



A new species of the ant genus *Forelius* (Formicidae: Dolichoderinae) from the dry forest of Colombia

ROBERTO J. GUERRERO¹ & FERNANDO FERNÁNDEZ²

¹Grupo de Investigación en Insectos Neotropicales, INTROPIC, Universidad del Magdalena, Santa Marta, Magdalena, Colombia.
E-mail: rguerrero@unimagdalena.edu.co

²Instituto de Ciencias Naturales, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Apartado 7495, Bogotá D.C., Colombia.
E-mail: ffernandezca@unal.edu.co

Abstract

Forelius damiani **sp. nov.** is described from the dry forest of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia, and additional collections from Costa Rica and Texas (USA). This new species is separated from the other rounded spiracles *Forelius* by the number of erect pronotal hairs, size and coloration. Comments and hypotheses about the biogeography of the genus are provided. *Forelius pruinosus* is recorded for the first time for Colombia.

Key words: Ants, *Forelius*, Neotropical region, taxonomy, Colombia

Resumen

Se describe a *Forelius damiani* **sp. nov.**, del bosque seco de la Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Colombia; esta especie también se encuentra en Costa Rica y Texas (Estados Unidos de Norte América). Esta nueva especie puede separarse de las otras *Forelius* con espiráculo redondeado, por el número de pelos erectos en el pronoto, tamaño y la coloración. Además, se presentan comentarios e hipótesis sobre la biogeografía del género *Forelius*. La especie *Forelius pruinosus* es registrada por primera vez para Colombia.

Palabras clave: Hormigas, *Forelius*, región Neotropical, taxonomía, Colombia

Introduction

Ants of the genus *Forelius* Emery 1888 are a component of the arid and semiarid ant fauna of the New World (Cuezzo 2000). *Forelius* has an apparently amphitropical distribution in North and South America (Shattuck 1992), occurring from the southern part of the United States to Panama and from northeastern Brazil to southern Argentina (Cuezzo 2000). Most species occur in the southern part of the range, from coastal and southern Brazil to Patagonia, and relatively few species occur in the northern part of the range, in Mesoamerica and the southern United States (Shattuck 1992, Cuezzo 2000, Ward 2005). In general, all species of *Forelius* inhabit dry and open areas and are seldom found in forested or moist sites.

Cuezzo (2000) revised the genus delimiting 18 species, offering distribution maps and a key to species. Recently Ward (2005) proposed *F. analis* as a junior synonym of *F. pruinosus*. In this paper, we report the first record of the genus *Forelius* in Colombia, with the description of a new species, *Forelius damiani* Guerrero & Fernández **sp. nov.** and the first record of *F. pruinosus* in Colombia. A revised key to known species with rounded spiracles is also provided.