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***Lasius niger* (L.) and *Lasius platythorax* SEIFERT
(Hymenoptera, Formicidae) – a revolution in Polish myrmecological
faunistics and zoocoenology?**

Abstract. Data are presented on the distribution, in Poland, of *Lasius niger* (L.) and *L. platythorax* SEIFERT (the latter as a species new to Poland). These data were obtained from an inspection of the ant collection in the Museum and Institute of Zoology, PAS in Warsaw. It is confirmed that SEIFERT (1991) was correct when he separated the originally collective taxon «*Lasius niger*» into the above-mentioned sibling species. A simplified key for distinguishing these forms is provided.

Key words: ants, *Lasius niger*, *Lasius platythorax*, sibling species, faunistics, Poland, key

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For over two centuries after *Lasius* (*Lasius*) *niger* was first described by LINNAEUS (1758), it was considered to be one of the commonest Palaearctic ant species due to its abundance in a wide variety of habitats. These range from very dry to very wet, both wooded and open habitats including strongly anthropogenized sites (fields, orchards, gardens, towns, industrial areas). *L. niger* was considered to be eurytopic with an unusually wide ecological flexibility and a great biological plasticity which was emphasized by the variety of the ways in which it constructs its nests: in the ground (with or without soil mounds), under stones, in rotting tree stumps, in tussocks of grass and moss, in rock and wall crevices (e.g. PISARSKI 1975, COLLINGWOOD 1979). Consequently, in the faunistic and zoocoenological literature concerning the ants