

An inland record of *Aedes detritus* Haliday (Diptera, Culicidae), *Nature, Lond.*, **132**: 135; 1938, *The British Mosquitoes*, London. Sherlock, R. L., 1921, Rocksalt and brine, *Mem. Geol. Surv. U.K., Sp. Rep. Min. Res. G.B.*, **18**: 1-121.

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PONERA PUNCTATISSIMA ROGER (HYM., FORMICIDAE) IN IRELAND,
WITH SOME NOTES ON THE SPECIES

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Recently Dr. H. E. Hinton gave me some small ants to name which had been sent to him by Dr. P. M. Butler, who had taken them at Bushmills, Co. Antrim. This is the first time *Ponera punctatissima* Roger, which these ants proved to be, has been taken in Ireland. This species has now occurred in the British Isles, Holland, France, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Norway and Finland; the Canary Isles; and Santschi recorded a single worker from the Belgian Congo. It frequents hothouses, bakehouses, kitchens, etc., but has also been taken at large away from houses and buildings—in flood-refuse, vegetable-refuse, bone-heaps, sawdust-heaps, manure-heaps, and dust-heaps where dustmen empty the town refuse. Also by sweeping, and winged females have been captured on the wing.

Dr. Butler writes that he found several specimens in an oatmeal mill at Bushmills, Co. Antrim. They were found in the building used as a kiln-house and store for locally grown oats. The insects occurred on the ground floor near the skirting, a few feet from a door leading to the yard. They were associated with various granary beetles and mites. The kiln is of course warm in places.

Ponera punctatissima Roger can be easily distinguished from *P. coarctata* Latr., the only other species of the genus found in the British Isles, by the very fine and close puncturation. The male also, which is winged in *coarctata*, is always apterous. This male was described by Roger as an abnormal worker under the name of *Ponera androgyna*. I suspect also that van der Wiel's ergatoid females and gynaecoid workers—he took two of each in a colony of *P. punctatissima* in a manure-heap at Mijdrecht in Holland in May, 1923—were really males.

The male appears to be rare, but it is probably passed over as a worker; we record four of five captures in British Ants. Major Brangham sent me a male with workers, which he had captured in a hot-house at Kew Gardens in 1937, to identify. This he has kindly presented to the National Collection. In the second edition of *British Ants* (1927), we record *P. punctatissima* from Hants., S.; Kent, E. & W.; Essex, N.; Middlesex; Oxford; Gloucester, W.; Glamorgan; York; Cumberland; and Edinburgh. Since then it has been taken at Bristol, Somerset, in a bone-heap (Womersley, 1928); Kew Gardens, Surrey (Brangham, 1937); and Bushmills, Co. Antrim (Butler, 1945).

It is probable that when this ant is present in hot-houses, botanic gardens, and the like, it may be descended from introduced specimens; but I agree with Holger Holgerson that some colonies found in the open—in the British Isles, Norway, Finland, etc.—are indigenous, and are probably relicts from a post-glacial epoch.

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