



A new species of *Obtusitermes* (Isoptera, Termitidae, Nasutitermitinae) from South America

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Abstract

Obtusitermes Snyder is a genus endemic to the Neotropics, restricted to northern South America and southern Central America. *Obtusitermes panamae* Snyder was described from Quipo, Panama. Herein, we describe *Obtusitermes formosulus*, **n. sp.**, from Venezuela and Trinidad and Tobago, based on the dimorphic soldier and polymorphic worker. These descriptions provide strong evidence that *Parvitermes bacchanalis* Mathews should not be included in *Obtusitermes*.

Key words: Isoptera, Termites, Nasutitermitinae, *Obtusitermes*, *Parvitermes*

Introduction

Termites of the subfamily Nasutitermitinae occur worldwide, being better represented in tropical and subtropical climates. A total of 39 nasutitermitine genera have been recorded in the Neotropics, of which 37 genera are endemic to the region while *Tenuirostritermes* Holmgren is Nearctic and *Nasutitermes* Dudley pantropical. The major areas of nasutitermitine species richness have a patchy distribution in South America. The extent of the distribution of each species as well as its degree of endemism is difficult to establish. Nevertheless, Nasutitermitinae is the best represented subfamily in recent surveys made in Brazil (Bandeira *et al.* 1998; Canello 1996; Constantino 2005; Constantino & Acioli 2006; Reis & Canello 2007).

Obtusitermes Snyder is one of the endemic Neotropical Nasutitermitinae genera. Restricted to northern South America and southern Central America, this genus is found in dead wood and leaf litter on the floor of forests (Snyder 1924; Nickle & Collins 1992). It is a well-defined genus, originally described as a subgenus of *Nasutitermes* by Snyder (1924), and redescribed by Nickle and Collins (1992), and Roisin *et al.* (1996). The single species originally recognized, *Obtusitermes panamae*, was described based on alates and soldiers (Snyder 1924, 1925), and Roisin *et al.* (1996) characterized the coiling gut *in situ* and enteric valve armature of the worker.

Obtusitermes formosulus, **n. sp.**, from Venezuela and Trinidad and Tobago is described herein based on characters of soldier and worker castes.

Material and methods

All examined material is deposited in the Isoptera Collection of Museu de Zoologia da Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil (MZUSP), the National Museum of Natural History, Washington D.C., USA (USNM) and the American Museum of Natural History, New York, USA (AMNH).