

# HYMENOPTERA OF THE SIJU CAVE, GARO HILLS, ASSAM.

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## I. TRIGLYPHOTHRIX STRIATIDENS EMERY AS A CAVE ANT.

By WILLIAM MORTON WHEELER.

Dr. S. Kemp has sent me for identification several workers and a winged female of a small ant taken by the Zoological Survey of India in the Siju Cave, Garo Hills, Assam. The insects were nesting in complete darkness, 400 feet from the entrance of the cave, under stones in ground heavily manured with bat-guano. Dr. Kemp surmises that the ant is not a regular cavernicolous species and this proves to be true, for it is *Triglyphothrix striatidens* Emery, a highly adaptable Indian species which for some years has been extending its range, not only in the Old but also to the New World. In a paper entitled "An Indian Ant Introduced into the United States" (*Journ. Econ. Ent.* 9, 1916, pp. 566-569, 1 fig.) I cited the known distribution of *T. striatidens* in 1916. It had spread from India to the Bismarck Archipelago, Queensland, Formosa, Ceram, Sumatra, Borneo, Guam, Tunis and Sierra Leone. In America it had been taken in Barbados, Mexico and Audubon Park, Louisiana. As early as 1906 Bingham found it in the propagating pits of the Kew Botanic Garden, and in 1905 and 1908 Donisthorpe recorded it as common in the palm house of the same institution.

In this connection I would note that Mr. F. W. Urich recently sent me from Trinidad two species of ants which he took in the cave inhabited by the singular "guacharo," or fat-bird (*Steatornis caripensis* Humboldt). One of the species, which was living in the nests of the birds, is *Wasmannia auropunctata* Roger, a well-known and widely distributed neotropical ant, which usually nests under stones or bark. The other, which was living in the guano of the guacharo, belongs to a new genus and will be described as *Spelaeomyrmex urichi*, gen. et sp. nov. It is evidently a true cavernicolous ant, blind, pale-coloured and covered with long, sparse sense-hairs.

Santschi [Formicidæ. Voyage de Ch. Alluaud et R. Jeannel en Afrique Orientale (1911-12), 1914] has recorded the following ants as having been taken by Alluaud and Jeannel in the caves at Tanga and Shimoni, East Africa: *Ponera dulcis* Forel, *Leptogenys jeanneli* San., *Odontomachus haematoda* L. var. *troglydytes* San., *Dorylus (Rhogmus) fimbriatus* Shuck., *Monomorium rhopalocerum* Emery subsp. *speluncarum* San., *Strumigenys stygia* San., *Epitritus marginatus* San. and *Prenolepis (Nylanderia) jaegerskioeldi* Mayr. Probably none of these can be regarded as a true cavernicolous species. Of course, ants that nest in the

ground or under stones are really cave-dwellers, and many of them would probably adapt themselves to living in the large cavities, to which we restrict the terms "cave" or "cavern," were it not that their food supply is usually too meagre to sustain whole colonies of social insects.

## II. DESCRIPTION OF A NEW BRACONID.

By S. A. ROHWER, *U. S. Bureau of Entomology, Washington, D. C.*

The specimens of this new genus and species of Braconid were recently forwarded to the author with the request that the species be named. The form is a very interesting one and although the sender stated that they were living in total darkness they show none of the usual characteristics which accompany this mode of life. From their systematic relationship and general habitus it may be expected that this species will be found to be a parasite of some internally feeding insect and perhaps one belonging to the order Coleoptera.

### **Neontsira**, new genus.

The second intercubitus is obsolete, although its position is clearly indicated, and because of this one might be justified in saying that this new genus would fall in the subfamily Hecabolinae as defined by Szepliget<sup>1</sup>. It does not agree entirely with the characterization of this group because the head is not cubical, nor does it agree with any of the genera placed in the subfamily. Considering that the fore wings have three cubital cells, and I think we should, the genus will fall more exactly in the subfamily Hormiinae as defined by Szepliget. It does not agree with any genus in this group, however, and it seems necessary to consider the head cubical and place the genus in the subfamily Doryctinae. In the key to the genera of this subfamily the new genus runs fairly satisfactorily to *Ontsira* Cameron, and when compared with the description of Cameron's genus seems to have a number of significant characters in common with it. From *Ontsira* it may, however, be distinguished by the strongly postfurcal nervulus, the different first tergite, the simple hind coxae and the absence of an impressed line on the prescutum.

*Genotype*.—*Neontsira typica*, new species.

Head when seen from above subcubical, narrowing behind the eyes, and broadly projecting between eyes; when seen from below the head is more nearly cubical because the projection between the eyes is not separable; ocelli arranged in an acute triangle; eyes oval, prominent; malar space long; flagellar joints nearly of uniform length; notauli nearly complete; scutellum margined laterally; propodeum with the dorsal surface separated from the lateral and posterior aspects by a carina, the posterior aspect with two median carinae; prepectal carina strong; sternauli and episternauli present; legs rather long, slender; hind coxae elongate; trochanters long; radius leaving stigma a short

<sup>1</sup> Genera Insectorum, Braconidae, fas. 22, 1904.