of *I. discors*. However, during this study variation in the above characters was found to be continuous and the recognition of the earlier proposed forms (except *I. obscurior*, see below) was unjustifiable. Additionally, the original descriptions provide no information helpful in separating or diagnosing these forms. The traits previously used included body colour and iridescence, development of pilosity and head shape, and these supposed differences are now known to be connected by intermediate forms which render them of little use in diagnosing species. For example, head shape was reported to be either narrow or broad. However, quantification of head shape by measuring head width and head length shows continuous variation with the type specimens of the proposed subspecies spanning nearly the complete range of this variation (Fig. 1). The variation in scape length shows a similar pattern, again with type specimens of the earlier taxa showing the extremes of the variation for this character (Fig. 2). Because of this, the names *I. discors aeneogaster* Wheeler, *I. discors occipitalis* Forel and *I. discors occipitalis exilior* Forel (an unavailable infrasubspecific name) are here considered to be junior synonyms of *I. discors*.

The known distribution of *I. discors* shows two distinct, allopatric populations, an eastern one in central and eastern Queensland and eastern New South Wales, and a western one extending from western Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria westward (Fig. 10). *I. discors* is not known to occur in the intervening region even though this area has been relatively well collected. Given that the habitat across this region is fairly uniform and changes only gradually, this disruption in distribution would suggest that two separate forms are present.

A detailed morphological analysis of material from both the eastern and western populations reveals only slight morphological differentiation. The eastern population tends to be slightly darker in overall colour compared to the western population. However, all colour forms can be found in both populations. Additionally, the anterior region of the dorsal propodeal face is flat in the eastern population (Fig. 7), while the majority of specimens from the western population have this region weakly convex (Figs 5, 6), but with a small proportion being flat (similar to Fig. 7). Thus while there is some degree of morphological divergence between these two populations neither possesses unique, diagnostic characters not shared with the other population, and therefore both populations are here considered to belong to a single species.

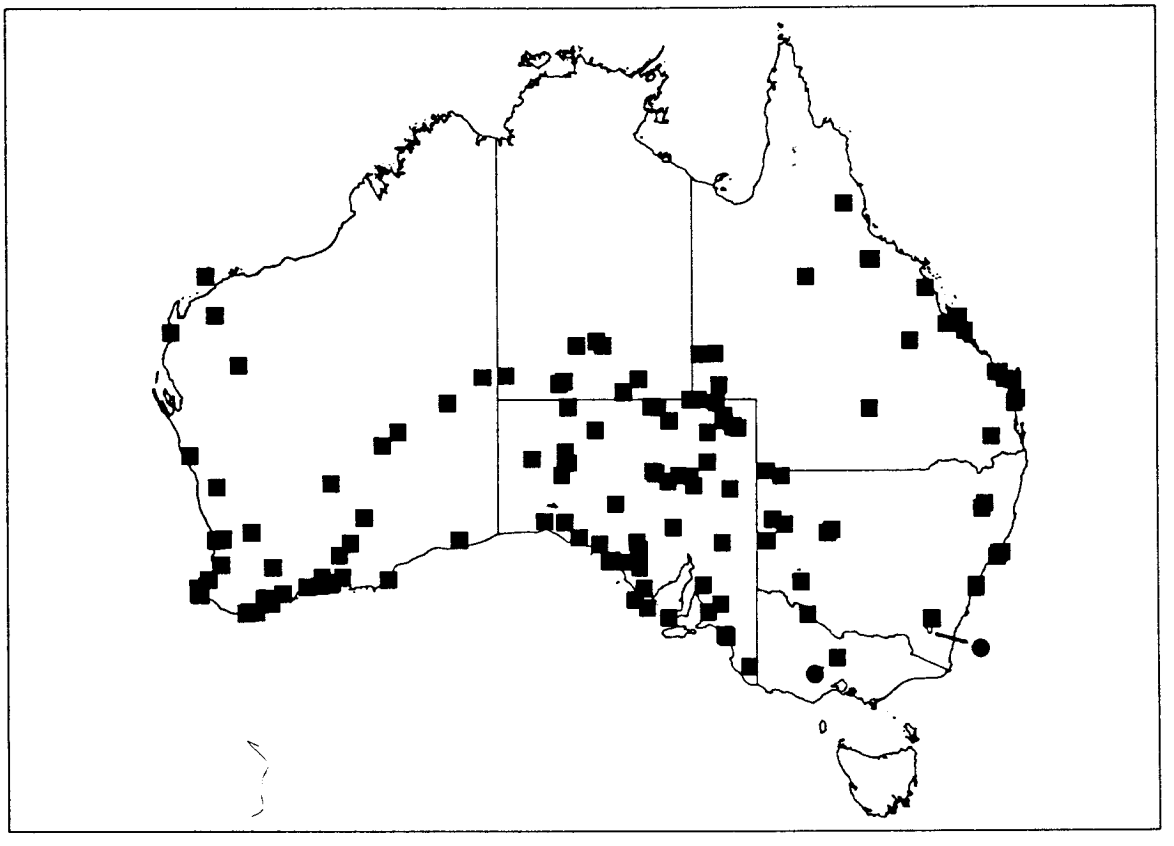

Fig. 10. Distribution of *Iridomyrmex* species examined during this study. Closed squares = *I. discors*, closed circles = *I. obscurior*.