ON THE STATUS OF CRYPTOCERUS LATREILLE AND CEPHALOTES LATREILLE (HYMENOPTERA: FORMICIDÆ)

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Latreille, in Hist. Nat. Crust. and Ins., volume 3, 1802, included in the family “Formicaires” two genera, Formica Linnaeus and the new genus Cephalotes. Cephalotes was monobasic with Formica atrata Linnaeus the only included species (pp. 357–358). In volume 5, 1803, he again placed in “Formicaires” only the two genera but to the group which he had called Cephalotes in 1802 he gave the name Cryptocerus (p. 311). Distinguishing characters were given but no species were mentioned by name.

Fabricius, 1804, Systema Piezatorum, page 418, used the name Cryptocerus for atratus Linnaeus and 4 new species, including umbraculatus; and he cited Cephalotes Latreille in synonymy under Cryptocerus atratus.

In 1810, Latreille (Consid. Gen. Crust. Arachn. Ins., p. 437) designated atratus Fabricius (= atratus Linnaeus) as the type of Cryptocerus. Since atratus was available for type designation of Cryptocerus, this action by Latreille has fixed the matter beyond dispute. Cryptocerus Latreille is thus an isogenotypic synonym of Cephalotes Latreille. The interpretation of Cryptocerus by subsequent authors who considered umbraculatus Fabricius as its type is erroneous, and a new generic name is needed for Cryptocerus of Emery (1915) and authors, not Latreille.

On page 253 of his 1805 work Latreille says “Toutes les espèces de cryptocérès, dont la fourmi atrata de Lin. et de Fab. est une, sont exotiques. Ces insectes ont un caractère très remarquable, et qu’on ne trouve à aucun de cet ordre; c’est le premier article de leurs antennes qui est inséré et logé de chaque côté, dans une rainure
latérale de la tête.’’ In the original description of Cephalotes he writes ‘‘Premier article des antennes inséré et logé, de chaque côté, dans une rainure latérale de la tête,’’ and in the original description of Cryptocerus—‘‘Premier article des antennes s’insérant dans une rainure de la tête.’’ It seems obvious that Latreille considered Cryptocerus (hidden or concealed horn [antenna]) much more descriptive of the genus Cephalotes (having a head) and decided to use it instead.

Since the facts in this case are as just stated, the tribe receives the new name, Cephalotini, based on the type genus Cephalotes, which must be used for Cryptocerus of authors. The genera and subgenera involved, with synonymy and types, are as follows:

Genus Cephalotes Latreille


Type: Formica atrata Linnaeus. Monobasic.


Type Formica atrata Linnaeus. Designated by Latreille, 1810.

Syn.: Cryptocerus Fabricius, 1804, Systema Piezatorum, p. 418 (in part).

Emery, 1915, Bul. Soc. Ent. de France, p. 192 divided Cryptocerus into three subgenera: Paracryptocerus, n. subgen., type Cryptocerus spinosus Mayr; Cryptocerus, type C. umbraculatus Fabricius, and Cyathocephalus, n. subgen., type Cryptocerus pallens Klug. Except for Cryptocerus he listed additional species in each subgenus. In 1922, in Wytsman’s Genera Insectorum, fascicule 174e, pp. 306, 308, he gave a detailed description of each of the above subgenera, cited the same types and listed all the known species.

Since Cryptocerus is not available, Paracryptocerus will succeed it. The correct arrangement is as follows:
Genus Paracryptocerus Emery, subgenus Paracryptocerus Emery

Type: Cryptocerus spinosus Mayr. By original designation.

Genus Paracryptocerus Emery, subgenus Harnedia, new subgenus

Harnedia is proposed for Cryptocerus of Emery, 1915, and subsequent authors, not of Latreille. Its type is umbraculatus Fabricius (1804). In 1922, Emery characterized the group and listed all the known species. The name Harnedia is in honor of Mr. R. W. Harned from whom I have received much encouragement in my studies of ants.

The following descriptions of the soldier and worker of this new subgenus are substantially the same as given by Emery in 1922.

Soldier.—Head usually longer than wide, occasionally similar to that of Paracryptocerus Emery except that the head is longer and less convex above. Tubercles near the posterior border of the head usually connected by a transverse ridge which unites with the lateral borders of the head forming a surface within these borders known as a cephalic disk; anterior border of cephalic disk with a median gap which exposes the mandibles and clypeus.

Thorax very noticeably more robust than that of the worker and without foliaceous border as in that caste. Epinotum with more or less distinct spines; exceptionally (umbraculatus Fabricius), the posterior spines of the epinotum are the longest.

Worker.—Thoracic border of variable form, sometimes spined or toothed as in Paracryptocerus Emery but the posterior pair of the 2 or 3 pairs of teeth on the epinotum never the longest. Border of thorax sometimes
divided into 3 parts to correspond to its segments, more or less widely margined, translucent or foliaceous, and without teeth.

Genus Paracryptocerus Emery, subgenus Cyathomyrmex Creighton


Type: Cryptocerus pallens Klug. By original designation.

Cyathomyrmex Creighton, 1933, Psyche 40: 98. New name.

Strumigenys venatrix Wesson and Wesson Synonymous with S. talpa Weber.—In the course of his studies of dacetine ants, Mr. William L. Brown, Jr. secured a loan of the type of S. talpa Weber (1934, Psyche, 41: 63–65, fig. 1) from the collections of the Illinois Natural History Survey. This specimen he very kindly placed at my disposal, since I had not seen it during earlier studies on Strumigenys in Ohio (Wesson and Wesson, 1939, Psyche, 46: 91–112, Pl. 3). The type of talpa proves to be indistinguishable from paratypes of S. venatrix which I had described from southern Ohio, and the latter name should be dropped.


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