AMERICAN MUSEUM

NOVITATES

1949b

PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
CITY OF NEW YORK JANUARY 25, 1949 NUMBER 1398

NEW PONERINE ANTS FROM EQUATORIAL AFRICA

By Neal Albert Weber[1]

all forms ✓✓

Descriptions of new species in the genera *Discothyrea*, *Probolomyrmex*, *Centromyrmex*, and *Asphinctopone* are presented in the present paper. They are rare, archaic relicts of interest to the student of zoogeography, while the blind *Centromyrmex* has striking adaptations for locomotion in subterranean termite nests and for preying on these insects. The genera have not previously been taken outside of coastal west Africa or south Africa, and the present records extend the range markedly east or north to indicate that the species represent remnants of an ancient continental distribution.

The genus *Discothyrea* has a tropicopolitan distribution and includes New Zealand, which must have acquired it before or in the Mesozoic. The genus *Probolomyrmex*, in the same tribe, Proceratiini, has hitherto been known from a species represented by west and south African specimens, a species in Java, one in Bolivia, and two in Panama. The genus *Centromyrmex*, of the tribe Ponerini, is known from a species in Rhodesia, Angola, and Portuguese East Africa, and a second species from Cameroon as well as from the Neotropical and Indo-Malayan regions. The new species, like the Indo-Malayan *feae* Emery, is probably an obligatory predator on termites. The worker was helpless when exposed to the light and seemed incapable of locomotion on the ground. The genus *Asphinctopone*, of the tribe Ponerini, has hitherto been known from one worker taken in Nigeria in 1912. The finding of a second specimen in east central French Equa-

[1] Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania.