

ignored the intruders or moved away. Thus the majors were apparently responding to nest intrusion. After a period in which the corpse was ignored, the minors found and began feeding on the embiopteran.

*Acanthomyrmex ferox*. Defensive behaviors of workers of *Acanthomyrmex ferox* confronted with *Lophomyrmex* were similar to those described for *A. notabilis*: both majors and minors antennated the intruder rapidly and then attempted to bite it, or to swing their gasters beneath their bodies in the direction of the intruder, or both. As in *A. notabilis*, the gaster tip was usually brought into contact with the intruder, at least intermittently: examination of photographs indicates that the ants were extruding their stings. *Acanthomyrmex notabilis* workers have the sting apparatus greatly reduced relative to the size of the ant (Kugler 1978), and this is also true of *A. ferox*; however, this appears not to preclude a defensive function.

#### DISCUSSION

COLONY SIZE. *Acanthomyrmex* colonies appear to be small: the *A. notabilis* and *A. ferox* colonies apparently both consisted of less than fifty individuals. In the *A. notabilis* colony, 7.5% (or three out of 40) of the workers were majors, while this figure is 4.1% (two out of 49) in the *ferox* colony. Colonies of *A. notabilis* from Mt. Klabat collected by William L. Brown, Jr. (pers. comm.) also contained about 40–50 workers, including 1–3 majors.

In both *Acanthomyrmex notabilis* and *A. ferox*, workers frequently held immatures passively in their mandibles for long periods, even during intervals of colony quiescence. Similar behavior has been observed for workers of the trap-jawed formicine ant *Myrmoteris toro* (Moffett, in press). The brood holding behavior in both cases seems to represent a means of insuring that workers can rapidly disperse with brood whenever the colony is disturbed. This is a particularly useful strategy for ants nesting in exposed sites where disturbances are common. As in the *A. ferox* colony described here, the *Myrmoteris* colony, which consisted of 22 workers and one queen, had been nesting between leaves lying loose within leaf litter on the forest floor.

Another common trait of *Acanthomyrmex*, *Myrmoteris toro*, and many other ants with small colonies (including colonies of