



## ***Austromorium*, a new myrmicine ant genus from Australia (Hymenoptera: Formicidae)**

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### **Abstract**

The myrmicine ant genus *Austromorium* is described for two Australian endemic species. One species has been known for some time but its taxonomic placement has been unclear while the second species is newly described. They are thought to be related to *Lordomyrma* and *Austromorium* is tentatively placed within the tribe Stenammini. These are ground-nesting ants although little else is known of their biology. While one species is widespread across semi-arid southern Australia the other is restricted to a narrow band of coastal south-western Western Australia.

**Key words:** Australia, Formicidae, Hymenoptera, new genus, new species, *Austromorium*

### **Introduction**

The Australian ant *Austromorium flavigaster* (Clark, 1938) is a fairly common and widespread species across much of southern Australia. Unfortunately its taxonomic placement has been unstable, having been placed in three genera since its description as well as being considered unplaced to genus (*incertae sedis* within the subfamily Myrmicinae). However, a detailed morphological examination has revealed that this species, together with its close relative *A. hetericki* sp. n., cannot be placed in any existing genus. Therefore, a new genus, *Austromorium*, is established for these two species. The genus is placed in the tribe Stenammini, while acknowledging that the tribal classification within this subfamily is not as robust as would be hoped for and this placement should be considered tentative until broader studies of the subfamily are undertaken.

### **Methods and abbreviations**

Size and shape characters were quantified and are reported as lengths or indices. Measurements were made with a stereo microscope at various magnifications using a dual-axis stage micrometer wired to digital readouts. All measurements were recorded in thousandths of millimetres, but are expressed here to the nearest hundredth as a range from minimum to maximum across all measured specimens.

The following measurements and indices are reported.

CI	Cephalic index: HW/HL x 100.
EI	Eye index: EL/HW x 100.
EL	Maximum eye length with eye in full face view.
HL	Maximum head length in full face (dorsal) view, measured from the anterior-most point of the clypeal margin to the posterior-most point of the head proper.
HW	Maximum head width in full face (dorsal) view.
ML	Mesosomal length measured from the anterior surface of the pronotum proper (excluding the collar)