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**ANTS OF THE DOMINICAN AMBER  
(HYMENOPTERA: FORMICIDAE).  
1. TWO NEW MYRMICINE GENERA AND  
AN ABERRANT *PHEIDOLE***

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Ants rival dipterans as the most abundant fossils in the Dominican Republic amber. Since they are also phylogenetically compact and relatively easily identified, these insects offer an excellent opportunity to study dispersal and evolution in a Tertiary West Indian fauna.

The age of the Dominican amber has not yet been determined, but combined stratigraphic and foraminiferan analyses of its matrix suggest an origin at least as far back as the early Miocene (Saunders in Baroni Urbani and Saunders, 1982). I am inclined to favor this minimal age (about 20 million years) or at most a late Oligocene origin, for the following reason. In a sample of 596 amber pieces containing an estimated 1,248 ants that I recently examined (439 now deposited in the Museum of Comparative Zoology), I found 36 genera and well-defined subgenera, to which may be added one other, *Trachymyrmex*, reported earlier by Baroni Urbani (1980a). Of these 37 taxa only three, or 8%, are unknown from the living world fauna (see Table 1). The relative contemporaneity of the Dominican amber ants contrasts with that of the Baltic amber, which is Eocene to early Oligocene in age (Larsson, 1978) and possesses 44% extinct genera; that is, 19 of the 43 genera recorded by Wheeler (1914) are unknown among living ants. The Dominican amber ants also differ to a similar degree from those of the Florissant, Colorado, shales, which are upper Oligocene in age and contain 8 of 20, or 40%, extinct genera (Carpenter, 1930).