It does usually not pose any problem to identify *T. diomedeum* among its southern Italian congeners. The enlarged petiolar nodes in females (Fig. 9) are found otherwise only in *T. meridionale*, but less marked (Fig. 10). Moreover, the latter species is easily recognizable by transverse striations on the occiput. The nodes in *T. diomedeum* workers also are somewhat wider than in the similar species (see Tab. 1 and compare Figs. 3, 5, 6). Workers are large and very weakly sculptured, appearing robust and more shiny in comparison with *T. semilaeve*. While sometimes single workers of these two species are not safely assignable without taking measurements of the petiolar nodes, differentiation of field nests is possible for the experienced myrmecologist in most cases. Levels of enzyme divergence among *T. diomedeum, T. meridionale* and *T. semilaeve* are low. However, *T. diomedeum* shows a phenomenon here referred to as "fixed heterozygosity". At three loci certain alleles were always found together in all individuals studied (Tab. 4 pag. 333), producing the typical heterozygous banding patterns. This peculiarity, though not yet understood, appears to be a species-characteristic feature.

It has been stated (Baroni Urbani, 1964, 1968a, 1971) that samples of the *T. ferox* group (sensu Radchenko, 1992a) from Apulia, Sicily and Malta constitute taxa distinct from each other and from nominotypical *T. diomedeum*. Both morphological and electrophoretic results of our investigations yielded no reasons to recognize more than one species of this group in southern Italy, which most probably extends to Malta without noticeable differentiation (worker material studied, including electrophoresis, from the island of Gozo, Malta, M. Sanetra leg.). Consequently, the synonymy of var. *bariensis* Forel, 1911 from Apulia with *T. diomedeum* established by Emery (1916) should be upheld.

The distribution of *T. diomedeum* in Italy comprises at least the southern regions Sicily, Calabria and Apulia, and although there are no present records, the species, nearly with certainty, can be expected to occur in Campania and Lucania, too. As evident for some other species confined to the southern Mediterranean, there exists a northern outpost at M. Cònero near Ancona (Marche) on the Adriatic coast (Baroni Urbani, 1968b). The single record from Sardinia by Krausse (1912) is highly doubtful in that the species has never been found on the island since then. Possibly for that reason, Poldi et al. (1995) ignored the record in their recent checklist of Italian ants. *T. diomedeum* is a characteristic ant species of the Mediterranean garrigue, only moderately common in general but abundant locally. On one occasion a nest containing two dealate females was discovered, suggesting that the species might be oligogynous.

Apart from Italy, *T. diomedeum* has been cited for Greece (Agosti & Collingwood, 1987), Israel and the Middle East (Schembri & Collingwood, 1981). We have found that female and worker material from Greece (Peloponnese) and western Turkey (A. Schulz leg.) cannot be told apart from Italian samples. *T. ferox* var. *laevior* Menozzi, 1936 from the European part of Turkey, also recorded from Rhodes (Greece), will probably prove to be a synonym. Thus, *T. diomedeum* may well be of Pontomediterranean origin.

Tetramorium meridionale Emery, 1870 [Fig. 10]

COLLECTING DATA:
Sardinia - Prov. Sassari, Lago del Coghinas ca. 10 km NW Oschiri, ca. 200m, 2.V.1994, M. Sanetra leg.; Prov. Nuoro, ca. 5 km S Bitti, ca. 600m, 4.V.1994, M. Sanetra leg.; Prov. Nuoro, Lago