

At the time Cook's publication appeared two similar and closely allied genera were recognized in the eastern United States, *Proceratium* and *Sysphincta*. For American workers, at least, the generic distinctions were obvious and clear-cut in the workers and females; M. R. Smith (1943) indicated equally sound characters for the males. In the latter caste, the main character used was wing venation. Not mentioned by Smith, but equally distinctive, is the clypeal configuration. In all castes of *Sysphincta* the clypeus possesses a distinct anterior median projection and the petiole is more or less nodiform (although this was recognized to be somewhat variable).

A cursory examination of Cook's figures show a distinctly projecting clypeal margin, a somewhat nodiform petiole and wing venation typically that of *Sysphincta*. Had any competent myrmecologist examined this specimen it would have been placed in that genus without hesitation. Cook was aware of Smith's work on male ants, having referred to it several times and taken a number of the illustrations directly from his paper, so it seems strange that he could have missed such obvious differences as were used to separate the two genera. Nowhere in his discussion of *Proceratium* does Cook make any mention of *Sysphincta*; neither did he attempt to compare his ant with any then placed in that genus.

Following a critical examination of nearly all the described species of *Proceratium* and *Sysphincta*, Brown (1958) found that the supposed generic differences would not hold up, as all the characters show gradation from the *Proceratium* extreme to the *Sysphincta* extreme. Accordingly Brown synonymized *Sysphincta* under *Proceratium*.

Attempts to recognize *P. californicum* from either Cook's description or figures prove futile. The textual comments are inaccurate and misleading and the figures bear little resemblance to the type specimen. The type, now the property of the Snow Museum, Oakland, California, has been made available to me, and with this specimen at hand, it is now possible to unravel some of the confusion and present a more detailed account of the species. Although I find it distasteful to review and criticize the original description in such detail as follows, I feel that if this is not done that there will remain the possibility of further confusion in the future.

CRITIQUE OF COOK'S ORIGINAL DESCRIPTION AND A REDESCRIPTION OF *PROCERATIUM CALIFORNICUM*

Cook gave the length of the type specimen as 3.5 mm. I have carefully measured this individual, and arrive at a length of 4.25 mm; the distance from the anterior ocellus to the thoracic-petiolar articulation is 2.0 mm, the petiole measures 0.4 mm, and the abdomen (with apical segments reflected downward) is 1.85 mm. The statement that the head length (HL) is about equal to head width (HW) is correct; the HL is 0.82 mm, while HW is 0.84 mm, so that HW slightly exceeds HL. In specimens of *P. croceum* (Roger) HL is