

**THE CORRECT NAME FOR THE GROUP OF ANTS FORMERLY
KNOWN AS PSEUDOMYRMA**

(HYMENOPTERA)

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For approximately one hundred years ants belonging to this genus have been erroneously called *Pseudomyrma*, and the authorship of the group has been attributed to Latreille, Lund, or Guérin. The facts concerning this matter are briefly discussed below, followed by a chronological outline of the synonymy.

Lund (June 1831), *Ann. Sci. Nat. Zool.* 23:137, in a letter addressed to M. Audouin entitled "Lettre sur les habitudes de quelques fourmis du Brésil," described these ants generically, gave an account of their biology, and mentioned the fact that he had brought five or six species with him from Brazil. These he had shown to Latreille, who had proposed for them the name *Pseudomyrme*. Had this name not been in the vernacular, it would have been accepted, and the authorship of the group would have been correctly attributed to Lund. This would have prevented subsequent complications that have been confusing to later students of ants. Guérin (1844), *Iconogr. Règne Anim. Ins.*, v. 7, p. 427, emended the name to *Pseudomyrma* and thereby would have been credited with the authorship had not other publications antedated his.

Upon reviewing the entire matter of the correct names and authorships for the ant section of the Synoptic Catalogue of the Hymenoptera of America North of Mexico, U. S. Dept. Agr. Monogr. No. 2 (July 1951), I found that the name *Leptalea* proposed in Erichson's article (Klug ms.) of 1839 (see citation below) antedated all other available names then known to me. Accordingly *Leptalea* was designated as the proper generic name for these ants and the authorship was credited to Erichson. The subfamily name was changed from Pseudomyrminae to Leptaleinae, of which I naturally became the author. Soon after the appearance of the catalogue, however, William F. Buren and Father Walter Kempf called my attention to an obscure European publication containing a correct name for this genus of ants antedating even *Leptalea*. Upon examining the publication I found that Lund (Nov. 1831), *Notizen aus dem Gebiete der Natur und Heilkunde*, No. 7, v. 32, p. 106, in an article entitled "Ueber die Lebensweise einiger brasilianischen Ameisen," gave an account of these ants almost identical with that in the French

publication of June 1831 referred to above. The name that he stated Latreille had proposed for the ants was, however, given this time as *Pseudomyrmex*, an acceptable scientific name in every sense. Hence, it is clear that the correct generic name should be *Pseudomyrmex* Lund. The subfamily name as a result of the change becomes Pseudomyrmecinae.

Subfamily **PSEUDOMYRMECINAE**

Genus **Pseudomyrmex** Lund

Pseudomyrme Lund (Latreille ms.), 1831 (June). Ann. Sci. Nat. Zool. 23:137. Vernacular.

Pseudomyrmex Lund (Latreille ms.), 1831 (Nov.). Notizen aus dem Gebiete der Natur und Heilkunde No. 7, v. 32, p. 106.

Type: *Formica gracilis* Fabricius. By present designation.

Leptalea Erichson (Klug ms.), 1839. Arch. f. Naturgesch. 5:309.

Type: *Formica gracilis* Fabricius. Designated by W. M. Wheeler, 1911.

Myrmex Guérin, 1844. Iconogr. Règne Anim. Ins., v. 7, p. 427. Preocc.

Type: *Formica* (*Myrmex*) *perboscii* Guérin. Monob.

Pseudomyrma Guérin, 1844. Iconogr. Règne Anim. Ins., v. 7, p. 427. Emend.

Type: *Formica gracilis* Fabricius. Designated by W. M. Wheeler, 1911.

Leptalaea Spinola, 1851. Accad. Torino Mem. 13:68. Emend.