

Description

Iridescence between compound eyes and on lateral region of head (between compound eye and insertion of mandible) weak to strong green, or weak purple. Pigment colour of mesosoma yellowish red to reddish brown; head yellowish red, lighter in colour than the mesosoma; coxae and legs the same colour as, or slightly darker than, the mesosoma; petiole dark reddish brown; lateral region of second gastral tergite shiny and with green and purple iridescence. Head pilosity (in full face view) abundant on occipital margin, and with 4–8 (rarely up to about 12) pale or dark setae near mandibular insertion. Ocelli absent, or present but vestigial. Ventrolateral pronotum with scattered erect setae. Mesosomal setae dark. Pilosity on first gastral tergite abundant, reduced anteriorly. Anterodorsal region of propodeum flat or arched.

Measurements

Holotype. CI 0·92; EL 0·34; EW 0·21; HL 1·93; HW 1·78; ML 1·00; PnL 0·93; PpL 1·01; REL 0·19; SI 1·01; SL 1·80.

Worker ($n=22$). CI 0·90–0·99; EL 0·33–0·40; EW 0·21–0·26; HL 1·84–2·37; HW 1·68–2·31; ML 0·90–1·23; PnL 0·93–1·24; PpL 0·97–1·23; REL 0·17–0·21; SI 0·87–1·03; SL 1·67–2·06.

Comments

Iridomyrmex galbanus appears to be most closely related to *I. viridiaeneus* in that they are the only species in the *I. purpureus* group with green iridescence on the head. They are separable on the basis of the more lightly coloured yellowish red head which is always lighter in colour than the mesosoma in *I. galbanus*, while *I. viridiaeneus* has a reddish brown head which is at most only slightly lighter in colour than the mesosoma.

The presence of *I. galbanus* has been shown to be highly correlated with specific soil types (Greenslade 1987) in South Australia. This specialisation accounts for the limited distribution of *I. galbanus* (Fig. 10) which is allopatric to the main distribution range of *I. viridiaeneus* (Fig. 19).

Etymology

The specific name, derived from Latin, describes the greenish-yellow body colour.

Iridomyrmex greensladei, sp. nov.

(Fig. 11)

Iridomyrmex purpureus form 'small purple' (or 'SP').—Halliday, 1979: 57.

Material Examined

Holotype. Worker, Western Australia, 15 km WSW. of Israeliite Bay, 33°41'16"S., 123°43'03"E., 5.iv.1992, S. O. Shattuck (SOSC #2827) (ANIC, type no. 7971).

Paratypes. 22 workers, 5 queens and 41 males, same data as holotype (ANIC, BMNH, MCZC).

Other material (in ANIC unless otherwise noted). **South Australia:** 100 miles W. of Penong (E. F. Riek); 10 km E. of Paney HS, Gawler Ranges (PJMG); 10 km N. of Buckleboo HS (PJMG); 10 km NW. of Kimba (PJMG); 11 km SE. of Buckleboo HS (PJMG); 12·5 km NW. of Kimba (PJMG); 120 miles W. of Penong (E. F. Riek); 12 miles E. of Kingoonya (TG); 12 miles E. of Penong (TG); 16 km NNW. of Kimba (PJMG); 16 miles NW. of Colona (TG); 17 km NE. of Port Broughton (PJMG); 18 miles W. of Penong (TG); 20 km E. of Paney HS, Gawler Ranges (PJMG); 20 km S. of Iron Baron (PJMG); 22 miles E. of Eucla (TG); 25 miles SW. of Iron Knob (E. F. Riek); 2 km SW. of Tandaie Dam (PJMG); 31 miles NW. of Colona (TG); 31 miles SE. of Colona (TG); 35 miles E. of Ceduna (E. F. Riek); 3 km E. of Peterby, Gawler Ranges (PJMG); 4 miles SE. of Ceduna (TG); 5 km N. of BM565, 25 km E. of Kimba (PJMG); 5 km N. of Kyancutta (PJMG); 9 miles S. of Nullarbor HS (TG); Belmonte, SW. of Kimba (PJMG); Ceduna (E. F. Riek); Darke Peak, Eyre Peninsula (PJMG); Mandoora Cons. Pk (PJMG); N. of Buckleboo (PJMG); Paney HS, Gawler Ranges (PJMG); Port Augusta (RSM); Port Wakefield (G. P. Bogisch) (LACM);