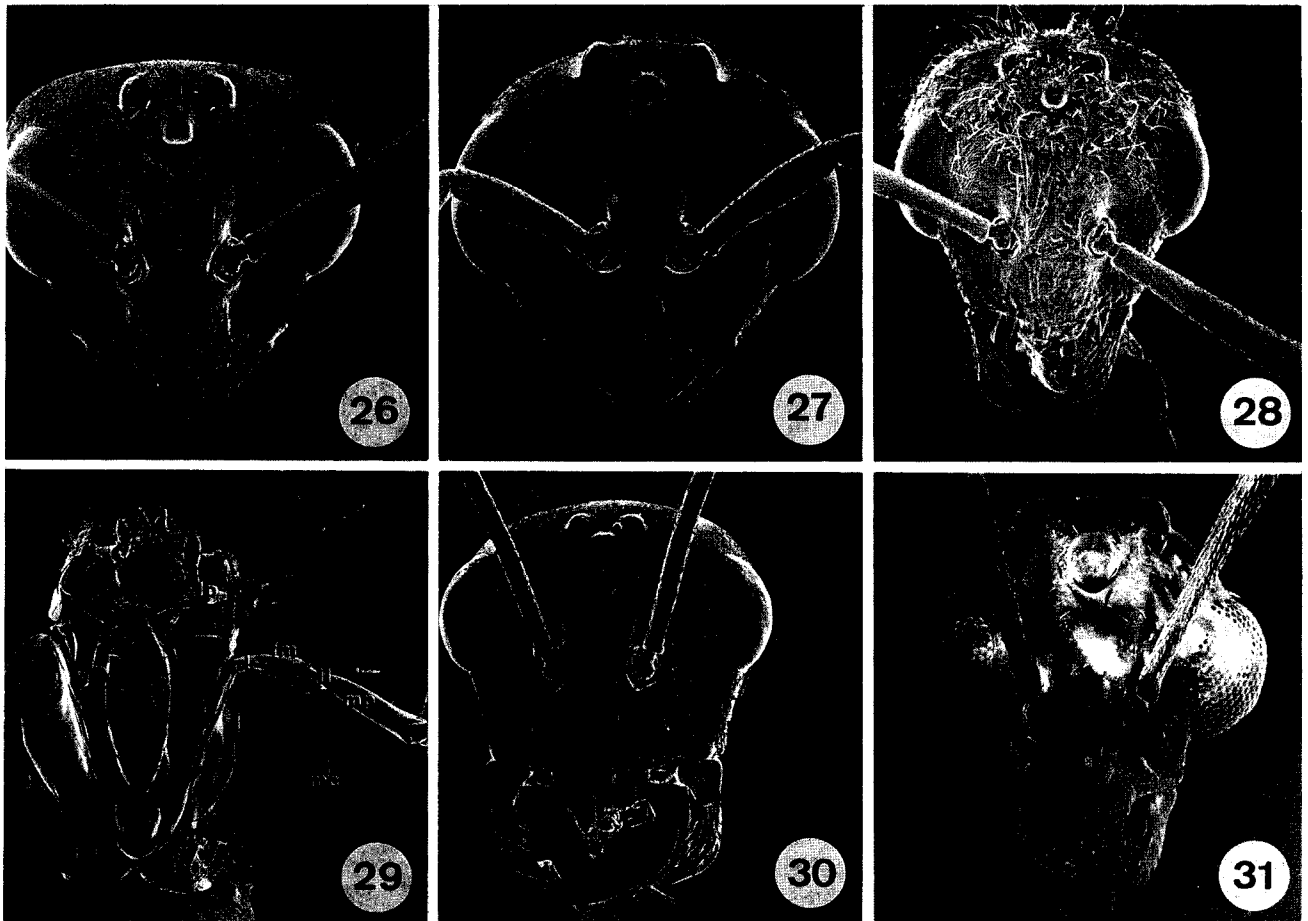


Comparisons. The workers and females of this genus differ from all the other formicini ants by the combination of a flat first maxillary palpal segment, the long and slit-shaped propodeal spiracle, and the short wings with a very reduced pubescence; the males differ by the presence of a median appendix of the stipes, the 3-lobed subgenital plate (if it seems to be truncated then it is long and forming a distinct transversal opening between the subgenital plate and the genital capsule).

Distribution and biology. This genus is an inhabitant of the drier parts of the Palaearctic, such as the steppe, the savannah, the Mediterranean type ecosystem, and the deserts. Hardly any species are proper desert ants (such as *bombycinus*) but they live at the edge of the deserts in the wadis and the oases. Their habitats are from sea-level up to 2200 m. The species of the *bicolor*-group have a range of distribution from the beaches of Ghana to Vienna and Central Asia, from Morocco to the plains of the Ghanges (Wehner *et al.*, 1983), but not in Spain, and with a centre of diversity in the southeastern Mediterranean; the range of the *bombycinus*-group seems to be restricted to sandy deserts of North Africa and Middle East; the species of

the *emmae* group have been found in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia on the southern side of the Atlas mountains (Delye, 1965), in Baluchistan (Agosti, 1990), and recently in the desert-like southeastern part of Spain (Tinaut, 1993); the *pallidus*-group is restricted to the deserts of central Asia. The *altisquamis*-group has a range from the Iberian Atlantic coast to central Asia and from north of the Sahara and the Asir mountains to central Asia via the southern side of the Mediterranean sea. Finally, the *cursor*-group is distributed from Portugal to eastern Mongolia along the north side of the Mediterranean sea, with the southernmost extensions on the Antiliban and the Brahui-Range in Pakistan. The species of the *cursor*-group are living in the most mesic habitats of all the *Cataglyphis* species, the species of the *pallidus* and the *bombycinus* group in the hottest areas (Agosti, 1990).

The biology of all the *Cataglyphis* species is rather uniform and hardly known. The information points generally towards a mongynous, mono- or oligocalic lifestyle, with independent nest founding and rather small colonies. The nests are always in the soil, often with only one entrance and a distinct crater made out of dug-out soil.



Figs 26–31. Head of males in frontal view. (26) *Formica sanguinea*. (27) *Polyergus rufescens*; (28) *Proformica* sp. (29) Maxillo-labial complex of *Cataglyphis bicolor*. lp = labial palpus; mc = macrochaetae; mp = maxillary palpus: I, II = first, second segments. (30) *Bajcaridris theryi*; (31) *Cataglyphis bicolor*.