

ferent order of magnitude. For the same reasons (probable artifacts due to the sagittal

compression of the head) I would not attribute much value to the perpendicular frontal laminae of *tethepa*. Due to the close similarity of the two species in many details, I consider the cephalic morphology of the better preserved and better observable *primigenia* to be actually shared by the two species in spite of some doubts and contrasts appearing in the drawings. The eyes of *primigenia* are remarkably protruding

from the sides of the head, though to a lesser extent than in *tethepa*, but they are asymmetrically deformed in the latter species and I am inclined to attribute at least part of their conical appearance in *tethepa* to the same sagittal compression of the head already mentioned. The specific distinction but close relationships between *Pheidole primigenia* and *tethepa*, hence, can be regarded as reasonably reliable.

WILSON (1985 a) described *tethepa* in *Pheidole* as a tentative generic assignment; he suspected that it might be invalidated by the presence of exophthalmic eyes and proportionately large mandibles. The ocular morphology has already been discussed above. In addition to probable deformations in amber (demonstrated by the asymmetric appearance of *tethepa*) the eyes of *primigenia* do not differ in a significant way from those of some members of the Malayan-Notogean subgenus *Pheidolacanthinus* (see Fig. 10, 11) where they are also more protruding than in other species of *Pheidole*. The Mandibular Index is 47–60 in *primigenia* and 62 in *tethepa*, much higher than in most *Pheidole* species where the MI is around 35–40, but – in a non-random sample of species measured for this study – it appears to be 54 (i. e. within the range of *primigenia*) for the Indomalayan *Pheidole dugasi* FOREL. Hence, the placement of both species, *tethepa* and *primigenia*, in *Pheidole* appears to be the sole possible solution.

In revising the Indomalayan genus *Acanthomyrmex*, MOFFETT (1986) suggested that *Pheidole tethepa* may represent the sister taxon of that genus. This hypothesis is based on similarities in the cephalic morphology between *Acanthomyrmex* and the *tethepa* holotype; I have already shown that these characters are with great probability due to strong deformation of the latter. They can only be interpreted as artifacts if the close relationship between *primigenia* and *tethepa* is to be maintained.

Within the genus *Pheidole*, the presence of pronotal spines in both species discussed here immediately calls to mind the Australian-Malayan subgenus *Pheidolacanthinus*. This had already been noted by WILSON (1985 a) who referred correctly to the striking differences between *tethepa* and all Neotropical *Pheidole* and the similarity of thoracic structures between *tethepa* and *Pheidolacanthinus*. However, he concluded that "the pronotal spines were almost certainly derived independently from the Old World *P. quadrispina* group" (lapsus calami for *Pheidole quadrispinosa* (SMITH) from New Guinea)