

variable, ranging from one to three, more or less acute teeth, situated along the dorsal edge of the segment between the distinct lateral angles (Fig. 3a).

Males and immature stages are present in the ANIC and RJK spirit collections.

REMARKS

As indicated above, *P. rufofemorata* occurs in two distinct forms, of which one has the petiole only angulate or dentate, while in the other it is distinctly spinose. This variability is occasionally accompanied by differences in other characters. For example, specimens with angulate petioles tend to be more stoutly built, while a distinctly spinose petiole is generally accompanied by more gracile stature. However, all these characters often integrate and no taxonomically significant variability seems to be present. Females of both forms are very similar and seemingly differ only in the length of the pronotal spines, which are somewhat shorter in females from colonies in which the workers have their petioles angulate.

This species is apparently lignicolous in nesting habits and most colonies were found in the hollow internodes of standing dead bamboo. The known distribution is from the Moluccas and New Guinea to Australia, where *rufofemorata* occurs on Cape York Peninsula from Bamaga south to Iron Range (Grid cells 2/140, 3/141, 3/142, 3/143, 6/146, 8/147, 9/148, 10/142, 12/143).

KEY TO AUSTRALIAN ANTS OF THE POLYRHACHIS RELUCENS SPECIES-GROUP BASED ON THE WORKER CASTE

1. Outline of mesosomal dorsum and declivity in side view forming a continuous curve (Fig. 9); antennal scapes relatively long (SI > 180) *P. inusitata*
Outline of mesosomal dorsum not forming a continuous curve - it consists of a clearly defined dorsum with the declivity more or less abrupt (Figs 10, 11, 12); antennal scapes relatively short (SI < 170) 2
2. Petiolar spines situated relatively close together, rising from the uppermost angles of the leading dorsal edge of the node (Figs 1, 3) 3
Petiolar spines widely separated, rising from the dorso-lateral angles of the node (Fig. 2) *P. foreli*
3. Propodeal dorsum concave; the lateral margins

forming almost vertically raised lamellate flanges; antennal scapes with numerous short erect hairs (Fig. 8)

..... *P. rufofemorata*

Propodeal dorsum more or less flat; the lateral margins distinct, but not lamellate; antennal scapes without erect hairs (Fig. 6)

..... *P. andromache*

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