

distinct and 3-segmented, about as long as the remainder of the funiculus. Body smooth and shining, with the following exceptions: six longitudinal carinulae between inner margin of eye and antennal fossa; other carinulae scattered between the frontal carinae and frontal triangle and along the dorsal plane of the scutum; a patch of weak rugoreticulum on the anterior half of the lateral pronotal face; and shagreening over the propodeum and petiolar peduncle. Pilosity moderately dense over entire body and appendages, consisting primarily of straw-yellow, thin, suberect to erect and slightly curving hairs. Body uniformly light reddish brown, appendages a moderately contrasting yellowish brown.

*Paratype queens.* Head width 0.46-0.48 mm. All are closely similar to the lectotype (see fig. 4).

Kartabo, Guyana: alate lectotype and 6 alate paratype queens (W.M. WHEELER, 25 August 1920, acc. no. 638; associated with minor workers of a species of the *P. minutula* group). Also paratype queen (W.M. WHEELER, 31 August 1920, acc. no. 721; associated with 2 major workers of apparently the same species as the minor workers collected with the lectotype).

The name *Pheidole microgyna* is of marginal validity, having been scarcely mentioned by Wheeler in 1928 and then totally neglected in the literature for the next 50 years. Here is Wheeler's entire account: "In one minute and perhaps parasitic species (*Ph. microgyna* sp. nov), which I found in British Guiana, all three of the castes [queen, minor worker, major worker — E.O.W.] are nearly of the same size... if *Ph. microgyna* be really parasitic, the small stature of its queen is probably due to a secondary reduction, but if it is non-parasitic, we may be dealing with a very primitive condition".

In rediscovering Wheeler's material in the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard University, I have taken the step of describing it adequately under the same name used by Wheeler. It seems prudent to treat Wheeler's brief mention of the species in 1928 as the valid description, even through a case might be made for using a new name and ascription (but with potentially even greater confusion in the future). I trust that the species will be left as *P. microgyna* Wheeler for purposes of nomenclatural stability.

*Associated workers.* Of greater importance is the worker series collected with the *microgyna* queens and what they reveal concerning the biology of the queens. The minor and major workers are very similar to series of *P. minutula* Mayr from Tingo Maria, Peru (compared with a syntype by W.L. Brown), and series collected by Joseph Bequaert and myself at Belem and Manaus, Brazil, from the swollen leaf bases of the melastome understory shrub *Maieta guianensis*. The Belem series had been identified by Wheeler as *P. minutula* subsp. *folicola* Forel, but the differences do not seem very important. The *microgyna*-associated workers, on the other hand, have several significant morphological traits that would seem to distinguish them at the species level from *minutula*. As shown in figure 5, their propodeal spines are acute and upwardly curving (they are not only shorter and less acute but also quite straight in *minutula*); and the head of the major has shorter rugae on its anterior surface and is more shining.