

TETRAMORIUM RUGIVENTRIS

The type series and only recorded sample of *T. rugiventris* was obtained from an upland ponderosa pine stand about ten miles south of Prescott, Arizona, and about one mile off the highway. In emphasizing his difficulty in accepting Smith's hypothesis, namely, that the ant was introduced with camel food or stores at the time when camels were imported from North Africa during the last century, Creighton wrote: "Entomologists frequently strain at gnats but it is seldom that they are asked to swallow a camel."

I have checked with care a syntype of *T. rugiventris* kindly sent by Dr. Smith. As a result of this examination, I can agree with Dr. Creighton that the ant in question is almost unquestionably endemic to the locality where it was found. However, I cannot agree with either Smith or Creighton that the species *rugiventris* belongs to the genus *Tetramorium* as it is now constituted. Instead, the type I have examined seems to me to be a clearcut, if somewhat aberrant, member of the genus *Myrmica*, closely allied to *M. striolagaster* Cole. *M. striolagaster* is recorded from several localities in Arizona and New Mexico, and I have specimens collected by E. O. Wilson at or near the type locality of *rugiventris*, in the vicinity of Prescott. Although the two species are separated by the extent and strength of the gastric sculpturing and by other characters as well, it seems clear that they are congeneric, and also that they run rather close to the *M. punctiventris* group of *Myrmica*.

The *rugiventris* type actually possesses minute barbulation on the posterior tibial spurs, as can be seen at magnifications of 90 \times and better, so that in this character, the species would key to *Myrmica*, rather than *Tetramorium*, in the standard keys to tribes and genera of Formicidae. Actually, however, this spur barbulation is not worth much as a tribal character within the Myrmicinae, despite the faith that key-makers have placed in it. The false distinction between *Hylomyrma* Forel (tribe Myrmicini) and *Lundella* (tribe Tetramoriini) appears to have been based partly on this character (Brown, 1953), and the same may hold true of the supposed difference between *Cratomyrme* Santschi, purportedly a member of tribe Myrmicini, and *Messor* Forel, of tribe Pheidolini.