

pronotum and anterior mesonotum strongly convex; posterior of mesonotum descending to the mesopropodeal impression, forming an obtuse angle with the propodeal base.

Abdomen. Base of propodeum slightly shorter than declivity; propodeal spines short and projecting dorsad; petiole, in profile, stout and with a short anterior peduncle, anterior face gently curved and posterior face short; apex of node weakly angular to moderately convex; seen from above the sides of the petiole parallel and the node notched in the middle; postpetiole in profile strongly convex dorsally, slightly concave and much shorter ventrally; seen from above, postpetiole two times or more wider than petiole and with lateral connules; gaster oval and much smaller than the head.

Sculpture. Cephalic longitudinal rugae extending posteriorly and somewhat divergently; the lateral rugae usually do not reach the occipital lobes; occipital lobes smooth and shining laterally and dorsally; rugae present on the genae, extending longitudinally; posterior to the eyes the surfaces smooth and shining; head posteriorly with coarse circular piligerous punctures. Dorsum of pronotum and mesonotum with longitudinal or transverse rugae or both, the interstitial areas with fine reticulate punctation. The mesopropodeal impression wide and with longitudinal rugules, the interstitial areas smooth and weakly shining; the propodeal base and declivity finely reticulo-punctate and weakly shining. Several transverse striae present between bases of spines; petiole and postpetiole opaque and weakly reticulo-punctate; gaster smooth and shining except in the basalmost area where it is opaque and weakly punctate.

Pilosity. Hairs yellow, pointed, short and semi-erect and sparse on the anterior face of the head, short and long and semi-erect ventrally; dorsum of thorax with numerous short and long erect hairs measuring up to 0.26 mm; pedicel with numerous semi-erect short and long hair; sparse pubescence confined to antennae and appendages.

Color. Reddish brown, appendages lighter; dorsum of gaster slightly darker; anterior margin of clypeus and the border of mandibles dark.

Description of Worker

Body length 2.30 to 2.40 mm. Head length 0.56 to 0.64 mm; head width 0.56 to 0.58 mm. Thoracic length 0.74 to 0.77 mm. Scape length 0.53 to 0.59 mm. Scape Index 92 to 94 mm.

Head usually a little longer than broad, occipital borders weakly convex; frontal area impressed and with a longitudinal striation in the middle; frontal carinae slightly divergent; clypeus with a weak median carina and 2 longitudinal striae laterally; anterior border curved and without any notch. Mandibles slender with 2 large and sharp apical teeth and 4 or 5 smaller teeth on the remaining masticatory border; scapes usually surpassing the occipital border by an amount no greater than the first funicular joint; eyes large with about 45 facets and measuring about 0.15 mm in diameter. In profile, pro-mesonotum moderately convex; propodeal spines small, sharp, and projecting obliquely dorsad.

Abdomen. Petiole as in the major, except the crest is proportionately much broader; postpetiole convex dorsally and flat ventrally, seen from above the sides are strongly convex and almost 2 times wider than petiole; gaster oval.

Sculpture. Head reticulo-punctate and opaque; a few rugules on the genae, between the eyes and on the mandibles; thorax, in profile, reticulo-punctate; dorsum of pronotum and mesonotum usually with a few longitudinal or transverse striae; petiole reticulo-punctate; sides of postpetiole weakly punctate, dorsum weakly shining; gaster smooth and shining.

Pilosity. Erect hair yellow, short on the dorsal surface of head, longer on the ventral surface and anterior clypeal margin; long and sparse on thorax and pedicel; gaster with rather sparse hair of mixed lengths; pubescence confined to the antennae and legs.

Color. Reddish brown, sometimes the mandibles and legs are lighter.

Holotype: Major, collected near Gainesville, Florida by M. A. Naves.

Paratypes: 3 majors and 20 workers probably from the same nest as the holotype, collected as follows:

Dr. John F. Carroll collected one major and several workers on August 2, 1973, near Gainesville, Florida. M. A. Naves collected three majors and several workers in August, 1975, at the same locality.

The holotype major and 3 worker paratypes will be deposited at the Florida State Collection of Arthropods, Division of Plant Industry, Gainesville, Florida and in the M. A. Naves collections.

This species was also collected by me at Tall Timbers Research Station.

Discussion

This species has unusual behavior which is not common to other species of *Pheidole* known to me. It was always found in shaded areas in sandy soils among tall trees such as pines and oaks. It forages when the temperatures are not high and avoids direct sunlight. It is easily found at dusk or in the morning. The workers usually go out at random. Usually there are no more than 15 workers foraging at one time, and the foraging territory usually is within 5 meters from the nest entrance. The nest entrance is small and usually very hard to spot. The workers are sluggish compared with most other species. The majors are very rare. For a year two colonies were periodically checked and yielded only one callow major in 1975 and two majors in March, 1976. Dr. John F. Carroll also collected one major in the same locality in August, 1973. Periodic excavation usually also yielded a chamber approximately 4x2x2 cms located 30 cm deep and full of various seeds, some apparently with a black fungal mycelium. Although the excavation for one of these colonies at one time was 1.7 meters deep and 1.5 meters in diameter, I was unable to locate the main chamber or any majors or any sexual forms. Probably the main chamber or chambers are located very deep in the ground. It seems quite obvious that the colonies are not large. The disproportional size of the major and its rarity also seems to indicate that it has limited importance in sustaining the colony, which is not true for most species of the genus.

Another feature of this species when disturbed is the ability of the workers to feign death. The minors try to flex themselves around particles of soil which make them very difficult to see. The majors hide themselves and also seem to