Rica, near the confluence of the Rio Puerto Viejo and Rio Sarapiqui (84°02'W, 10°26'N). The collections were made during March 22-27, 1985. The first colony was located in a large rotting pod of *Pentaclethra macroloba* (Mimosaceae) partially buried in leaf litter. When the two halves of the pod were pulled apart 8 workers, the queen, a worker pupa, and several larvae in different stages of development were found within a 5-cm-wide space. Another worker was found alone in the litter 20 cm from the pod. A careful search of the ground and litter through a 1-m radius of the nest failed to reveal other *Basiceros*.

The second nest was in a soft rotting log about 40 cm long and 20 cm wide, resting in litter on the forest floor. The ants were in two groups. One was in a 4-cm-wide chamber immediately adjacent to a pair of chambers containing fungus gardens of an attine ant (*Apterostigma* sp.); it consisted of 19 workers, 2 males, 18 worker pupae, 3 male pupae, one queen pupa, 24 larvae of various sizes, and two eggs. The other, in a similar-sized chamber 30 cm from the first, contained the queen and 25 workers. When this colony was transferred to an observation chamber for closer study, the workers evicted the *Apterostigma* workers mixed in with them, by dragging them away and dropping them, and cleared a circular area about 2 cm across in which the brood were placed.

The third colony was in a soft rotting log about 30 cm long and 25 cm wide. All of the ants were in a single group in two adjacent cavities which had a joint diameter of approximately 10 cm. The population was as follows: 1 dealate queen, 2 alate queens (one callow), 44 workers, 3 worker pupae, 5 queen pupae, 11 larvae, and 2 eggs.

A single dealate queen was discovered in a large rotting log in another La Selva locality on March 23, unaccompanied by workers or brood. Finally two workers were found in a third locality in secondary forest, about 2 m apart and evidently foraging. One was in a 15-cm-wide soft rotting log, the other in the rotting stem of a fallen palm frond.

**Cryptic coloration and behavior**

The camouflage of the *B. manni* workers and queen is the most effective we have personally encountered in the ants, and we have seen a large majority of the genera in living condition during field trips around the world. When the ants are standing still on their nest material, they are virtually invisible to the human eye and presumably also well concealed from most visually orienting predators, such as birds and lizards (see *fig. 1*). Experience showed that the colonies could best be located most readily by searching for the distinctive white larvae and pupae, then scanning for the adults around them.

The cryptic coloration of the *B. manni* exoskeleton is enhanced in the queen and older workers by the accumulation of fine soil particles in a dry, mud-like layer on the upper body surface (*fig. 2*). The material is evidently wiped off the surrounding soil and litter by the upper layer of hairs, which are shaped roughly like tapered bottle brushes. It is held in place by a lower layer of strongly curved " feather " hairs (*fig. 3*). A more detailed description of this unusual pilosity, along with similar patterns in other basicerotine and stegomyrmecine species, is given elsewhere (HÖLLDOBLER and WILSON, 1986). Histological examination has failed to reveal the presence in *B. manni* of special secretory cells that might contribute to the camouflage