

invalid infrasubspecific name). Its workers and those of *foreli* are remarkably similar and share many features including the configuration of the petiolar spines. They might well be conspecific. However, examination of available queens of the two forms suggests that the queens are not conspecific. Females of *P. foreli* closely resemble their workers, while the only available putative female of the '*P. relucens decipiens papuana*' (from Emery's study series) shows significant differences. The petiolar spines, for example, are situated on the uppermost angles of the leading dorsal edge of the segment. Because of this, I doubt that the '*P. relucens decipiens papuana*' female is conspecific with the workers of Emery's series. The series thus appears to be composite and the workers and female might not have been collected together and actually represent two different species.

Colonies of *P. foreli* usually nest in old, partly rotten logs, but some were also found nesting in the ground, under stones (Taylor, pers.comm.). The known distribution ranges from Iron Range on Cape York Peninsula, south to Hinchinbrook Island (Grid cells 12/143, 15/145, 16/145, 17/145, 17/146, 18/146).

***Polyrhachis inusitata* sp.nov.**

(Figs 4,5,9)

MATERIAL EXAMINED

HOLOTYPE: AUSTRALIA: Queensland, Cape York Penins., West Claudie Riv., Iron Range area, 12.44 S x 143.14 E (type locality), 3-10 December 1985, G.B.Monteith and D.Cook (worker).

Paratypes: data as for holotype (1 worker). McIlwraith Ra., Leo Creek Rd., 10-20 July 1976, P.Filewood (1 worker).

TYPE DEPOSITION

Holotype in QM (Type no. T.11122); 1 paratype each in ANIC and RJK.

WORKER

Dimensions (holotype cited first): TL 10.53, 9.38-9.82; HL 2.56, 2.31-2.37; HW 1.87, 1.72-1.75; CI 73, 74; SL 3.53, 3.30-3.48; SI 189, 192-199; PW 1.61, 1.36-1.51; MTL 3.56, 3.38-3.58 (3 measured).

Mandibles with 5 teeth. Clypeus almost straight in profile, anterior margin obtusely truncated medially. Head in front of eyes converging anteriorly, its lateral margins shallowly concave. Behind the eyes the head is markedly wider, with the sides forming a blunt continuous ridge

extending on each side toward the posterior angle, where it meets a similar ridge which commences on each side at the base of mandible and separates the gena from the ventral parts of the head. Eyes large, convex, situated well back giving the face a somewhat elongated appearance; in full face view the eyes clearly break the outline of the head. Frontal carinae with strongly raised lobes. Pronotal dorsum armed with a pair of relatively short, downturned, dorsally flattened spines; their lateral borders continuous with the posteriorly converging pronotal margins. Mesonotal dorsum narrower than pronotal, feebly transversely convex. Propodeum with anterior angles somewhat upturned, sides weakly margined and only slightly converging posteriorly, terminating in ill-defined angles. Petiolar dorsum armed with a pair of relatively long, slender, subparallel spines; the lateral teeth reduced to more or less distinct denticles. Base of first gastral tergite shallowly truncated.

Mandibles finely longitudinally striate, with numerous piliferous pits. Clypeus and front of head mostly finely irregularly rugose; sculptural intensity decreasing laterally, with sides of head finely reticulate, and increasing dorsally, with occiput more or less rugose. Dorsum and sides of mesosoma reticulate-punctate. Petiole and gaster finely shagreened.

Relatively short, semierect, yellowish to brown hairs abundant on dorsum of head and mesosoma, and diluted elsewhere, particularly on the petiole, which has only a few very short hairs scattered along its lateral edge and on the spines. The hairs are relatively long on the gaster, where they are somewhat posteriorly directed. Very short, golden, appressed pubescence very dilute all over the body, except the gaster, where it is more abundant, with a distinct reddish tint on the dorsal aspect.

Black, with mandibles at the masticatory border and appendages infuscated reddish-brown.

Sexuals and immature stages unknown.

REMARKS

P. inusitata is closely allied to *P. continua* Emery from Papua New Guinea and shares with that species the curved outline of the mesosomal dorsum, the postocular and lateral ridges of the head and the slender petiole, with dorsum deeply concave between two, relatively long, erect spines. These species differ in the sculpturation of the head and body, which is irregularly reticulate-rugose in *inusitata*, while *continua* has the cephalic and mesosomal sculpturation regularly longitudinally striate. *P. inusitata* is also characterised by