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Polyrhachis (*Myrma*) *cyaniventris* F. Smith, 1858 (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) and a related new ant species from the Philippines

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Abstract

The *Polyrhachis* (*Myrma*) *cyaniventris* species group is established and described. It contains *Polyrhachis* (*Myrma*) *cyaniventris* F. Smith, 1858 and a species new to science, *P.* (*Myrma*) *pirata* **sp. n.** At present knowledge the clade is restricted to the northern and eastern islands of the Philippine archipelago. *Polyrhachis cyaniventris* is recorded from central and southern Luzon, Catanduanes, Mindoro, Samar, and Leyte; *P.* (*Myrma*) *pirata* **sp. n.** from central and southern Luzon, Mindoro and Samar.

Key words: Hymenoptera, Formicidae, *Polyrhachis*, *Myrma*, *Polyrhachis cyaniventris* species group, new species, Philippines, Luzon, Catanduanes, Mindoro, Samar, Leyte

Introduction

Polyrhachis F. Smith, 1857 is one of the most dominant ant genera in the Oriental, Malesian and Australian Regions with well over 600 valid species. In the Philippines, a survey by the second author yielded 76 morphospecies (H. Zettel, unpublished), while 62 identified species (= 15.8 % of 393 Philippine ant species) are presently listed by Alpert *et al.* (2009). Since the species of these two studies only partly overlap and certainly more species will be discovered, the Philippine *Polyrhachis* fauna is estimated to consist of about 100 species. Moreover, the Philippine fauna contains some very spectacular and peculiar species regarding colour and shape, e.g., *P.* (*Myrmhopla*) *cryptoceroides* Emery, 1887, *P.* (*Myrmhopla*) *osiris* Bolton, 1975, *P.* (*Myrma*) *parabiotica* Chapman, 1963, and *P.* (*Myrmhopla*) *tragos* Stitz, 1925. In the subgenus *Myrma* Billberg, 1820, which comprises 138 valid names, *P. cyaniventris* F. Smith, 1858 and related species stand out due to their metallic bluish shimmer, although the gaster is also bluish coloured in some species of the *Polyrhachis* (*Myrmhopla*) *hector* species group (see Dorow 1995).

A careful examination of ant specimens similar to *P. cyaniventris* from various parts of the Philippines yielded a species new to science.

Material and methods

All specimens are dry mounted on card squares or triangles. Examination of specimens was carried out with an Olympus SZH10 Research stereomicroscope and measurements were taken at magnifications of 20× and 40×. Digital photographs were taken with a Leica DFC490 camera attached to a Leica MZ16 binocular microscope by help of Image Manager IM50 and processed with Auto-Montage Pro and Adobe Photoshop 7.0 programmes. Locality data are arranged zoogeographically, the sequence follows the regions and subregions listed by Ong *et al.* (2002).

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