

the largest prey recorded was a 7 mm long *Rhopalidia* wasp weighing 27 times as much as a *Proatta* worker. Foragers only detected prey very close to them, and would rush at the prey and try to grip it with their mandibles. Attempts to sting the prey sometimes followed, but were often poorly executed.

Arthropods larger than *Proatta* workers were captured by group predation. However, even prey vulnerable to predation by single foragers were often more quickly subdued if one or more workers aided the first.

When a worker succeeded in gripping onto a large arthropod it would attempt to hold the prey in place. Sometimes the worker was dragged along or bitten by the quarry until it released its grip. Yet solitary workers were occasionally successful at restraining relatively huge prey for up to 15 min. The workers accomplished little on their own: large, active prey were never successfully captured by single ants. However, the first ant was often joined within minutes by others, which helped to pin the prey in place. The arrival of aid seemed to be fortuitous, at least initially: foragers sometimes passed within 1 cm of ants struggling with prey without orienting toward them. Recruitment trails were often formed to large prey after several workers had arrived at the prey.

The importance of myrmecophagy to *P. butteli* is reflected in the abundance of ant remains in and around nests. *Proatta* will feed on freshly killed ants. Predation of live ants also occurs, although it is difficult to distinguish predation from defense. In the field I have seen workers capture *Oecophylla longinoda*, *Odontoponera transversa* and sundry *Camponotus*. These ants weigh 10-15 times as much as a *Proatta* worker. Only a small proportion of capture attempts succeed, since the larger ants usually move too quickly for the *Proatta* to respond to their presence.

The most common formicid prey for the Singapore colonies was *Pheidologeton diversus*. In this species the workers group hunt. (MOFFETT, 1984). *Proatta* occasionally captured raiding *P. diversus* ants, but the majority of *P. diversus* taken were stragglers from raids, in most cases wounded ants. Curiously, colonies in Singapore often had a few live *P. diversus* minors and medias in or near their nest entrances. These ants moved as if drugged. The *Proatta* sometimes dragged these ants about, but mostly ignored them; whether they were eventually consumed is unknown.

Large prey were transported to the nest by groups of workers (group transport was poorly developed, however, because workers tended to pull in conflicting directions). These prey slowly pulled apart inside the nest. Ant prey were often difficult to dismember: 1 hr after the *Proatta* had dragged several *Camponotus* and *Oecophylla* ants inside their captive nest, some of the prey were still capable of moving about feebly. Within another hour, however, most of the ants had been torn to pieces and were being consumed.