

***Ponera punctatissima* Roger**

*Ponera punctatissima* Roger 1859.

São Miguel: Ribeira Seca, 18.III.57, 2 workers.

This is a widely distributed 'tramp' species which is well established in most of the warmer parts of the world and in many of the colder parts too but there it can survive only under artificially heated conditions. Its rareness in the Azores may imply that it is a fairly recent arrival which finds it difficult to compete with the very abundant *P. eduardi*.

## MYRMICINAE

***Aphaenogaster senilis* (Mayr)**

*Aphaenogaster testaceopilosa* (Lucas 1846), Emery 1908 [G], Wheeler 1927 [Azores], nec Lucas.

*Aphaenogaster senilis* var. *acoreensis* Santschi 1933 [Fa, T], Donisthorpe 1936.

*Aphaenogaster testaceopilosa* var. *acoreensis* Santschi 1933, Wellenius 1949 [Fa, P, T], Carthy 1955 a [Fa, P].

*Aphaenogaster testaceopilosa* var. *gemella* (Roger 1862), Donisthorpe 1936 [P], nec Roger.

Faial: Praia do Almoxarife, 31.III.57, loc. 72; Horta, Ribeira dos Flamengos. 31.III.57, loc. 71; Flamengo Bay, 31.III.57.

This is by far the largest and most striking ant species in the Azores if one excludes the gross females of *Lasius niger*. It is a fast moving underground nesting, ant, abundant in Portugal, Spain and along the north side of the Mediterranean. As well as from Faial it has been recorded in earlier collections from Pico, Graciosa and Terceira. Apparently neither *senilis* nor any of the North African species of which there are several has become established in Madeira. Santschi's variety *acoreensis* seems to be covered by the variation found in any European population and does not, I think, indicate any evolutionary trend peculiar to the Azores. Although I have not been able to trace the specimen from Pico treated by Donisthorpe as var. *gemella* I have little doubt that this was no more than an individual aberrant from the *senilis* population of this Island. *A. gemella* is a species in its own right, occurring in Majorca and in North Africa. Its male has a short broad head crowned with three enormous ocelli quite unlike that of the *senilis* male whose head is long and narrow and with normal ocelli. According to Bernard (1958) *gemella* is entirely vegetarian whereas *senilis* and the North African *testaceopilosa* are at least largely carnivorous.