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A taxonomic revision of the genus *Oxyopomyrmex* André, 1881 (Hymenoptera: Formicidae)

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Abstract

Oxyopomyrmex André, 1881 is a small genus of myrmicine ants found in arid grasslands of the Mediterranean region. Here we provide a new taxonomic revision of the genus. Twelve species are recognized, including five new to science: *O. laevibus* sp. nov. (Greece: Crete), *O. magnus* sp. nov. (Spain), *O. negevensis* sp. nov. (Israel), *O. polybotesi* sp. nov. (Greece: Nisyros, W Turkey) and *O. pygmalioni* sp. nov. (Cyprus). *Oxyopomyrmex santschii* var. *nigripes* Santschi, 1907 and *O. santschii* var. *nitidior* Santschi, 1910 are raised to species level. The following new synonymies are proposed: *O. krueperi* Forel, 1911 = *O. lagoi* Menozzi, 1936 **syn. nov.**; *O. nigripes* Santschi, 1907 = *O. sabulonis* var. *rugociput* Santschi, 1923 **syn. nov.** = *O. emeryi* var. *brunnescens* Santschi, 1929 **syn. nov.**; *O. nitidior* Santschi, 1910 = *O. emeryi* var. *laticeps* Santschi, 1915 **syn. nov.** = *O. emeryi* st. *sabulonis* Santschi, 1915 **syn. nov.**; *O. saulcyi* Emery, 1889 = *O. santschii* Forel, 1904 **syn. nov.** = *O. santschii* var. *siciliana* Karavaiev, 1912 **syn. nov.** = *O. gaetulus* Santschi, 1929 **syn. nov.** = *O. saulcyi* var. *latinodis* Santschi, 1939 **syn. nov.** A neotype for *O. oculatus* André, 1881 is designated. An identification key based on the gyne, male and worker caste is provided.

Key words: revision, Formicidae, Myrmicinae, Mediterranean Subregion

Introduction

Oxyopomyrmex is a small genus of ants with a center of diversity in northwest Africa. The genus was described by André (1881) as monotypic for *Oxyopomyrmex oculatus* André, 1881, from Israel, and now contains 15 species-group taxa. It occurs mostly in the Mediterranean Basin with a few records from the Near East and one from Macaronesia (Ghahari et al. 2011, Borowiec 2014). The largest contribution to the study of *Oxyopomyrmex* was made by Felix Santschi, who described more than 50% of the known taxa. Currently, *Oxyopomyrmex* includes nine valid species and six valid subspecies, of which 80% were described from the western part of the Mediterranean Basin: eight from Tunisia, two from Morocco, one from France, and one from Spain (Emery 1899; Forel 1904; Santschi 1907, 1908, 1910, 1915, 1923, 1929, 1939). Three species were described from the eastern part of the Mediterranean Basin: two from Greece and one from Israel (André 1881, Forel 1911, Menozzi 1936).

In the Old World, along with *Goniomma* Emery, 1895 and *Messor* Forel, 1890, they represent a well-defined clade within the tribe *Stenammini* Ashmead, 1905 (Ward et al. 2015).