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Article I.—ANTS OF THE AMERICAN MUSEUM CONGO EXPEDITION. A CONTRIBUTION TO THE MYRMECOLOGY OF AFRICA¹

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WITH THE COLLABORATION OF J. BEQUAERT, I. W. BAILEY, F. SANTSCHI, AND W. M.
MANN

PLATES I TO XLV, 47 MAPS, AND 103 TEXT FIGURES

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION.....	7
New Species, Subspecies, and Varieties, with Their Type Localities....	10
I.—ON THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE ANTS OF THE ETHIOPIAN AND MALAGASY REGIONS, BY WM. M. WHEELER.....	13
The Peculiarities of the Ethiopian Ant-Fauna.....	13
Table I. General Distribution of the Genera of Ants.....	22
Table II. Total Number of Genera and Number of Endemic Genera in each Region, also Number of Genera Common to Other Regions	29
Table III. Total Number of Genera and Number of Endemic Genera in each of the Subfamilies.....	29
Table IV. Number of Species, Subspecies, and Varieties known from each Region in 1911 (Forel).....	30
Table V. Number of Species, Subspecies, and Varieties of each Genus hitherto Recorded from the Ethiopian Region and the Belgian Congo.....	31
The Peculiarities of the Malagasy Ant-Fauna.....	33
Table VI. Number of Species, Subspecies, and Varieties of each Genus hitherto Recorded from the Malagasy Region.....	37

¹Scientific Results of the American Museum Congo Expedition. Entomology No. 7.

	PAGE
II.—THE ANTS COLLECTED BY THE AMERICAN MUSEUM CONGO EXPEDITION,	
By WM. M. WHEELER.....	39
Dorylinae.....	39
<i>Dorylus</i> Fabricius.....	41
Ceratopachyinae.....	51
<i>Ceratopachys</i> F. Smith.....	52
<i>Phyracacces</i> Emery.....	53
Ponerinae.....	56
<i>Platythyrea</i> Roger.....	57
<i>Palliothyreus</i> Mayr.....	60
<i>Megaponera</i> Mayr.....	63
<i>Bothroponera</i> Mayr.....	69
<i>Phrynoponera</i> Wm. M. Wheeler.....	75
<i>Euponera</i> Forel.....	81
<i>Plectroctena</i> F. Smith.....	85
<i>Psalidomyrmex</i> Ern. André.....	89
<i>Leptogenys</i> Roger.....	93
<i>Anochetus</i> Mayr.....	96
<i>Odontomachus</i> Latreille.....	99
Pseudomyrminae.....	103
<i>Tetraponera</i> F. Smith.....	104
<i>Vilicicola</i> Wm. M. Wheeler.....	107
<i>Pachysima</i> Emery.....	112
Myrmicinae.....	124
<i>Pheidole</i> Westwood.....	126
<i>Myrmecaria</i> W. Saunders.....	141
<i>Cardiocondyla</i> Emery.....	149
<i>Crematogaster</i> Lund.....	150
<i>Monomorium</i> Mayr.....	161
<i>Solenopsis</i> Westwood.....	163
<i>Aëromyrma</i> Forel.....	165
<i>Carebara</i> F. Smith.....	168
<i>Pædalagus</i> Forel.....	177
<i>Atopomyrmex</i> Ern. André.....	180
<i>Meranoplus</i> F. Smith.....	183
<i>Macromischoides</i> Wm. M. Wheeler.....	187
<i>Tetramorium</i> Mayr.....	190
<i>Xiphomyrmex</i> Forel.....	193
<i>Rhoptromyrmex</i> Mayr.....	194
<i>Triglyphothrix</i> Forel.....	196
<i>Cataulacus</i> F. Smith.....	197
Dolichoderinae.....	199
<i>Engramma</i> Forel.....	201
<i>Tapinoma</i> Förster.....	208
<i>Technomyrmex</i> Mayr.....	209
Formicinae.....	210
<i>Plagiolepis</i> Mayr.....	211

	PAGE
<i>Acantholepis</i> Mayr.....	214
<i>Prenolepis</i> Mayr.....	216
<i>Pseudolasius</i> Emery.....	218
<i>Oecophylla</i> F. Smith.....	224
<i>Campylopus</i> Mayr.....	232
<i>Phasmomyrmex</i> Stitz.....	256
<i>Polyrhachis</i> F. Smith.....	256
III.—THE PREDACEOUS ENEMIES OF ANTS, BY J. BEQUAERT.....	271
Arthropods.....	273
Arachnida.....	273
Coleoptera.....	275
Neuroptera.....	276
Diptera.....	277
Hymenoptera.....	283
Amphibians.....	285
Reptiles.....	295
Birds.....	297
Mammals.....	314
Man.....	329
IV.—ANTS IN THEIR DIVERSE RELATIONS TO THE PLANT WORLD, BY J. BEQUAERT.....	333
1. Various Relations between Ants and Vegetation.....	334
Economic Importance of Ants.....	334
Ants as Agents in the Pollination of Flowers.....	349
Ants and Extrafloral Nectaries.....	351
Dispersal of Seeds by Ants.....	355
Harvesting Ants.....	358
Ants and Epiphytes.....	364
Gall-inhabiting Ants.....	369
Fungus-growing Ants.....	375
Fungous Parasites of Ants.....	384
Intracellular Bacteria of Ants.....	401
2. A Review of African Myrmecophytes.....	403
Leguminosae.....	408
<i>Schotia</i> Jacquin.....	408
Euphorbiaceae.....	409
<i>Macaranga</i> DuPetit-Thouars.....	409
Ecology of <i>Macaranga saccifera</i>	412
Sterculiaceae.....	414
<i>Cola</i> Schott and Endlicher.....	414
Ecology of <i>Cola Laurentii</i>	417
<i>Scaphopetalum</i> Masters.....	419
Ecology of <i>Scaphopetalum Thonneri</i>	422
Flacourtiaceae.....	423
<i>Barteria</i> J. D. Hooker.....	424
Ecology of <i>Barteria fistulosa</i>	432
Ecology of <i>Barteria Deweyrei</i>	439

	PAGE
Apocynaceæ.....	441
<i>Epitaberna</i> K. Schumann.....	441
Verbenaceæ.....	443
<i>Clerodendron</i> Linnaeus.....	443
<i>Vitex</i> Linnaeus.....	444
Ecology of <i>Vitex Staudtii</i>	447
Rubiaceæ.....	452
<i>Uncaria</i> Schreber.....	453
Ecology of <i>Uncaria africana</i>	458
<i>Sarcocephalus</i> Afzelius.....	459
Ecology of <i>Sarcocephalus</i> Species.....	460
<i>Randia</i> Houston.....	461
Ecology of <i>Randia Lujæ</i>	465
Ecology of <i>Randia myrmecophyla</i>	465
Ecology of <i>Randia physophylla</i>	467
<i>Plectronia</i> Linnaeus.....	468
Ecology of <i>Plectronia Laurentii</i>	471
Ecology of Unidentified African Species of <i>Plectronia</i> ...	474
<i>Cuviera</i> de Candolle.....	477
Ecology of <i>Cuviera</i> in the Belgian Congo.....	488
3. Synopsis of Recorded Myrmecophytes.....	494
Pteridophyta.....	497
Polypodiaceæ.....	497
Monocotyledoneæ.....	499
Palmae.....	499
Orchidaceæ.....	500
Dicotyledoneæ.....	501
Moraceæ.....	501
Polygonaceæ.....	505
Myristicaceæ.....	508
Monimiaceæ.....	509
Lauraceæ.....	509
Nepenthaceæ.....	510
Rosaceæ.....	510
Leguminosæ.....	510
Meliaceæ.....	514
Euphorbiaceæ.....	515
Sterculiaceæ.....	517
Flacourtiaceæ.....	517
Melastomataceæ.....	517
Loganiaceæ.....	519
Gentianaceæ.....	519
Apocynaceæ.....	520
Asclepiadaceæ.....	520
Borraginaceæ.....	521
Verbenaceæ.....	522
Rubiaceæ.....	522
4. Bibliography of the Relations between Ants and Plants.....	530

	PAGE
V.—THE ANATOMY OF CERTAIN PLANTS FROM THE BELGIAN CONGO, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MYRMECOPHYTISM, BY I. W. BAILEY.....	585
Introduction.....	585
Minute Anatomy of African Myrmecophytes.....	585
<i>Vitex Staudtii</i> Guerke.....	585
<i>Cuviera</i>	593
<i>Plectronia</i> species A.....	597
<i>Plectronia Laurentii</i> De Wildeman.....	598
<i>Barteria fistulosa</i> Masters and <i>B. Deweveri</i> De Wildeman and Durand.....	599
<i>Sarcophthalmus</i> Species.....	600
Salient Features of African Myrmecophytes.....	601
Food of Twig-inhabiting Ants.....	602
Theories of Myrmecophily and Myrmecophytism.....	610
Bibliography.....	619
VI.—NOTES ON A COLLECTION OF WEST AFRICAN MYRMECOPHILES, BY WM. M. MANN.....	623
VII.—KEYS TO THE GENERA AND SUBGENERA OF ANTS, BY WM. M. WHEELER...	631
Key to the Subfamilies.....	631
Dorylinæ Leach.....	633
Ceropachyinae Forel and Ponerinae Lepeletier.....	636
Pseudomyrminæ Emery.....	653
Myrmicinae Lepeletier.....	655
Dolichoderinae Forel.....	687
Formicinae Lepeletier.....	691
VIII.—A SYNONYMIC LIST OF THE ANTS OF THE ETHIOPIAN REGION, BY WM. M. WHEELER.....	711
Approximate Location of African Localities, Rivers, Mountains, Lakes, etc., Mentioned in the Catalogue of Ethiopian Ants and Elsewhere in the Paper.....	714
Dorylinæ Leach.....	727
Ceropachyinae Forel.....	755
Ponerinae Lepeletier.....	757
Pseudomyrminæ Emery.....	795
Myrmicinae Lepeletier.....	802
Dolichoderinae Forel.....	921
Formicinae Lepeletier.....	928
IX.—A SYNONYMIC LIST OF THE ANTS OF THE MALAGASY REGION, BY WM. M. WHEELER.....	1005
Ceropachyinae Forel.....	1005
Ponerinae Lepeletier.....	1005
Pseudomyrminæ Emery.....	1014
Myrmicinae Lepeletier.....	1016
Dolichoderinae Forel.....	1034
Formicinae Lepeletier.....	1035
INDEX.....	1057

INTRODUCTION

The present volume has grown out of a study of the ants collected by the American Museum Congo Expedition, under the direction of Messrs. Herbert Lang and James P. Chapin, and of a smaller collection made in the same region by Dr. J. Bequaert. The working up of this material has proved to be far from easy, owing to the state of the literature on the African Formicidæ. During the nineteenth century comparatively little work was done on the ants of the dark continent, but during the past two decades, as a result of numerous expeditions and the interest of resident entomologists, Emery, Forel, Santschi, and Arnold, but especially Forel and Santschi, have published a great number of papers dealing with fragments of the Ethiopian fauna. This literature proved to be quite unmanageable until I had carefully catalogued the numerous described species, subspecies, and varieties. After this had been accomplished it seemed best to publish the results as an aid to future students. Getting the catalogue ready for publication, however, was a very annoying task, which I could hardly have undertaken without the assistance of Dr. Bequaert, who patiently verified all the numerous references, added others, and helped in arranging the synonymy and lists of localities. He has also given me the benefit of his expert opinion in regard to many taxonomic details.

Both Mr. Lang and Dr. Bequaert have, in fact, showed such keen and enthusiastic interest in the progress of the work that it seemed advisable to expand it by the addition of other matter of interest not only to the zoologist but to the general public. This, however, required the services of several collaborators. At my request, Dr. F. Santschi kindly undertook to work up the species of *Crematogaster*, a genus to which he has given much attention. A glance at my catalogue of the Ethiopian species will show why I despaired of adequately handling the Congo material of the group. I might have attempted it, if the *Crematogaster* portion of Mr. George Arnold's monograph of the Rhodesian ants had appeared, but the World War had stopped the publication of this important work, so that even in making my catalogue I had nothing to rely on except the confused mess in the existing literature. Mr. Arnold nevertheless sent me some valuable comments on several of the species, together with the following remarks on the genus as a whole: "The genus *Crematogaster* is perhaps the most troublesome of all, and for this there are several reasons. First of all, it is a very large genus, so large that authors get lost in the vast number of described forms and of their collections. Secondly, the species of this genus in Africa are exception-

ally liable to minute variations in all directions even over a very small area (one might almost say 'on a very small number of adjacent trees,' since most of the species are arboricolous), and even within the limits of the same nest. This is a point which can only be properly appreciated by the man on the spot, and is persistently overlooked by the cabinet naturalist. Thirdly, in the separation of species and varieties, too much emphasis has been placed on unreliable characters, such as the length and degree of divergence of the epinotal spines, the strength of the median mesonotal tubercle, and the proportions of the petiole. Lastly, a good deal of confusion is due to sheer carelessness and contempt for exact methods." Other almost equally baffling and disconcerting complexes of forms are presented by *Camponotus* (*Myrmoturba*) *maculatus* (Fabricius) and *C. (Myrmotrema) foraminosus* Forel and their numerous subspecies and varieties. My catalogue of these probably has little value except as a record of present taxonomic confusion.

It seemed advisable to include in the work dichotomic tables for the identification of the known genera and subgenera of ants. In constructing these tables I have also been greatly aided by Dr. Bequaert. In drawing up those of the subfamilies Ponerinae, Cerapachyinae, Dorylinae, and Dolichoderinae, extensive use was made of Emery's fascicles in Wytsman's 'Genera Insectorum.' We have, of course, added brief diagnoses of all the genera and subgenera since published. As the publication of the fascicles on the Myrmicinae and Formicinae was rendered impossible by the German occupation of Belgium, we were compelled to create tables for these two subfamilies from such materials as we could find in the literature and from a study of representative species in my collection. This portion of the tables is, therefore, less satisfactory and may need modification when Emery's account of the Myrmicinae and Formicinae appears.

Among the collections made by Messrs. Lang, Chapin, and Bequaert, there was also considerable material representing portions of the singular plants (myrmecophytes) regularly inhabited by some of the Congolese ants. As Dr. Bequaert, during his sojourn in equatorial Africa, had made many detailed notes and drawings on the relations of ants to plants, he was requested to write an article on myrmecophytism. My colleague, Prof. I. W. Bailey, undertook to study the histology of the plants under discussion and reached such striking and important conclusions, both botanical and zoological, that there could be no doubt about the propriety of including his paper as a portion of the report.

After much of the taxonomic work had been completed, Dr. Bequaert discovered that additional ant material could be obtained from the stomachs of the numerous frogs and toads collected on the expedition, and Mr. G. K. Noble kindly went over all the Congo amphibians and cut out and labelled their stomachs. Among the ants, which were in a surprisingly good state of preservation, there were many interesting forms, notably representatives of the genera *Phrynoponera*, *Psalidomyrmex*, and *Leptogenys*, not taken by the collectors in the field. The results of this study suggested the writing of a special compilation by Dr. Bequaert on ants as the food of other animals. In future it will be advisable for collectors of ants in the tropics carefully to examine the stomach contents of all batrachians as well as those of ant-eaters.

The Lang-Chapin-Bequaert collection also contained a few striking myrmecophiles which I have described in a special chapter together with an account of an interesting collection of myrmecophilous beetles made for me by Mr. George Schwab in the Cameroon. In writing this part I have had the assistance of Dr. W. M. Mann, to whom the new species of Staphylinidæ are to be attributed.

I would express to the authorities of The American Museum of Natural History my deep appreciation of their kindness in enabling me to add to the interest of the volume by including in the text the many figures drawn by Mrs. Helen von Ziska, the maps of distribution, and especially the colored frontispiece by Mr. L. A. Fuertes and the reproductions of Mr. Lang's beautiful photographs of Congolese ant-nests. I trust that in its present form the work will not only prove to be valuable as an account of the Formicidæ collected by the first American expedition to the Congo, but will also serve as a book that can be profitably taken into the field by future collectors throughout the Ethiopian Region.

A list including the various localities in which Messrs. Lang, Chapin, and Bequaert collected the material treated in my taxonomic review precedes the Catalogue of Ethiopian ants.

WM. M. WHEELER

NEW SPECIES, SUBSPECIES, AND VARIETIES, WITH THEIR TYPE LOCALITIES

	PAGE
<i>Dorylus (Anomma) kohli</i> var. <i>langi</i> . Malela.....	45
“ “ “ var. <i>chapini</i> . Stanleyville.....	45
<i>Phyracaces langi</i> . Lubila.....	54
<i>Platythyrea gracillima</i> . Avakubi.....	59
<i>Bothroponera pachyderma</i> var. <i>funerea</i> . Medje.....	73
<i>Phrynoponera gabonensis</i> var. <i>esta</i> . Medje.....	77
“ “ “ var. <i>fecunda</i> . Akenge.....	78
“ “ “ var. <i>umbrosa</i> . Medje.....	78
“ <i>heterodus</i> . Stanleyville.....	78
“ <i>bequaerti</i> . Ngayu.....	79
<i>Euponera (Mesoponera) ingesta</i> . Akenge.....	82
“ “ <i>subiridescens</i> . Akenge.....	83
<i>Psalidomyrmex obesus</i> . Medje.....	92
<i>Leptogenys stuhlmanni</i> subsp. <i>camerunensis</i> var. <i>opalescens</i> . Akenge.....	94
“ (<i>Lobopelta</i>) <i>ergatogyna</i> . Medje.....	95
<i>Anochetus estus</i> . Akenge.....	98
“ <i>opaciventris</i> . Akenge.....	98
<i>Odontomachus assiniensis</i> var. <i>furrior</i> . Faradje.....	101
“ “ “ var. <i>aterrimus</i> . Niapu.....	102
“ <i>hæmatoda</i> var. <i>stanleyi</i> . Stanleyville.....	102
<i>Tetraponera mocquersyi</i> var. <i>lepida</i> . Faradje.....	106
<i>Viticicola tessmanni</i> var. <i>castanea</i> . Avakubi.....	112
<i>Pheidole batrachorum</i> . Akenge.....	128
“ <i>caffa</i> subsp. <i>bayeri</i> var. <i>thysvillensis</i> . Thysville.....	130
“ “ “ subsp. <i>senilifrons</i> . Yakuluku.....	130
“ <i>minima</i> subsp. <i>malelana</i> . Malela.....	133
“ <i>mylognatha</i> . Banana.....	134
“ <i>niapuana</i> . Niapu.....	136
“ <i>saxicola</i> . Zaunbi.....	138
<i>Myrmecaria salambo</i> . Garamba.....	147
“ <i>erigua</i> subsp. <i>kisangani</i> . Stanleyville.....	148
<i>Crematogaster excisa</i> subsp. <i>impressa</i> var. <i>agla</i> . Dimbroko, Ivory Coast.....	153
“ “ “ “ var. <i>euphrosyne</i> . Faradje.....	153
“ <i>impressiceps</i> var. <i>frontalis</i> . Malela.....	154
“ <i>menilekii</i> subsp. <i>proserpina</i> . Malela.....	154
“ (<i>Sphærocrema</i>) <i>bequaerti</i> var. <i>atraplex</i> . Yakuluku.....	155
“ (<i>Atopogyn</i>) <i>africana</i> subsp. <i>tibialis</i> . Mosekowa between Walikale and Labutu.....	157
<i>Solenopsis punctaticeps</i> subsp. <i>kibaliensis</i> . Vankerekhovenville.....	164
<i>Aëromyrma petulca</i> . Malela.....	166
<i>Carebara langi</i> . Stanleyville.....	173
“ <i>osborni</i> . Niangara.....	174
<i>Pædalagus termitolestes</i> . Malela.....	177
<i>Atopomyrmex mocquersyi</i> subsp. <i>cryptoceroideus</i> var. <i>melanoticus</i> . Between Lukolela and Basoko.....	182

<i>Merauoplus nanus</i> subsp. <i>soriculus</i> . Medje.....	184
<i>Tetramorium guineense</i> subsp. <i>medje</i> . Medje.....	192
“ <i>pusillum</i> var. <i>hemigi</i> . Niangara.....	193
<i>Niphomyrmer occidentalis</i> subsp. <i>akengensis</i> . Akenge.....	194
<i>Cataulacus tragaordhi</i> var. <i>plectronix</i> . Stanleyville.....	199
<i>Engramma denticulatum</i> . Between Lukolela and Basoko.....	205
“ <i>griseopubens</i> . Between Lukolela and Basoko.....	206
“ <i>gowdeyi</i> . Kampala, Uganda.....	207
<i>Tapinoma luridum</i> subsp. <i>longiceps</i> . Zambi.....	209
<i>Pseudolasius bufonum</i> . Medje.....	220
“ <i>bucculentus</i> . Medje.....	222
“ <i>gowdeyi</i> . Entebbe, Uganda.....	223
<i>Oecophylla longinoda</i> var. <i>annecdens</i> . Avakubi.....	230
<i>Camponotus</i> (<i>Myrmoturba</i>) <i>maculatus</i> subsp. <i>miserabilis</i> var. <i>pessimus</i> . Yakuluku.....	235
“ “ <i>maculatus</i> subsp. <i>solon</i> var. <i>jugurtha</i> . Batama.....	236
“ “ <i>maguassa</i> . Avakubi.....	237
“ “ <i>pompeius</i> subsp. <i>cassius</i> . Yakuluku.....	239
“ (<i>Dinomyrmer</i>) <i>langi</i> . Faradje.....	241
“ “ <i>massinissa</i> . Medje.....	244
“ (<i>Myrmosericus</i>) <i>rufoglaucus</i> subsp. <i>syphax</i> . Zambi.....	246
“ (<i>Orthonotomyrmer</i>) <i>viridus</i> var. <i>semidepilis</i> . Medje.....	248
“ (<i>Myrmotrema</i>) <i>micipsa</i> . Between Leopoldville and Yumbi.....	252
“ (<i>Myrmamblys</i>) <i>chapini</i> . Garamba.....	254
<i>Polyrhachis</i> (<i>Myrma</i>) <i>atalanta</i> . Stanleyville.....	263
“ “ <i>aërope</i> . Niangara.....	265
“ “ <i>bequaerti</i> . Utiasiki between Lubutu and Kirundu.....	267

In addition, the following new names are proposed in this paper:

Phyracaces santschii Wm. M. Wheeler, p. 56; for *Phyracaces foreli* Santschi ♀, 1915; not *Phyracaces foreli* Santschi, ♂, 1914.

Platythyrea cribrinodis var. *brevidentata* Wm. M. Wheeler, Part VIII; for *Platythyrea cribrinodis* var. *punctata* Arnold, 1915; not *Platythyrea punctata* (F. Smith), 1858.

Monomorium modestum var. *smutsi* Wm. M. Wheeler, Part VIII; for *Monomorium modestum* var. *boerorum* Santschi, 1915; not *Monomorium minutum* subsp. *boerorum* Forel, 1910.

Monomorium salomonis subsp. *subopacum* var. *santschii* Wm. M. Wheeler, Part VIII; for *Monomorium salomonis* subsp. *subopacum* var. *senegalense* Santschi, 1913; not *Monomorium senegalense* Roger, 1862.

Oecophylla crassinoda Wm. M. Wheeler, p. 227; for *Oecophylla brevinodis* Wheeler, 1914; not *Oecophylla brevinodis* Ern. André.

Polyrhachis militaria subsp. *cupreopubescens* var. *dido* Wm. M. Wheeler, p. 261; for *Polyrhachis militaria* subsp. *cupreopubescens* var. *argentalus* Stitz, 1910; not *Polyrhachis argentalus* (F. Smith), 1858.

Protholcomyrmer Wm. M. Wheeler, p. 162; subgenus of *Monomorium* with *Monomorium rothsteini* Forel as the type.