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NOTES ON THE BEHAVIOR OF THE DIMORPHIC ANT
*OLIGOMYRMEX OVERBECKI**
(HYMENOPTERA: FORMICIDAE)

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Species of the myrmicine genus *Oligomyrmex* are common in tropical Asia, although the ants are easily overlooked because of their small size and inconspicuous activities. The genus is of special interest because of the well developed worker dimorphism shown by all species. Some natural history information is available on *Erebomyrma* (Eidmann, 1936; Wilson, 1962, 1986), the American sister group to *Oligomyrmex* which has only recently been resurrected from synonymy with that genus (Wilson, 1986). However, the natural history of Old World *Oligomyrmex* ants has never been investigated.

I have made preliminary behavioral observations on a colony of *Oligomyrmex overbecki* Viehmeyer collected in Singapore (fig. 1). This species is clearly one of the world's smallest ants, with minor workers having head widths of 0.29–0.32 mm, while the "miniature" majors have head widths of 0.42–0.45 mm.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study colony was collected on the grounds of the Botanic Gardens of Singapore, under bark still firmly attached to the trunk of a large *Eugenia grandis* tree (Myrtaceae), within 50 cm of ground level. The colony was placed in a plastic box 20 × 10 × 7 cm deep, with a moistened paper-mache bottom gouged towards one end with several small, shallow chambers, which were then covered with a sheet of glass. The ants moved into the artificial nest chambers, where they could readily be observed through the glass.

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