

character until I had begun this taxonomic study after my return to the United States. Since I assumed that the Kangaroo Island form was the ordinary *forficata*, I unfortunately failed to secure any females. I say unfortunately because the females may be the key to this problem. The females of *regularis* differ from those of *forficata* in having a much smaller thorax; Wheeler and Clark have assumed that they are "subapterous," i.e. lacking developed wings, but Haskins and Haskins (1951) found that the females may be eclosed with wings that reach to the gastric apex, but which are shed while the young queens are still virgin and callow. The colonies of *M. forficata* frequently, probably normally, produce fully winged females capable of flight (Clark, 1952, p. 19), but these same colonies may also, according to Clark, contain various kinds of queen-worker intermediates without well-developed wings. The status of females of the *forficata*-like form from the southeastern states with light gastric apex is not specifically mentioned by Clark, and must be presumed to be unknown. Clark (1952, p. 93) records *regularis* from Kangaroo Island and from Portland, southwestern Victoria, the records very probably being based on specimens of the *forficata*-like (dark) form like those I found to be so common on Kangaroo Island myself, but he does not record *regularis* from the Dandenong Ranges or elsewhere in the vicinity of Melbourne despite the fact that the form in question is not uncommon in these districts where he has long resided and collected. It therefore seems very probable that Clark has confused two forms, the typical *forficata* and the form with light gastric apex, in this area; consequently, his remarks concerning wingless females in the nests may apply to the latter. Only further collecting by someone aware of the problem beforehand will settle the status of the forms known as *forficata-lucida-regularis*.

The problem is made less easy by the fact that *M. forficata* (with concolorous blackish gaster) throws light reddish-colored variants in Victoria and elsewhere in the southeastern states; like the typical *forficata* (and *regularis*), these light variants frequently show violet, blue or green metallescence in fresh specimens, particularly on the gaster where the background color is darker. To these variants, the names *rubra*, *violacea* and *brevinoda* (*nec* Forel) have been applied, and slight differences in petiolar shape have been supposed also to distinguish them. The petiolar differences seem to have been over-emphasized by Clark, and his figures of the petioles of the different forms are somewhat ambiguous and contradictory in different views.