

DOLIOPONERA genus nov.

Insecta: Hymenoptera: Formicidae

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Worker: Small Ponera-sized, slender, body cylindrical. Head narrow, parallel-sided, with minute anteriorly placed compound eyes. Frontal lobes broad, placed anteriorly so as to overlap clypeus, separated only by a fine median sulcus. Median free lobe of clypeus briefly produced, broad, truncate. Mandibles short, triangular, with distinct basal and masticatory borders meeting at a rounded angle; masticatory border concave, armed with an acute apical tooth and one smaller subapical tooth; basad of this the masticatory border is cultrate, but arising from its inner ventral side are 6 fine, short, acute separated teeth that are not part of the regular serial dentition, but may be modified setae. Antennae robust, 12-merous, with a very much enlarged apical segment.

Trunk narrow, separated into 2 parts by an apparently flexible promesonotal suture a little in front of the midlength, but the dorsal outline forms one gently convex curve from front to rear, without other sutures. Propodeum bluntly biangulate. Only 1 broad pectinate spur on each tibial apex. Tarsal claws small, simple.

Petiolar node sessile, barrel-shaped and moderately elongate axially. Postpetiole also barrel-shaped, a little longer and broader than petiole; next gastric (IV abdominal) segment cylindrical, axially aligned with postpetiole and similar to it in height, but much longer and a little wider. Small apical segments of gaster moderately downcurved; sting long, slender, curved, exerted.

Sculpture densely and finely punctulate, predominantly opaque. Pilosity very short, appressed to decumbent, almost pruinose, with some short suberect hairs under the petiole and gaster, on the clypeal lobe, mouthparts, and at gastric apex. Color brownish ferruginous; mandibles and appendages lighter, more yellowish.

Queen and male unknown.

Type species: Dolioponera fustigera, described on PRZ Card No. 32, by present designation, monobasic.

Distribution as known: Gabon, central west Africa.

This genus is related to Pachycondyla s. lat., but to exactly which group of Pachycondyla it is hard to say without knowing the sexual castes and the larvae. In the loss of the secondary (lateral) apical spurs of the middle and hind tibiae, Dolioponera resembles the crassa group ("Bothroponera"); the petiolar form may also indicate affinities in this direction, though it is distinctive in its own right. The broad, truncate median free clypeal lobe is like those of the Indo-Australian groups that have been classified as Trapeziopelta and Pseudoponera. The mandibles are unlike those of any Pachycondyla, particularly in their dentition.

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DOLIOPONERA FUSTIGERA species nov.

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Holotype worker: TL 2.8, HL including frontal lobes but excluding median clypeal process 0.54, HW 0.37 (CI 69), ML estimated from open mandibles 0.16, scape L 0.33, WL 0.79, petiolar node L 0.34, W 0.26 mm. Basic description of genus given on PRZ Card No. 31. General form as in figs. 1-4, below. Further details: Trunk as seen from above parallel-sided, with a slight constriction at promesonotal suture. Petiolar node as seen from directly above with posterodorsal margin feebly concave. Median anterior process of clypeus squarely truncate, but with its mid-dorsal surface raised in a median swelling or bluntly rounded median carina. Under mouthparts closed up tight; labrum apparently emarginate in the middle of its free margin; palpi very short, with only the apices extending beyond the labral margin, so that the maxillary palpi can scarcely have more than 2 or 3 segments. In some angles of view, there appears to be a feeble indication of an incipient intercalary tooth between the apical and subapical teeth of the mandible. Though the body generally is very finely and densely punctulate and opaque, the fine punctulae tend to be more spaced out on the apical halves of the mandibles, and to some extent also on the legs and posterior half of the gaster, so that these areas are feebly shining in part.

Holotype a unique (deposited in the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts) from Gabon: Plateau forestier d'Ipassa near Makokou, taken in a berlesate of soil 0 to 5 cm deep on a hill spur covered with primary forest by J. A. Barra (his No. IPA 3 alpha-2) during 1966-1967.

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Fig. 1, holotype, mandible enlarged beyond scale of figs. 2-4. Fig. 2, same, midbody segments, dorsal view. Fig. 3, same, side view of body. Fig. 4, same, full-face view of head. The scale line for figs. 2-4 is 1 mm. Drawings by George J. Batik and the author.

