

LXXV.—A New *Myrmecophilous* Diapriid (Hymenoptera, Serphoidea). By G. E. J. NIXON, B.A., Imperial Institute of Entomology.

THE following species was sent with a collection of ants from Mauritius by R. Mamet to the Imperial Institute of Entomology for identification. As Monsieur Mamet is particularly interested in this Hymenopteron because of its association with an ant, it is here described as new.

Family Diapriidæ.

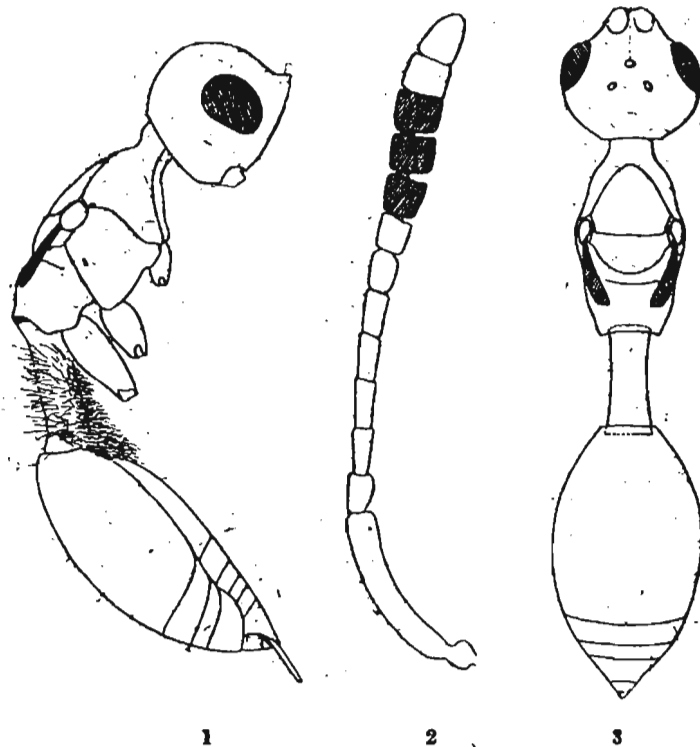
*Spilomicrus myrmecophilus*, sp. n.

♀. Head black but in two of the four specimens becoming reddish below and behind the eyes. Thorax predominantly reddish brown with the mesonotum and mesopleura usually flushed with darker colouring. Gaster very dark brown, faintly paler on about basal third in three out of the four specimens; in one of these three specimens the pale area is separated into a large pale patch on each side. Antenna with segments 1-8 reddish yellow; 9-11 dark brown; 12-13 yellowish. Legs brownish; femora infuscated medially.

Head seen above as long as wide (measured from frontal prominence to occipital margin), much wider than the thorax, 21:17, completely smooth and shining; apart from the long hairs which fringe the occipital ridge above, the head in a dorsal view shows some 6-8 very long hairs, arranged more or less in pairs. Back of head beneath with short pubescence. Eyes rather small. Scape, excluding radicle, a little shorter than the following four segments together; pedicel elongate, one-and-a-half times as long as apically wide; flagellum claviform but without any trace of a differentiated club; flagellar segments 1-2 subequal, fully twice as long as apically wide; 6 slightly longer than wide; 8-10 slightly transverse; 11 about one-and-a-third times as long as 10, regularly conical and slightly narrower than 10 (fig. 2).

Thorax a little less than twice as long as at its greatest width, 25:14 (measured between posterior end of neck and apex of propodeum). In a dorsal view, the pronotum is conspicuously visible as far back as the tegula; the pronotal collar above has numerous rather long hairs

but no close pubescence. Propleura closely pubescent. Scutellum anteriorly without a transverse furrow or paired depressions; in some lights a faint transverse impression can be made out. Propodeum above smooth, shining, bare and without the slightest trace of a longitudinal keel; its posterior margin (in profile breaking the even curve of the propodeum) is produced backwards as a



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Fig. 1.—Body (lateral), ♀.

Fig. 2.—Antenna, ♀.

Fig. 3.—Body (dorsal), ♀.

rim or flange to cover the base of the petiole. Metapleura and extreme lateral edge of propodeum clothed with pale brownish pubescence. Fore wing vestigial, reaching as far as, or slightly beyond, middle of propodeum. Legs showing no unusual feature but very

slender; hind tarsus very distinctly longer than its tibia, 16:13; hind tarsus 3 is two-thirds of 5; dorsal and lateral surface of hind tibia with only recumbent hairs.

*Abdomen*: Petiole two-and-a-half times as long as wide, smooth, shining, clothed rather thinly with pale brownish hairs. Gaster about one-and-two-third times as long as wide, regularly oval and evenly convex; tergite 2 (1st gaster) covers about three-quarters of the gaster. The sides of the tergites (undifferentiated epipleura) do not extend on to the ventral surface of the gaster, so as to wrap over the ventrites as is usual in *Spilomicrus*. Except for some long hairs on the apical tergite and the apical ventrite, the gaster is conspicuously free from hairs.

Length: ♀, 2.2 mm.

MAURITIUS: Corps de Garde Mt., 26. x. 1945, 4 ♀♀ (one labelled as type), found in nest of *Solenopsis mameti* Donisthorpe (1947), (*R. Mamet & J. Vinson*).

Type presented to the British Museum (Natural History).

I have placed this species in *Spilomicrus* Westwood for reasons of convenience. It cannot be said rightly to belong here, though because of the 13-segmented antenna and the structure of the base of the gaster it is probably related to the *Spilomicrus*-group of genera. It differs from *Spilomicrus* in two highly significant details:— (1) the complete absence of even a trace of a medial propodeal keel and (2) the absence of hollows on the anterior part of the scutellum. If and when the numerous diapriid genera described by Kieffer come to be studied critically and some attempt is made to define their limits, it may be found necessary to create a genus for the present species. No useful purpose would be served. I think, in taking such a step just now.

*Spilomicrus myrmecophilus* shows no trace of trichomes, which suggests perhaps that its relationship with *Solenopsis mameti* is not a very intimate one.

In figure 1 the pubescence only of the petiole and base of ventral surface of gaster is shown.