

New myrmicine ant genera from the Oriental Region (Hymenoptera: Formicidae)

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Abstract. Four new myrmicine ant genera are described from the Oriental Region. *Vombisidris* gen.n. (twelve species) is predominantly an arboreal genus that ranges from India to Queensland, with the majority of species in Malaysia and Indonesia. *Rotastruma* gen.n. (two species) is known from China, Singapore, and East Malaysia and is also arboreal. *Tetheamyрма* gen.n. is monotypic and known only from a single leaf litter sample from East Malaysia. The three species of *Kartidris* gen.n. are terrestrial and have been found in mountainous areas in southern China, Thailand and India.

Introduction

The four new genera described here belong to the ant subfamily Myrmicinae and come from the Oriental region, an area with an enormous and little understood diversity of myrmicine ants. Two of the genera, *Vombisidris* and *Rotastruma*, are mostly or entirely subarboreal to arboreal. Tree-fogging, a specialized sampling technique whose value has only recently become fully appreciated, is to a large extent responsible for our knowledge of *Vombisidris*. Like most other arboreal ant genera the biologies of *Vombisidris* and *Rotastruma* remain unknown, but their numbers always appear to be low. Whether this is because they find it hard to compete with other arboreal genera, or have very specialized lifeways, is also unknown. The twelve species of *Vombisidris* range from eastern India to Queensland, Australia, with most occurring in Malaysia and Indonesia. *Rotastruma* is currently known from southern China, Singapore, and Sarawak in East Malaysia. These two genera are referred to the tribe Leptothoracini, a large and diverse group with a predominantly holarctic distribution.

Tetheamyрма was recovered from a single leaf-litter sample taken in Sabah, East Malaysia.

It belongs to the *Stenammas*–*Rogeria*-group of genera and is particularly interesting as it represents the third evolutionary lineage to develop spongiform tissue on the waist segments and gaster. Other myrmicines with such tissue include the unrelated tribe Dacetini (see e.g. Brown, 1962; Bolton, 1983; and their included references), and the isolated and peculiar genus *Dacetinops* (Taylor, 1985).

Finally *Kartidris*, a member of the *Pheidole*–*Messor*–*Aphaenogaster*-group of genera, is known from three species collected in mountainous areas of southern China, India and Thailand; one species from each of these countries. Members of this genus are terrestrial but their biologies remain uninvestigated.

As a general rule I do not favour the publication of isolated descriptions of new taxa, that is, taxa described out of the context of some broader study. The general rule must be broken here, reluctantly, as these genus-level names need to be made available for inclusion in other studies and in the new general catalogue of ants which is currently in preparation.

Standard measurements and abbreviations of museum titles are as defined in Bolton (1983).

***Vombisidris* gen.n.** (Figs 1–11)

Diagnosis of worker. Monomorphic terrestrial to arboreal myrmicine ants with the following

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