

viewed against a lightly coloured background. Pilosity on first gastral tergite abundant, reduced anteriorly. Anterodorsal region of propodeum generally flat, sometimes weakly arched.

Measurements

Holotype. CI 0.92; EL 0.32; EW 0.19; HL 1.91; HW 1.75; ML 0.84; PnL 0.99; PpL 0.92; REL 0.18; SI 0.94; SL 1.64.

Worker ($n=30$). CI 0.86–0.95; EL 0.26–0.36; EW 0.16–0.23; HL 1.46–2.09; HW 1.26–1.99; ML 0.64–1.06; PnL 0.75–1.08; PpL 0.68–1.04; REL 0.17–0.21; SI 0.89–1.08; SL 1.36–1.82.

Comments

Iridomyrmex reburrus is morphologically similar to *I. sanguineus* in iridescence and in the shape of the posterior pronotum, but differs in having erect or suberect setae present on the lateral margins of the head. *Iridomyrmex reburrus* also averages slightly darker in colour than *I. sanguineus*, especially in living or freshly collected material. However, in older museum material there is broad overlap in colour between these two species. Geographically, *I. reburrus* is sympatric with *I. sanguineus*, but does not extend as far west, south or east as the latter (Figs 14, 16). Additionally, *I. reburrus* is much less common and more patchily distributed than is *I. sanguineus*, and is apparently limited to slightly wetter sites (e.g. floodplain margins, creek edges, urban lawns) (A. N. Andersen, personal communication).

The separation of *I. reburrus* from *I. sanguineus* is based on the development of erect or suberect setae on the lateral margin of the head above the area immediately posterior to the mandibular insertion. The number of setae varies only slightly between individuals from a single nest series, with a much greater amount of variation occurring between nest series. The majority of *I. reburrus* workers have about 15–40 erect setae distributed continuously and approximately uniformly along the entire lateral margin from the posterolateral corner to the mandibular insertion. In some samples, erect or suberect setae may be reduced to about 6–8 located between the posterolateral corner and the level of the compound eyes. There is also a very limited number of nest series (approximately 2% of the material examined) in which some individuals have only 2 to about 4 setae while others have between 4 and about 10. In contrast to *I. reburrus*, *I. sanguineus* generally lacks erect or suberect setae laterally. However, in a few of the nest series examined, some individuals were found to have a limited number of suberect to decumbent setae located between the posterolateral corner of the head and the level of the compound eyes. In these cases, the individuals without erect setae were much more common than individuals with them. Therefore, the identity of single specimens that possess between about 2 and 6 lateral setae may not be reliably determined without reference to other specimens from the same nest series.

Both *I. reburrus* and *I. sanguineus* show the widest variation in body size found within the *I. purpureus* species-group. It was originally thought that the smaller individuals of both species were separate taxa from the larger individuals. However, all metric characters examined show continuous variation (e.g. head length and width, see Fig. 15) between the extreme size forms with no evidence for gaps or other differentiation. Therefore, it is concluded that this variation is intraspecific rather than interspecific, and that both of these species show considerable variation in size.

Etymology

The specific name, derived from Latin, describes the hairy head.

***Iridomyrmex sanguineus* Forel, stat. nov.**

(Figs 4, 15, 16)

Iridomyrmex detectus var. *sanguinea* Forel, 1910: 53.—Forel, 1915: 79 (queen description).

Iridomyrmex purpureus sanguineus Forel.—Greenslade, 1974a: 247.