

Himalayan ants of the genus *Lasius* (Hymenoptera: Formicidae)

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ABSTRACT. Keys and descriptions are given for the eleven species of *Lasius* F. that occur in the Himalayan area. The distribution of each species is outlined. Two new species, *L.draco* and *L.mikir*, and the previously unknown male of *L.crinitus* are described.

Introduction

Five *Lasius* species were listed and described for the Indian subcontinent by Bingham (1903). In the present paper the total number of species known to occur in the Himalayas has been increased to eleven. Two new species similar to *Lasius crinitus* are described: *Lasius draco* sp.n. and *L.mikir* sp.n. A full list of specific synonyms and combinations is given by Wilson (1955) for the remaining species.

The bulk of the material examined here was collected during the course of expeditions by staff of the Natural History Museum, Basel, Switzerland, to Bhutan, Nepal, North India and Pakistan. The initial assortment of species was done by Dr C. Baroni Urbani who himself collected most of the Formicidae in Bhutan and Pakistan. I am deeply grateful to him for the opportunity of examining this material and for his help and guidance throughout the preparation of this paper. I also acknowledge with thanks the excellent drawings of the eleven species discussed here by Mr Armin Coray of the Natural History Museum, Basel.

In this paper distribution is given by traditional geographical areas — Assam, Bhutan, India, Kashmir, Nepal, Pakistan and Tibet, and is without political significance.

Terminology

The following abbreviations have been used for measurements in this work:

- CI Cephalic index = head width \times 100/ head length
- EL Eye length = maximum length of eye
- EW Eye width = maximum width of eye measured at 90° to EL
- FTSC Fore tibia seta count = number of standing hairs on outer surface of fore tibia
- HL Head length = maximum length measured from mid point of occipital border to midpoint of anterior clypeal border
- HW Head width = maximum width of head including eyes
- SI Scape index = scape length \times 100/ head width
- SL Scape length = maximum straight line length of scape excluding basal bulb
- SSC Scape seta count = number of projecting hairs on scape viewed in plane of flexion

Abbreviations used for depositories are: CC, Collingwood Collection; NHMB, Natural History Museum, Basel.

Key to workers

- 1 Colour shining jet black (head large, broadly cordate) *fuliginosus*

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