

REPORT ON NEOTROPICAL DACETINE ANT STUDIES (Hymenoptera: Formicidae)¹

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(With 12 text-figures)

Since W. L. Brown, Jr. started in the middle of the forties the taxonomic revision of the World fauna of the ant tribe Dacetini, this agglomerate of numerous genera and species became again a manageable unit within the subfamily Myrmicinae, and the roster of new forms was noticeably increased. For the Neotropical region alone nearly 50 new species have since been described. The discovery of such new species is a result not only of a more thorough analysis of the pertinent material accumulated in the collections — an automatic consequence of nearly any revision —, but also of a more systematic search for these insects by using specialized collecting techniques such as the Berlese funnel.

The present study follows the wake of this endeavor by offering the description of four species new to science, the first diagnosis of a still unknown caste of two already known species, and significant new locality records for several other species.

I am greatly indebted to my friend and colleague Professor W. L. Brown, Jr. of Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, for

letting me describe and name the new forms and supplying part of the specimens for which a new locality record is given. The remaining material was received as a gift from the following collectors: Col. M. Alvarenga, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Mr. Karol Lenko, Instituto Biológico de São Paulo, Brazil; Mr. Fritz Plaumann, Nova Teutônia, S. C., Brazil; Dr. C. W. Rettenmeyer, University of Connecticut, Storrs, Conn., U. S. A.; Mr. J. A. Winder, CSIRO Biological Control Station, Curitiba, Paraná, Brazil, to all of whom I am very grateful. The work was performed under a fellowship of the "Conselho Nacional de Pesquisas" of Brazil (Proc. 6836/68) with equipment donated by the "Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado São Paulo" (Proc. 71/543).

In citing measurements and proportions the definitions used in Brown's work on dacetine ants (cf. Brown, 1962: 254) and already standard in the taxonomy of the tribe have been followed.

Most of the specimens dealt with here are in my private collection (WWK), others belong to the collections of the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard University (MCZ), and of the "Museu de Zoologia da Universidade de São Paulo" (MZUSP).

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