"grade" standing parallel to *Proceratium* in ectatommine evolution, especially to those species then assigned to *Sysphincta.*

Brown, however, related *Aulacopone* to *Heteroponera*, a genus which has its distribution somewhat more peripheral to the main northern continents than that of *Gnamptogenys,* especially in the Old World. There are two faunistic elements : one in eastern and south-western mainland Australia, Tasmania and New Zealand; the other in South America, from Panama south to Uruguay and Chile (Kempf and Brown 1968). *Heteroponera* is unknown from the Palearctic, Oriental and Ethiopian regions, or from Melanesia. It has no known fossil record. Undescribed species known from Australia could at least treble its continental fauna of three species recognised by Brown, and the name *H. imbellis* (Emery), as applied by Brown, certainly refers to a partly intractable complex of several Australian species. New Zealand has a single known endemic species. Kempf (1972) listed 13 Neotropical species.

The *Aulacopone* female (Figs. 1–4) is very like her counterparts in species of the *Heteroponera imbellis* complex, in size, general habitus, structure of the mesosoma, and colour. *Aulacopone* and *Heteroponera* share several major features distinguishing them from *Gnamptogenys,* including the presence of a median longitudinal costa, distinct from other sculpture, on the head (terminating in front of the anterior ocellus in females), and the absence of a tooth or spine on the upper surface of each posterior coxa (a feature of almost all *Gnamptogenys* species, found nowhere else among the Ectatommini). *Aulacopone* also shares with *Heteroponera* those features distinguishing the latter from the neotropical genus *Acanthoponera;* these include the absence of long propodeal spines and a strong tooth or spine on the petiolar summit, and the lack of a prominent basal lobe accompanying a distinct submedian tooth on each tarsal claw. Basal lobes are characteristic of *Acanthoponera.* Submedian teeth are vestigially represented on the claws of some neotropical *Heteroponera* species, though they are lacking from all Australian species, and from *Aulacopone.* The lack of submedian teeth on the tarsal claws also distinguishes *Aulacopone* and *Heteroponera* from the prominent and diverse Australia-based genus *Rhytidoponera,* the species of which, in addition, almost all have a strong tooth-like process on each lateral pronotal margin. Such structures are lacking in other ectatommine genera, including *Aulacopone,* and all *Hete-*