

Genus RHOPALOTHRIX Mayr

Rhopalothrix Mayr 1870, *sensu* Brown and Kempf, 1960, p. 230.

The single previously known Indo-Australian species, *R. diadema* Brown & Kempf, was described from rain forest on the lower Busu River, near Lae, N.E. New Guinea. This species is apparently related to the New World ones through the Colombian *R. ciliata* Mayr. In the neotropics the genus ranges from Cuba and Panama south to Tucumán, Argentina. Illustrations of a *diadema* paratype (MCZ) are given in Figures 4 and 5.

RHOPALOTHRIX ORBIS, sp. nov.

(Figs. 1–3)

Holotype worker

AUSTRALIA: QUEENSLAND: Tamborine Mountain, north side near Curtis Falls (Berlese funnel sample, leafmould, rain forest), 8.v.1953, T. E. Woodward. Deposited in ANIC (Type No. 7503). Dimensions are as follows: TL, c.2·6; HL, 0·61; HW, 0·66; CI, 108; ML, 0·20, MI, 33; WL, 0·66. Similar to *R. diadema*, and agreeing with its original description (Brown and Kempf 1960, pp. 239–40, fig. 59) unless otherwise noted.

Description

Head shape as in Figure 1, transverse frontal sulcus lacking. Eyes minute, situated as in *R. diadema*. Mandibles narrow; distal half of inner border with 3 crowded, subequal, apically directed, minute denticles; proximal half of inner border edentate; teeth of apical complex as in *R. diadema*. Labrum lacking a mediobasal tumulus.

Mesosoma compact; profile as in Figure 2, summit at posterior edge of mesonotum, metanotal groove impressed, propodeal dorsum strongly convex, propodeal teeth distinct (compare *R. diadema*, Fig. 5). Humeri rounded in dorsal view. Pronotum broader than long, its maximum width 0·41 mm (0·62 times HW, and twice width of propodeal dorsum). Promesonotal sulcus vestigial on mesosomal dorsum. Metanotal groove with several weak transverse ribs. Propodeal dorsum inflated, forming a transverse elliptical welt, which descends abruptly behind towards the bases of the propodeal teeth; the latter parallel in dorsal view, and the propodeal declivity slightly concave. Petiole and postpetiole generally as in *R. diadema*. Postpetiole almost exactly twice the width of petiole and 0·7 times as wide as first gastric tergite. The latter 0·59 mm wide; almost precisely as broad as long.

Entire body densely and finely granulose-punctate and opaque. Ground pilosity of white, orbicular, subappressed, squamiform hairs, distributed as in *R. diadema*, but more abundant, especially on postpetiole and gaster, and less variable in size, especially on head and its appendages. Larger specialized hairs similar in structure and distribution to those of *R. diadema*, except only 8 in anterior arc on head, and 6 on first gastric tergite. Those on the latter form a posterior marginal row across the sclerite, which otherwise bears hairs of a single size class, unlike *R. diadema* (compare Figs. 3 and 4). Colour almost uniformly medium reddish brown, darker than in *R. diadema*.