

bular strike, and carried off without being stung. Queens catch small prey with the mandibles alone, and apparently use their stings only for defense. When the sting is used by workers against termites, the prey is immobilized in a few seconds.

Ledoux found that large flies with a wing removed and given to *O. assiniensis* were finally caught only after repeated attempts, the ant seizing an extremity of the fly's appendages and immediately curling its gaster under in an attempt to sting. The fly often escaped, shaking the ant off by violent motion, but once the ant managed to get its sting between the segments of the fly's abdomen, the struggle quickly ceased. This picture is quite different from that drawn by Wheeler for capture of flies by *O. clarus*, but whether the difference is due to real behavioral dissimilarities between *Odontomachus* species groups can only be settled by further comparative study.

The smaller and more delicate species *Anochetus inermis* has been observed by me in a laboratory nest. The colony came from a piece of rotten wood from the floor of a wet ravine near Bucay in western Ecuador. The colony was fed with small tenebrionid beetle larvae (*Tribolium castaneum*), comparable in size to the *A. inermis* workers, and the latter attacked the prey with their mandibles in the familiar snapping manner, but very cautiously and nervously, with stealthy approach, extremely rapid strike, and instant recoil-retreat. After several attacks of this kind, with intervening periods of waiting, during which the beetle larvae fled, rested, or writhed about in distress, an ant would finally attack with its mandibles and hold them closed on the prey for long enough to deliver a quick sting in the intersegmental membrane. After this, the prey appeared to be paralyzed, or at least subdued, and sooner or later was carried off by the ant to the nest, and eventually placed on an ant larva.

Frequent delays and excursions before the prey are finally immobilized and brought to the ant larvae in the nest may well have the function of allowing time for protective allomones of the prey to dissipate. Many tenebrionid adults, including *Tribolium*, possess potent quinonoid defensive allomones, but the larva is not known to possess quinones in this genus.

Observations by Borgmeier (1920: 37) made in *O. affinis* in southeastern Brasil are contradictory in that he found this ant would feed on honey and sugar solutions, and would regurgitate to the larvae, but it would not feed on termites he offered it. Perhaps the termites in this case were of a kind particularly