

348
 Willowsella
 See p. 22

33. THE ANTS OF RENNELL AND BELLONA ISLANDS

BY

EDWARD O. WILSON

MUSEUM OF COMPARATIVE ZOOLOGY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY,
 CAMBRIDGE, MASS., U. S. A.

The ant fauna of Rennell Island and its small neighbor, Bellona Island, was completely unknown until 1934, when W. M. WHEELER listed several species collected by MAURICE WILLOWS, Jr., during the Templeton Crocker Expedition of 1933. The picture is now considerably strengthened by the addition of the material to be reported upon in the present paper. This material comes from three sources: the Danish Expedition (Dan. Exp.), which as a subsidiary enterprise of the Galathea Expedition Round the World 1950-52, stayed on Rennell Island from 12 October to 14 November, 1951, under the direction of Dr. TORBEN WOLFF (WOLFF, 1955a and 1955b); a British expedition (Brit. Exp.) conducted on Rennell Island from 15 October to 27 November 1953 by Mr. J. D. BRADLEY and Mrs. DIANA BRADLEY under the auspices of the British Museum (Natural History) (BRADLEY 1955); and a private collection made on Rennell and Bellona during November 20-30, 1955, by Mr. E. S. BROWN. The Danish collection is deposited in the Zoological Museum of Copenhagen and the Bradley and Brown collections in the British Museum (Natural History). The author wishes to express his appreciation to these institutions and to the collectors mentioned for the opportunity of studying this valuable material.

The basis of our present knowledge of the ants of the Solomon Islands as a whole is the monograph published by W. M. MANN in 1919. This is an unusually sound and thorough work of its kind, partly because MANN collected in the islands himself, from 19 May to 24 November 1916. An entertaining account of his experiences during these early and difficult times is given in his well-known autobiography, "Ant Hill Odyssey". More recently, the present author has been revising the ants of the Solomons as part of a larger study of the Melanesian fauna (WILSON, 1958 and 1959a). The available collections from the main islands of the Solomons have been growing rapidly, thanks largely to the collecting program of the B. P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu, under the direction of J. L. GRESSITT.