

National Parks Service management as by its distance from the mainland, will probably continue to diverge faunistically from most of the Florida Keys. We note that the key with the richest ant fauna is Big Pine, from which 61 species have been collected. This key has had large portions of natural habitat protected and maintained as part of the National Key Deer Wildlife Refuge. We believe that this has been a major factor in conserving the diversity of ant species on this island. Island biogeography is unfortunately supplied with ever more examples from ever smaller fragments of natural habitat.

It seems inevitable that the known ant fauna of the Keys will continue to change. We expect that exotic species will continue their trend toward ecological domination, except in protected areas such as Elliott Key, Lignum Vitae Key, and parts of Largo, Long, Bahia Honda, Big Pine, and No Name Keys. We also assume that the list of species known from the Keys will increase to at least 90 species, including some native species. A number of species on the present list are known only from one or a few pockets of suitable habitat, and it seems unlikely that we have sampled the full diversity of such sites. For example, a number of the islands are composed of porous rock and underlain by a whole series of miniature caves and grottos that could have a cavernicolous fauna. It is virtually certain that further myrmecological surprises await in the Florida Keys.

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