THE FUTURE
(add after "Importance of Larvae")

Our stream of incoming larvae has dwindled to a mere trickle. Our supply from Australia has been hampered by governmental export regulations. Our American colleagues who supplied the most larvae have reduced their field activities—as have we. Our lament was well expressed by Dr. W. L. Brown years ago: "If only I could get myrmecologists to collect larvae!" So we ask our young colleagues to collect and send us larvae.

Recently we were commenting to a young colleague (who is sending us larvae) that we were not getting larvae of new genera. He retorted: "The genera you have not studied are those whose nests are found only by accident." That had not occurred to us. We know that many nests have no superstructure around the entrance, which is just a hole in the ground; some genera nest in leaf mold or duff, others in plant cavities.

So we looked up the history of 103 genera which we have not studied: 62% have been reported only once (probably the type nest or only the type specimen), 23% we consider rare, and only 15% common.

In view of the above we have the following observations to make concerning the future of the study of ant larvae. The remaining common genera will be described. Some of the "only once" and the rare will be accidentally found and described, but some will never be discovered; they may be extinct already as the result of the degradation of the habitat. The younger stages of most genera will be needed in order that instars may be identifiable. We have studied ant larvae at the generic level. There will doubtless be problems where intraspecific and interspecific differences must be studied. Investigators must also be aware of the intranidal differences. The anatomy and function of protuberances, chiloscleres and unnamed structures will be studied. Because of the importance of larvae to the well-being of the colony, the physiology and behavior of the colony with reference to the larvae must be learned. Ant larvae will play a larger role in systematics. Where adult taxonomy is dubious, larval similarities or differences will be an aid in taxonomy.

A. TAXONOMIC BIBLIOGRAPHY OF OUR PUBLICATIONS ON ANT LARVAE (pp. 93–96) [ADDITIONS ONLY]

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