

1952

[19 Aug. 1952]

THE FEMALE OF *FORMICA OPACIVENTRIS* EMERY
(FORMICIDAE)

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The forms of *Formica exsecta* constitute a small, well defined group of ants easily recognized by the excavated, or broadly emarginate, occipital border of the head. Only three of the North American variants are now considered valid (Creighton, 1950, for synonymy). All the castes of *Formica exsectoides* and *F. ulkei* have been described previously, but the worker and male alone were the castes hitherto known for *F. opaciventris*, the female having escaped collection. I am now able, however, to fill this gap by presentation of the description of the *opaciventris* queen.

Dr. Creighton cites the mountains of Colorado and Wyoming as the range of this species, and states that it appears to be confined to high intermountain valleys, and does not occur on the eastern slope of the Rockies. The nests he observed were built in hard, stony soil, and consequently differed much from the nests of the eastern *exsectoides* and *ulkei* which are usually in moist, spongy earth.

Near the village of Valmont, Colorado, five miles east of Boulder, is an assemblage of mound nests of *Formica* readily visible from the road. The nests are in a low, moist meadow at approximately 5160 feet, and partly arranged with reference to the water table in that most of them are present on slightly higher ground and fewer are in the swales where alkali accumulates from the evaporation of water.

These mounds are occupied largely by *Formica altipetens*, but some are constructed by *opaciventris*. With Dr. Creighton, I visited the area on November 29, 1950, and by careful excavation of one of the nests, we discovered the single dealated female of *Formica opaciventris*. This