

Not only do the termitaria furnish food but they conserve moisture which enables the ant brood to exist in the cells under arid conditions during dry seasons. The ants which nest in rotted wood or in earth cells under a leaf cover in scrub forest also find relatively high and constant humidity. Since they are minute in size, it is the microclimate that is important for them, for food is everywhere. They are regular inhabitants of the earth and humus of rain forests and have become widespread throughout tropical Africa.

PRISTOMYRMEX MAYR

Pristomyrmex MAYR, 1866, Verhandl. Zool. Bot. Gesellsch. Wien, vol. 16, p. 903.

The genotype, *P. pungens* Mayr, 1866 (*loc. cit.*), is coarsely sculptured, lacks pronotal tubercles or spines, has long epinotal spines, lacks smooth antennal scrobes, and has the median carina of the clypeus well developed. It is generically different from *Hylidris myersi* Weber, 1941, but clearly related. Of nine identified species attached to *Pristomyrmex* in the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, all from the Indo-Malayan, Chinese, and Australasian regions, two are heavily sculptured as in the genotype and show other similarities; seven are mostly smooth and shining. While most lack pronotal spines or tubercles, *P. picteti* Emery and *P. quadridentatus* André of Australia have spines. The nodes of the pedicel of *quadridentatus*, *laevigatus* Emery of the Philippines, and *mandibularis* Mann of Fiji are similar to those of *Hylidris myersi* though differing in other characters.

It is obvious here, as in such genera as *Tetramorium*, that we are dealing with a complex of species differing greatly among themselves yet having certain characters in common. The weight attached to these characters will differ widely among investigators and as more species become known, or as study becomes more critical, the tendency will be to split up these large, heterogeneous genera into more homogeneous aggregates of species. These, of course, should have a common ancestor, but evidence will be limited. There exist between recognized genera species with intermediate characters, even between such different genera as *Tetramorium* and *Calyptomyrmex*; *T. scrobiferum* Emery is stated to approach *Calyptomyrmex* in several distinctive characters.