

long, somewhat undulating hairs. The pubescence of the gaster is very dense and golden, often with a distinct reddish tint mid-dorsally. The mesosomal dorsum of *P. depilis* has relatively sparse, whitish appressed pubescence, with fewer scattered hairs than in *aurea* (these are lacking in some of the specimens examined, apparently due to wear in life). The relatively long, appressed pubescence on the gaster is silvery-white, with at most only a very slight yellowish tint.

The original descriptions of *depilis* and *pallescens* show these taxa to be closely similar, and we conclude with reasonable confidence that they are conspecific. *P. pallescens* is evidently not common. It is known from the types, collected in central coastal Qld, and from a single additional series taken further south, from wallum community (a coastal heathland formation with dominant *Banksia aemula*, which extends from the Tropic of Capricorn south to northern NSW) at Lake Cootharaba (26/153) (near Boreen Point, SEQ, 13.xi.1976, RJK acc. 76.86).

Polyrhachis phryne Forel, 1907

Polyrhachis phryne Forel, 1907:41. Type locality: NSW, Mt Victoria (33/150).

Polyrhachis sidnica var. *perthensis* Crawley, 1922:36. Type locality: WA, Perth (31/115). syn.nov.

Taylor (1989) discussed affinities between the eastern Australian *P. phryne* (= *P. sempronina* Forel) and the southwestern *P. sidnica perthensis*, and raised *perthensis* to species rank. Subsequent examination of ANIC material from bulk spirit storage, and consideration of previously unstudied QMBA, Western Australian Museum and South Australian Museum specimens, along with the ecological voucher material of Dr P.J.M. Greenslade (CSIRO Division of Soils and ANIC), shows that these taxa should now be considered conspecific.

P. phryne is one of the most widespread of all southern Australian ants. It is known from c. 100 km N of Geraldton (28/114), Western Australia, southeastwards to the Great Australian Bight, across the southern part of the continent to southeastern South Australia and Victoria, thence northwards along the Great Dividing range and its eastern flanks to the Mackay district (21/148,149), NQ. An apparently outlying population is present further north at Forty Mile Scrub (18/144), where the species has been taken in deciduous monsoon rainforest. *P. phryne* is

unrepresented in available collections from Tasmania, though its presence there seems likely.

P. phryne is generally collected from nests in the soil under stones, or taken abroad at night, usually in dry sclerophyll forests or woodlands, including mallee and subalpine woodland. It is commonly encountered foraging nocturnally on tree trunks in tall mallee near Poochera (32/134), SA, at well studied sites where *Nothomyrmecia macrops* Clark is present; it has only rarely been seen abroad there during daytime; nests are excavated in very fine calcareous soil, often without covering stones.

P. phryne is not a particularly variable species when compared to some others in '*Campomyrma*'. Detailed examination of scores of mounted specimens from all parts of the known range has not revealed characters implying the presence of more than a single species, and there is no clear evidence of consistent geographical variation.

Relevant specimens have been examined from at or near the following localities:

QUEENSLAND: Forty Mile Scrub (18/144); Britton Range, Eungella Nat Pk, Finch Hatton Gorge (21/148); Blackdown Tableland (23/149); Cammoo Caves (23/150); Rundle Range (23/151); Biloela (24/150); Kroombit Tops (24/151); Bunya Mountains (26/151); D'Aguiar Range, Mt Coot-tha (27/152); Cedar Creek Nat Pk, North Tamborine, Tamborine Mountain, Thunderbird Park (27/153); Goondiwindi (28/150); Fletcher (28/151); Mt Devlin (28/152); Binna Burra Lodge, Lamington Nat Pk (28/153). NEW SOUTH WALES: Lismore, Mt Nullum (28/153); Armidale, Ben Lomond Hill, Moonbi Range (30/151); Wauchope (31/152); Bulga, Fassifern, Heaton State Forest (32/151); Bulahdelah (32/152); Hillston (33/145); Grenfell (33/148); Blaxland, Kanangra Creek, Mount Victoria (33/150); Bucketty, Lane Cove, Swansea (33/151); Griffith (34/142); Euston (34/143); Tabbita (34/145); Boorowa, Cootamundra, Yass (34/148); Gunning, Wombeyan Caves (34/149); Mt Flora (34/150); Como (34/151); Finley (35/145); Tumut (35/148); Bungendore, Jerrabomberra Hill, Queanbeyan (35/149); Rosedale Beach (35/150); Khancoban (36/148); Tathra (36/149). AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY: Cotter Dam, Gibraltar Falls, Ororol Crossing, Uriarra Forest (35/148); Black Mountain, Mt Ainslie, Mt Majura, Mt Pleasant, Stirling Park, Tharwa, Yarralumla (35/149). VICTORIA: Linga (35/141); Nyah (35/143); Kiata (36/141); Heathcote (36/144); Ovens Valley (36/146); Chewton, Elphinstone (37/144). SOUTH AUSTRALIA: Nullarbor (31/130); 100 mi W of Penong (31/132); Wilpena Pound (31/138); Candada, Poochera, Streaky Bay