

well be involved. One or several alleles might cause (I) shiny cuticle in female and male sexuals, (II) longer hairs in gynes and workers, (III) wider postpetiole, and (IV), darker coloration. It is puzzling, however, that the "dull" phenotype has never been found as queen of a field colony.

Apparently the hypothetical mechanism underlying the "*pocahontas*" phenotype also accelerates the development of sexual larvae: male and female sexuals eclose several weeks earlier than those of sympatric *Leptothorax*. This might be advantageous in an alpine environment with short summer seasons, as in the type locality. The difference in maturation of the "*pocahontas*" and *Leptothorax* sexuals would ensure a certain reproductive isolation between the genotypes, thus permitting the comparatively frequent occurrence of "*pocahontas*" colonies in the small type area. The local microclimate may fit best their requirements or adaptations.

16th century Indian princess Pocahontas, namesake of the ant from Maligne Canyon, at least temporarily set misconceptions about American natives right when brought to England and charming the court with her gracious manner. Similarly, when transferred from American wilderness to the laboratory, *Doronomyrmex pocahontas* disproved what we thought we knew about its life history. As our study shows it certainly is necessary to reexamine this peculiar ant more closely, and only additional material will help to decide whether *D. pocahontas* is a hybrid, a polymorphic species, or something else. As long as studies on this very species and on the validity of the genus *Doronomyrmex* as a whole are not completed, we suggest to retain the original name *Doronomyrmex pocahontas*: "the playful one".

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