Australian National Insect Collection, Canberra, A.C.T.; BMNH, The Natural History Museum, London, U.K.; LACM, Los Angeles County Museum, Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.; MCZC, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A.; MHNG, Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle, Geneva, Switzerland; MVMA, Museum of Victoria, Abbotsford, Victoria; NHMB, Naturhistorisches Museum, Basel, Switzerland; USNM, United States National Museum of Natural History, Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

Key to Species of the *Iridomyrmex purpureus* Group

Based on workers

1. Eyes large (EL < 0.48 mm, REL < 0.27); scapes with erect setae primarily on the outer surfaces only 2
1. Eyes small (EL < 0.48 mm, REL < 0.27); scapes with erect setae on all surfaces 3
2. Scapes distinctly bicoloured, with the lateral surfaces reddish brown to dark reddish brown and the central region yellowish red; head and mesosoma distinctly lighter in colour than the gaster *I. variscapus*, sp. nov.
2. Scapes weakly bicoloured, with the lateral surfaces dark reddish brown and the central region reddish brown; head and mesosoma about the same colour as the gaster *I. bigi*, sp. nov.
3. Lateral and/or dorsal regions of head with at least weak green iridescence (often with purple iridescence as well) 4
3. Lateral and/or dorsal regions of head with purple or blue, but never green, iridescence 5
4. Head colour reddish brown, generally similar in colour to mesosoma, occasionally slightly lighter in colour than the mesosoma *I. viridiaeneus* Viehmeyer
4. Head colour yellowish red, always distinctly lighter in colour than the mesosoma *I. galbanus*, sp. nov.