

The component names assigned to this complex by Creighton were arranged as follows:

- M. comatus* Wheeler, 1908
- M. melliger melliger* Forel, 1886
- M. melliger californicus* Cole, 1936
- M. melliger orbiceps* Wheeler, 1908
- M. mendax* Wheeler, 1908

The subspecies *M. m. californicus* was known only from the type material, which Creighton had not seen, and was only tentatively placed with *M. melliger*. As I have shown elsewhere (Snelling, The identity of *Myrmecocystus melliger mimicus* var. *californicus* Cole, unpublished), this species must be transferred to the genus *Formica*. Creighton predicted that *M. m. orbiceps* would prove to be a synonym of the nominate form and in 1954 Creighton and Crandall were able to verify this. The only recent change was by Gregg (1963), who proposed returning *M. mendax* to the status originally given it by Wheeler, a subspecies of *M. melliger*.

My own investigation of this genus, based on type material of all forms, has convinced me that drastic changes are necessary within this complex and I propose to arrange the species as follows:

- M. mendax* Wheeler, 1908
- M. melliger* Forel, 1886
- M. semirufus* Emery, 1893
- M. placodops* Forel, 1908

Each of these component species is discussed in detail below.

### ***Myrmecocystus mendax* Wheeler**

*Myrmecocystus melliger* var. *semirufus* Emery, 1893. Zoologische Jahrbuch, Abt. für Systematik, 7:667 (in part).

*Myrmecocystus melliger* subsp. *mendax* Wheeler, 1908. Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist., 24:351, fig. 4, ♀ ♀ ♂; Wheeler, 1912, Psyche, 19:173; Gregg, 1963, Univ. Colo. Press, pp. 645-648.

*Myrmecocystus mendax* Creighton, 1950. Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool., 104: 442, 445.

This species, originally described from Colorado, ranges westward as far as California, through New Mexico and Arizona. It is closely related to *M. semirufus* and even more closely to *M. melliger*. I believe, however, all are distinct species, even though the differences which separate them are slight. When Emery described *M. melliger* var. *semirufus*, he had before him a mixed series of specimens from San Jacinto, California, and from Denver and Pueblo, Colorado; each series represents a different species. The Denver specimens are *M. mendax*, the Pueblo specimens are *M. melliger* and the series from San Jacinto (which includes the type) are *M. semirufus*. From the related species, *M. mendax* may be separated by the characters given in the key below.