

**Taxonomic Notes on Ants of the Genus *Megalomyrmex* Forel,
with the Description of New Species (Hymenoptera, Formicidae)**

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(With 12 text-figures)

The genus *Megalomyrmex* was first created for a small group of Neotropical ants distinguished by fairly large size (10 mm), besides other characters. In the meantime, small species have also been added to the genus, the tiniest member being so far *drifti*, which measures little over 2 mm in length. The genus is strictly Neotropical, distributed from southern Mexico to central Chile, northeastern Argentina and southeastern Brazil. These ants, according to presently available collecting records, are by no means common. Material is generally scarce in the collections.

Ettershank (1966) has revised the generic diagnosis and given a resumé of what is known of the biology of the species. The species-level taxonomy of the group is still in a primitive state. The existing keys are completely out of date; the first, by Emery (1890), because it deals only with four of the five species then known; the second, by Wheeler (1925), because it is mostly a compilation from the literature and uses characters of doubtful value in specific discrimination. Only *silvestrii* was recently revised (Kempf & Brown, 1968), with copious synonymy resulting from this critical study. There still is a need to detect and define good diagnostic characters for the species, indispensable for the elaboration of good keys.

The present paper presents a taxonomic contribution to the knowledge of the group but is no attempt at a full-scale revision. Three new species are added to the genus; three species already described are discussed.