these rare species will be discovered. For example, the North American *Stenamma foveolocephalum* was recently encountered for the second time (after a lapse of over 60 years) (DuBois and Davis, 1998).

Within the last two decades, three new species have been described from Asia (*S. bhutanense* Urbani, *S. kashmirense* Urbani, and *S. gurkhalis* new species). One new species has been described from Corsica (*S. orousseti*) (Casevitz-Weulersse, 1990). A rather unusual species is known only from soil core samples and leaf litter in remote areas on the island of Borneo (*S. orientale* new species).

Since most species of *Stenamma* only live in moist, cool areas of forests and large tracts of forests have been cleared (and are being cleared today), many of these species are probably on the verge of extinction (or have recently become extinct). It has been estimated that large tracts of forest are being cleared at the rate of one acre per second (Raven, 1990). This phenomonen is not limited to the tropics — the type locality of *Stenamma meridionale* (mesic deciduous forest, Droste Woods, St. Charles Co., Missouri, U.S.A.) is now a suburban lawn (late M. Talbot, pers. comm.).

Extinction is an integral part of life and is offset by biological evolution. Plant and animal extinctions have occurred throughout geologic history. It is probable that many more species are extinct than are alive today. However, the rate of extinction is now alarmingly fast and probably exceeds previous catastrophies. Entire books have been devoted to this calamity and some indicate that it may take tens of millions of years for levels of diversity to return to those of a few centuries ago (for example, Wilson, 1988 and Wilson, 1992).

In order to better understand these vanishing creatures, one must first answer the question: what kind of animal is it? This revision is an attempt to summarize existing knowledge concerning one genus of ants in the Palaearctic and Oriental regions. Due to observed variability within species coupled with paucity of specimens from large tracts of Asia, a rigorous classification is not attempted herein. Rather, this work represents my attempt to summarize existing knowledge of this group of insects.

Stenamma is found worldwide, ranging from 1 to 50 degrees north latitude (except for sub-Saharan Africa); most species are found from 25 to 45 degrees north latitude. One exception is the extensive fauna of Central America which is currently being revised by Snelling (pers. comm.). Since *Stenamma* was first established as a genus, most species have been described as isolated taxa or as part of a limited regional revision.

Stenamma was described as a separate genus in 1840, based upon