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## TEN NEW SPECIES OF *MYRMICA* (HYMENOPTERA, FORMICIDAE) FROM THE HIMALAYA

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**Ten New Species of *Myrmica* (Hymenoptera, Formicidae) from the Himalaya.** Radchenko A. G., Elmes G. W. — Ten new species discovered among collections examined in the course of a taxonomic revision of the *Myrmica* species of the Himalaya and the adjacent mountain regions of India and Pakistan are described: *Myrmica brancuccii*, *M. villosa*, *M. vittata*, *M. williamsi*, *M. nitida*, *M. wittmeri*, *M. wardi*, *M. ordinaria*, *M. rhytida* and *M. petita*. They belong to several quite different complexes of species of the genus *Myrmica*, but clearly differ from each other and all previously described forms. Distinctions of each species and data on their ecology are given.

Key words: Ants, Formicidae, *Myrmica*, new species, India, Pakistan.

**Десять новых видов *Myrmica* (Hymenoptera, Formicidae) из Гималаев.** Радченко А. Г., Элмс Г. В. — В статье приведено описание 10 новых для науки видов *Myrmica*, собранных в Гималаях и прилегающих горных системах Индии и Пакистана. Описаны: *Myrmica brancuccii*, *M. villosa*, *M. vittata*, *M. williamsi*, *M. nitida*, *M. wittmeri*, *M. wardi*, *M. ordinaria*, *M. rhytida* и *M. petita*. Они относятся к нескольким довольно различным комплексам видов рода *Myrmica*, и четко отличаются как друг от друга, так и от всех ранее описанных форм. Приведены отличия каждого нового вида от близких видов и все имеющиеся данные об их экологии.

Ключевые слова: муравьи, Formicidae, *Myrmica*, новые виды, Индия, Пакистан.

### Introduction

The genus *Myrmica* has a Holarctic, temperate distribution and its colonies are abundant, often dominating, in a wide range of natural and semi-natural habitats. Currently, more than 160 species are recognised, of which about 25 originate from the Himalaya and the Tibetan plateau (Bolton 1995). The first *Myrmica* species recorded from the Himalayan region, was *Myrmica rugosa* Mayr (1865), but the majority were described in the early part of the twentieth century — *e. g.*, eight species by Forel (1902, 1904 a, b, 1906). Menozzi (1939) installed some order into the taxonomy of the Himalayan *Myrmica* species and provided a key. Weber added three new species to the list when he made a synopsis of the Palaearctic *Myrmica* as a part of his revision of the North American species (Weber, 1947, 1948, 1950). Since then, there has been no further treatment of the Himalayan *Myrmica* except for the description of a social parasite — *Myrmica erepatrix* Bolton (1988). Nevertheless, myrmecologists continued to collect ants from the Himalaya, particularly from the southern and western mountains of Pakistan, Nepal, India and Bhutan, and therefore a taxonomic revision of the *Myrmica* of those regions is overdue.

When we started a general revision of the Asian *Myrmica*, we were fortunate to be given access to several unidentified collections of Himalayan *Myrmica* (see below). Examination of these soon convinced us that the mountains of the southern and western sides of the Himalaya form a separate biogeographic zone for *Myrmica* species, which are quite distinct from the fauna of the northern and eastern mountains, including the Tibetan plateau. Among the collections we discovered 15 previously unknown species which clearly differ from all the previously described forms. Five of them belong to the *ritae* group — a distinct group of primitive *Myrmica* species — which we described when revising that group (Radchenko, Elmes, 1998). It should be noted that the remaining 10 species have no particular taxonomic affinity to each other, they belong to various complexes existing within the Himalayan *Myrmica*. Here we describe formally these 10 species, prior to their inclusion in a full taxonomic revision of the south-western Himalayan *Myrmica* (in preparation).