

basic stocks and is ecologically more diversified than that of the neotropical region, which probably indicates a longer span of evolution in the Old World. I think we can conclude from the available evidence that the subtribe most likely originated in the Old World wet tropics, that it has gone through a complicated evolution with several waves of dispersal, and that both the evolution and the dispersal may well have been rapid and geologically late.

Relationships and Origin of the *Odontomachini*

The odontomachites have for more than a century been considered to be a distinct suprageneric group (Mayr, 1862: 708), and most recent classifications have accorded them tribal rank within the Ponerinae as the *Odontomachini*. Certainly, their habitus, built around the unique form and function of the snapping mandibles and the head that holds them, renders them instantly recognizable among all ants. Aside from that, and the unispinose or otherwise modified petiolar node, they are rather typical Ponerinae. In fact, it does not take much close consideration of all castes and the larvae and pupae to see that among the tribes of this subfamily, the odontomachites show closest affinities to tribe Ponerini.

Males of *Odontomachus* and *Anochetus* are clearly members of Emery's «Euponerinae», which is to say that they have strongly reduced mandibles that cannot be opposed, genital capsule not [fully] retractile, and subgenital plate (hypopygium) entire (that is, usually not deeply forked or bidentate). Furthermore, the pygidium in *Odontomachus* and a few *Anochetus* is modified into a prominent downcurved spine as in most large and medium-sized males among the genera of Ponerini, and some species of *Platythyrea*. This character state, which I take to be primitive among the stocks represented by *Platythyrea*, *Odontomachus* and the larger Ponerini, may represent a false sting defensive mechanism, as discussed by Brown (1975). The false sting hypothesis is at least consistent with the loss of the pygidial spine in such small-sized males as those of *Hypoponera* (Ponerini) and many *Anochetus*, in which visual or tactile effects of the spine could scarcely be expected to impress most would-be predators.

The parts of the odontomachite male genital capsule itself are like those of Ponerini in general, and the wing venation