

Monomorium dentatum sp. n., a new ant species from Egypt (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) related to the *fossulatum*-group

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Abstract. *Monomorium dentatum* sp. n. is described and illustrated from Egypt, based on the worker caste collected in different parts of the country. It belongs to the *Monomorium fossulatum*-group, with closest resemblance to *M. sersalatum* Bolton and *M. thrascoleptum* Bolton.

Kurzfassung. *Monomorium dentatum* sp. n. wird anhand von Arbeitern, die in verschiedenen Teilen Ägyptens gesammelt wurden, beschrieben und illustriert. Die Art gehört zur *Monomorium fossulatum*-Gruppe und steht *M. sersalatum* Bolton und *M. thrascoleptum* Bolton am nächsten.

Key words. Worker ant, North African fauna, alpha taxonomy.

Introduction

The ant genus *Monomorium* was created by Mayr in 1855, based on the type species *M. minutum* Mayr, 1855 (given the new name *Monomorium monomorium* BOLTON (1987: 287)). It is one of the largest genera in the subfamily Myrmicinae, including 296 species (BOLTON 1995), and is found in all zoogeographic regions with most species occurring in the Old World tropics. Most species nest in rotten wood, under stones, or directly in the earth (BOLTON 1973).

There are few revisionary works on the genus *Monomorium*. In his genus-level study of the ants related to *Solenopsis* and *Pheidologeton*, ETTERSHANK (1966) tabulated a summary of all generic and subgeneric names applied to these groups. He considered *Syllophopsis* Santschi (1915), in which all the species of the *fossulatum*-group were classified, as a valid genus despite not having seen any material referable to that taxon. Additionally, ETTERSHANK presented a list of the five known species of *Syllophopsis* and synonymized two species. The large Afrotropical fauna of the genus *Monomorium* was fully revised and keyed by BOLTON (1987) in a broader study of the *Solenopsis* genus-group. He listed 145 species in 8 species-groups, 46 of which were described as new, and regarded *Syllophopsis* as a synonym of *Monomorium*, with seven species, of which two were new, forming the Afrotropical component of the *Monomorium fossulatum*-group. More recently, the Australian ants of the genus *Monomorium* were revised by HETERICK (2001), who recognized 59 species including 41 newly described.

The Egyptian ants of *Monomorium* Mayr, 1855 have never received a comprehensive taxonomic treatment, and contributions have slowly accumulated in a number of papers, including MAYR (1904), FOREL (1907), SANTSCHI (1908), KARAVAEV (1911), WHEELER & MANN (1916), MENOZZI (1929), VIEHMEYER (1923), SANTSCHI (1927), ALFIERI (1931),