Solution to the Problem of Tetramorium lucayanum (Hymenoptera: Formicidae)

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Of the six species of Tetramorium that have been reported as inhabiting the New World, the status and provenience of five have been dealt with in my paper entitled, "Is the ant genus Tetramorium native to North America?" (Brown, 1957, Brev. Mus. Comp. Zool. Harvard No. 72). T. guineense, T. similimum, and T. pacificum, as has long been recognized, are tramp species of Old World origin (the first two are almost certainly African), and T. caespitum is believed to be a post-Columbian immigrant from Europe. The fifth species, T. rugiventris, was eliminated from consideration because it was found to belong, not to Tetramorium, but to the Holarctic genus Myrmica. Subsequent assignment of rugiventris to the weak satellite genus Paramyrmica seems to me to have been ill-advised, but in any case the ant is definitely not a Tetramorium.

The single American species of Tetramorium remaining was T. lucayanum Wheeler, originally described from the Bahamas, but since reported from the following countries:

Cuba: Cienfuegos, Guantamano, Cristo (all W. M. Mann leg.)
Puerto Rico: Mayaguez (M. R. Smith leg.)
Jamaica: Kingston (E. A. Chapin leg.), Mill Gully, Green Mts. (? leg.)
Virgin Islands: St. Croix (W. F. Buren leg.)

A variety was also described from specimens taken in Dublin greenhouses (see below).

In my 1957 paper (p. 6), I stated my opinion that T. lucayanum, despite its wide distribution in the West Indies, must be a post-Columbian immigrant to the New World, and that it most likely came from Africa. Repeated attempts to match its types with Old World Tetramorium species represented in
American museum collections all led to failure; though *T. lucayanum* did seem to be more or less closely related to certain African *Tetramorium*, it was apparently not conspecific with any available samples from the Old World.

In 1963, when I had an opportunity to visit the classical European ant collections, I took along digms of *T. lucayanum* (from Jamaica) in the hope that I would be able to make their match. I am pleased to report that the search was successful. The type of *T. camerunense* var. *waelbroeki* turns out to be the African representative of *T. lucayanum*, and the following synonymy is in order:

**Tetramorium lucayanum**


So far as one can tell from the material currently available, *T. camerunense* and *T. lucayanum* are separate species. *T. lucayanum* has a longer, lower petiolar node with slightly con-
vex dorsum; a sharp transverse carina separates the dorsum of
the node from its anterior face. (The carina is not shown in
Wheeler's figure, which is rather sketchy where details are
concerned.) The *T. camerunense* samples I have seen, includ-
ing the type, all have the petiolar node shorter and higher, and
more "blocky" as seen from the side. I took what I believe to
be *T. camerunense* sympatriically in the Banco Forest Reserve,
near Abidjan, Ivory Coast, with two slightly different kinds of
what I refer to *T. lucayanum*. One of these (A-109) is very
like the West Indian *lucayanum*, except that the postpetiolar
costulae are distinct and crowded, giving the appearance of
course striation; this series came from a nest in a tall red-rotten
tree stump, about 2 m above the ground. The other form was
collected twice in the Banco Reserve (A-71, A-76), both times
as strays in the leaf litter; its petiolar node is slightly higher,
without distinct cross-costulation as in the West Indian and
A-109 examples, and its postpetiole has no distinct longitudinal
costulae and is predominantly smooth and shining discad. This
second form might even eventually prove to be a sibling species,
but the African *Tetramorium* vary so much that it seems more
likely at the moment that these variants from Banco are just
different forms of one species.

Wheeler gave 5 as the number of mandibular teeth in his
types, but the number is 6 or 7 if one counts all of the irregular
denticles on the basal half of the masticatory margins; these
small teeth are difficult to see.

A specimen of *T. lucayanum* has also been seen from Mon-
rovia, Liberia (E. S. Ross leg.), showing that this species is
widespread in West and Central Africa. It may be that the
West Indian stock arrived in ballast or timber, or perhaps with
the slave trade, in a ship from Africa during the early days of
New World colonization. At any rate, it is now clear that
Africa was its original home.

This paper is a by-product of work done in West Africa and
in Europe during 1963 toward a reclassification of family Formi-
cidae, sponsored by the National Science Foundation (Grant
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