

ON THE FORMICIDAE OF THE AZORES ¹By I. H. H. YARROW ²

Several entomological expeditions to the Azores have collected ants. Wheeler (1908), Santschi (1933), Donisthorpe (1936), Wellenius (1949) and Carthy (1955a) have published on these collections and have demonstrated how very poor the ant fauna is in species if not in actual number of individuals. The present collection, made by Per Brinck and E. Dahl of the Lund University Expedition, is no exception for despite the large number of specimens obtained—567 individuals mounted, 45 samples in spirit and 15 in sawdust, more than 1000 in all—they represent no more than 9 species, only one of which (*Ponera punctatissima* Roger) is a new record for these islands. Three species recorded from earlier expeditions were not encountered. Perhaps the most interesting feature of the ant-fauna is its paucity. With the exception of the honeybee all Hymenoptera in the Azores must be accidental introductions and so far as the ants are concerned, there seems no reason why all but one of these should not have been carried along with the many trees and plants shipped to the islands from Portugal. Tutin (1953) writing of the flora notes that of the 500 established plant species, more than 200 are accidental or deliberate introductions, mostly from Europe. Traffic between Madeira and the Azores must be responsible for the presence of *Monomorium carbonarium* (Smith) in both, but otherwise there seems no good reason to think of Madeira rather than Portugal as the source of the Azores antfauna. Indeed one species, *Aphaenogaster senilis* (Mayr) occurs commonly in Portugal but is unknown in Madeira. Carthy (1955), referring to Hymenoptera generally, suggested that islands with jetties and quaysides to which trading ships

1) Report No. 51 from the Lund University Expedition in 1957 to the Azores and Madeira.

2) Department of Entomology, British Museum (Natural History) London.