

5820

Wing

No. 246.

Donisthorpe, H., 1944

From
**THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
ROYAL ENTOMOLOGICAL
SOCIETY OF LONDON**

Series B. TAXONOMY

Vol. 13, Parts 1-2, February 24th, 1944

**The Royal Entomological Society of London,
41, Queen's Gate, S.W.7**

B

5820

PROCEEDINGS OF THE
ROYAL ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY
OF LONDON

SERIES B. TAXONOMY

VOLUME 13.

1944.

MESSOR AEGYPTIACUS EMERY SUBSPECIES *CANALICULATUS*
SUBSP. N. (*STRIATICEPS* SANTSCHI? (1923) *NEC* ER. ANDRÉ
(1883)) (HYM. FORMICIDAE)

By HORACE DONISTHORPE, F.Z.S., F.R.E.S.

Department of Entomology, British Museum (Nat. Hist.).

♂. Black, shining, mandibles and last four joints of the tarsi reddish, furnished with sparse outstanding golden hairs, forming a row on the clypeus. Psammophores present. *Head* large, broad, slightly transverse, very slightly broader posteriorly, sides almost straight, posterior angles rounded, posterior border slightly emarginate in middle. Finely longitudinally striate, more strongly so on cheeks and on disc; puncturation consisting of fine, small, shallow, scattered punctures; *mandibles* massive, broad, triangular, deeply longitudinally striate, masticatory border armed with two large broad rounded teeth at apex, and a number of smaller teeth behind, worn almost flat (these are more visible on the underside); *clypeus* transverse, anterior border slightly excavate in middle, sinuate at each side, disc convex and rather strongly longitudinally striate; *frontal area* rather shallow, more finely striate than clypeus, rounded posteriorly; *frontal carinae* with sharp raised rims, slightly divergent posteriorly; *eyes* moderate, round oval, slightly convex, with many facets; *antennae* fairly long; *scape* narrow and somewhat curved, not reaching posterior margin of head; *funiculus* gradually increasing in breadth to apex, first joint slightly longer than the rest, last joint slightly longer than the one preceding it. *Thorax* not long though longer than broad, constricted in middle; *pronotum* large, round, convex, furnished with a neck raised at anterior margin, anterior angles and sides rounded, neck rather rugosely punctured, space between neck and disc transversely striate, disc irregularly and finely longitudinally striate, sides more evenly and strongly so; *mesonotum* longer than broad, convex, rather sharply pointed at apex, narrowed towards base, finely longitudinally striate, and with sparse, shallow, scattered punctures, sternite of mesothorax rather strongly transversely striate; furrow between mesonotum and epinotum rather deep and transversely striate; *epinotum* armed with a rather broad rounded projection on each side, which possesses sharp edges slightly bending outwards and downwards, the *dorsal surface* longer than the declivity and hollowed out, forming a furrow before and between the projections, transversely striate, *declivity* rather abrupt, flat, transversely striate, sides of epinotum transversely striate, sternite and episternite of metathorax longitudinally striate; *peduncle of petiole* rather long with a slight projection on each side before middle, *node of petiole* high, rounded above and at sides, posterior surface flat; *post-petiole* transverse, rounded above and at sides, not as high as node of petiole. *Gaster* very shining, sculpture very finely coriaceous and with some small, sparse, shallow, scattered punctures, more abundant on first segment. *Legs* moderate. *Long.* 9 mm. to 10.5 mm.

PROC. R. ENT. SOC. LOND. (B) 13. PTS. 1-2. (FEB. 1944.)

Type in the British Museum (Natural History).

♂. The workers vary in size, the smallest measuring 5.5 mm. The structure and sculpture is the same as in the soldiers, except that the head is longer and narrower, not being transverse. The pronotum is reddish in some of the smaller workers, and in a few small specimens the thorax is entirely reddish.

Described from a number of soldiers and workers sent to me by Mr. W. Pickles from Algeria. He informed me that he has found them on several occasions in conflict with *Messor barbarus barbarus* L. In 1923 Santschi wrote

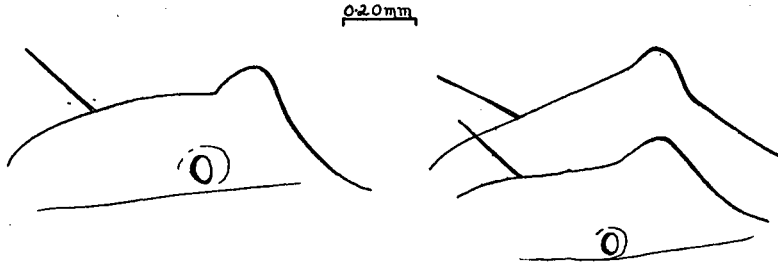


FIG. 1.—*Messor aegyptiacus* Emery subsp. *canaliculatus* subsp. n. Epinotum in profile and viewed obliquely.

of *Messor aegyptiacus* Emery (1878) as a species which is typical of a group of desert, or semi-desert, forms. Emery in the *Genera Insectorum* (1921) treated *aegyptiacus* as a subspecies of *Messor barbarus* L. In my opinion Santschi's

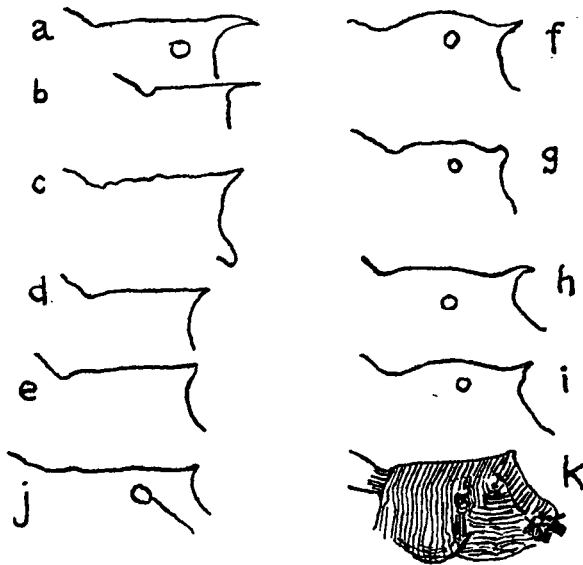


FIG. 2.—“Profil de l'épinotum chez les diverses variétés du *Messor aegyptiacus* Em.” (a) *v. foreli* larger ♀; (b) *ibid.* smaller ♀; (c) *v. fossulatus* larger ♀; (d) *ibid.* smaller ♀; (e) *v. brevispinosus* ♀; (f) *v. aegyptiacus* ♀; (g) *v. tunetinus* ♀; (h) *v. striatulus* larger ♀; (i) *v. felah* larger worker; (j) *Messor striaticeps* André (type) ♀; (k) *ibid.* oblique view.

view is correct, for the epinotum of *barbarus* is totally unarmed, whereas in *aegyptiacus*, and the allied forms it is armed with spines, teeth, or projections. Santschi gives a diagram (which is reproduced here) showing the epinotum in profile of the different forms; but for what he calls *striaticeps* André he also gives an oblique view. This is evidently not Er. André's *striaticeps*, for that insect has a sharp spine to the epinotum. André in his original description (1883¹) writes—"d'épines bien accentuées au metanotum" (now called the epinotum). Furthermore the specimens of *striaticeps* in the British Museum possess such spines, and one of these, ex coll. Donisthorpe, bears Forel's identification label. Santschi does not give a description of *striaticeps*, but I think it is probable that his figure refers to our insect, though it does not really agree with it. Both occur in Algeria; but in any case Santschi's ant requires a new name as it is clearly not *striaticeps* André.

Karawajew redescribed Emery's *striatulus* (1891) under the name of *curvispina* (1912), which latter name sinks, of course, as a synonym.

I am indebted to Dr. H. E. Hinton for the outline drawings, and to Mr. W. H. T. Tams for the reproduction of Santschi's diagram.

The forms figured by Santschi are as follows.

1. *Messor aegyptiacus* Emery, 1878, *Ann. Mus. Stor. nat. Genova* 12 : 57 (*Messor barbarus* L. subsp. *aegyptiaca* Emery in *Genera Insectorum*).

2. *Messor aegyptiacus* Emery var. *brevispinosus* Stitz, 1917, *Mitt. zool. Mus. Berlin* 8 : 344 (*Messor barbarus* L. subsp. *striaticeps* Er. André var. *brevispinosa* Stitz in *Genera Insectorum*).

3. *Messor aegyptiacus* Emery var. *felah* Santschi, 1923, *Rev. suisse Zool.* 30 : 321.

4. *Messor aegyptiacus* Emery var. *foreli* Santschi, 1923, *Rev. suisse Zool.* 30 : 322.

5. *Messor aegyptiacus* Emery var. *fossulatus* Santschi, 1923, *Rev. suisse Zool.* 30 : 323.

6. *Messor aegyptiacus* Emery var. *striatulus* Emery, 1891, *Expl. Sc. Tunisie* : 11, 12. (*Messor barbarus* L. subsp. *striaticeps* Er. André var. *striatula* Emery in *Genera Insectorum*) = *curvispinosus* Karawajew, 1912, *Rev. russe Ent.* 12 : 10. (*Messor barbarus* L. subsp. *striaticeps* Er. André var. *curvispinosa* Karawajew in *Genera Insectorum*.)

7. *Messor aegyptiacus* Emery var. *striaticeps* Santschi, 1923, *Rev. suisse Zool.* 30 : 321, nec Er. André 1883.

LITERATURE.

ANDRÉ, ER., 1883, *Spec. Hym. Europe Algérie* 2 *Fourmis* : 356.

EMERY, C., 1878, *Ann. Mus. Stor. nat. Genova* 12 : 57.

—, 1891, *Expl. Sc. Tunisie Fourmis* : 11, 12.

—, 1921, *Genera Insectorum* Fasc. 174a : 69-73.

KARAWAJEW, W., 1912, *Rev. russe Ent.* 12 : 10.

SANTSCHI, F., 1923, *Rev. suisse Zool.* 30 : 321.

STITZ, H., 1917, *Mitt. zool. Mus. Berlin* 8 : 344.

¹ In the *Genera Insectorum* the date is given as 1882, but as pointed out in André's work (before the index) pages 281-548 were published in 1883.