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INTRODUCTION

Ants, the most successful social insects, live in almost all types of habitats. They can withstand various ecological hazards adapting with the situations. Being tiny creatures they have to face all types of anthropogenic activities.

Rabindra Sarovar, situated in the southern part of Kolkata, was made in 1940 by the Calcutta Improvement Trust. This 73 acres water body, mostly filled by rainwater and surrounded by 119 acres of land area covered with greenery, is considered as the oasis within the concrete desert. Considering its importance, this lake is declared as National Lake in 1997 under National Lake Conservation Programme. Now it has become the place for recreation of the city people. But till date the diversity of faunal wealth (particularly the insects) of this place is not ascertained. This is the first attempt to measure the diversity of ant fauna which survives in this lake area ignoring the anthropogenic pressure.

The ants constitute a single family Formicidae under order Hymenoptera and are cosmopolitan in distribution. They live in almost all ecological niches. Nearly 10,000 species have so far been described from world over. From Kolkata 28 species were reported by Tiwari et al. (1998), in which 14 species from Bingham's (1903) 'Fauna of British India' were also included. Out of those 28 species, 4 species were from Rabindra Sarovar area.

At a glance ants can be distinguished from other aculeate hymenoptera by the presence of petiole and postpetiole which is/are the modification of one or two segments of abdomen immediately following the propodeum.

Abbreviation : The abbreviations used in the text are : M = male, F = female, W = worker and S = soldier.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Ants were collected mostly by hand picking. Sometimes baits like sugar, jaggery and other eatables were used. Some ants were collected extracting soil samples using Berlese Funnel in standard methods. Collected ants were kept in 70% alcohol and studied.

Ants were collected periodically from December, 2001 to November, 2002. Collections were made by the authors from inside the lake area, as well as from the divider of the side by road, Southern Avenue, which is one of the main arterial roads of Kolkata, for comparison.
Figs. A-C: General diagram of a typical ant
A: Body profile; B: Head; C: Antennae

SYSTEMATIC ACCOUNT

List of the taxa

Family FORMICIDAE

I. Subfamily PONERINAE Lepeletier

Genus 1. *Diacamma* Mayr

1. *Diacamma rugosum* (Le Guillou)

Genus 2. *Pachycondyla* Smith

2. *Pachycondyla rufipes* (Jerdon)

Genus 3. *Platythyrea* Roger

3. *Platythyrea parallela* (Smith)

II. Subfamily DOLICHODERINAE Forel

Genus 4. *Tapinoma* Foerster

*4. Tapinoma melanocephalum* (Fabricius)

Genus 5. *Technomyrmex* Mayr

*5. Technomyrmex albipes* (Smith)

III. Subfamily FORMICINAE Lepeletier

Genus 6. *Camponotus* Mayr

*6. Camponotus compressus* (Fabricius)

7. *Camponotus dolendus* Forel

Genus 7. *Oecophylla* Smith

8. *Oecophylla smaragdina* (Fabricius)

Genus 8. *Paratrechina* Motschoulsky

*9. Paratrechina longicornis* (Latreille)


*10. Plagiolepis jerdonii* Forel

IV. Subfamily PSEUDOMYRMECINAE Emery

Genus 10. *Tetraponera* Smith

*11. Tetraponera allaborans* (Walker)

*12. Tetraponera rufonigra* (Jerdon)

V. Subfamily MYRMICINAE Lepeletier

Genus 11. *Cardiocondyla* Emery

*13. Cardiocondyla nuda* (Mayr)

14. *Cardiocondyla tiwari* sp.nov.

Genus 12. *Carebara* Westwood

*15. Carebara lignantata* Westwood

Genus 13. *Crematogaster* Lund

*16. Crematogaster rothneyi* Mayr

Genus 14. *Meranoplus* Smith

*17. Meranoplus bicolor* (Guér.)

Genus 15. *Monomorium* Mayr

18. *Monomorium destructor* (Jerdon)

*19. Monomorium floricola* (Jerdon)

20. *Monomorium latinode* Mayr

21. *Monomorium monomorium* Bolton

22. *Monomorium pharaonis* (Linnaeus)

Genus 16. *Pheidole* Westwood

*23. Pheidole robertii* Forel

24. *Pheidole* sp.

Genus 17. *Pheidolegeton* Mayr

*25. Pheidolegeton diversus* (Jerdon)

Genus 18. *Recurvidris* Bolton

*26. Recurvidris recurvispinosa* (Forel)

Genus 19. *Solenopsis* Westwood

*27. Solenopsis geminata* (Fabricius)
Genus 20. Tetramorium Mayr

*28. Tetramorium walshi (Forel)
29. Tetramorium sp.

Species marked with single asterisk (*) are also found from the divider of the Southern Avenue.

Key to the Subfamilies

1. Propodeum followed by petiole .......................................................... 2
   - Propodeum followed by petiole and post petiole ............................ 4
2. A more or less marked constriction between basal two segments of gaster ................................................. PONERINAE
   - No constriction between basal two segments of gaster .................. 3
3. Opening at posterior end of gaster (acidopore) terminal, circular and usually surrounded by a fringe of hairs ....................................... FORMICINAE
   - Opening at posterior end of gaster (acidopore) transverse, slit-like .............. DOLICHODERINAE

4. Elongate, often very slender, eyes very large and elongate; clypeus with a rounded upper margin, not prolonged between frontal carinae; frontal carinae usually narrow and not expanded laterally to cover the antennal insertions ........... PSEUDOMYRMECINAE
   - Without these combinations of characters; frontal carinae usually large, nearly always covering the antennal insertions ......................................... MYRMICINAE

1. Subfamily PONERINAE Lepeletier

   Key to the genera

1. Posterior margin of clypeus not distinctly defined ........................... Platythyrea
   - Posterior margin of clypeus defined by a suture .................................. 2
2. Petiole bispinous posteriorly ......................................................... Diacamma
   - Petiole not spinous, denticulate posteriorly .................................. Pachycondyla

1. Genus Diacamma Mayr

Type-species: Ponera rugosa Le Guillou, 1841.

GHOSH et al.: Ants (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) of Rabindra Sarovar, Kolkata.

1. Diacamma rugosum (Le Guillou)


Diacamma rugosum

Diagnostic characters: W. TL 8 – 9.5 mm. Black; mandibles, scape of antennae and legs castaneous red; short erect reddish hairs and pubescence moderately present. Head oval; punctured mandibles strongly dentate; median lobe of testiculum clypeus rounded at apex; more or less deep and regular striae on head above antennae. Thorax slender and elongate; pronotum with concentric striae surrounding few transverse striae; mesonotum with shallow punctures; striae on metanotum running obliquely forward from a medial impressed line. Concentrally striate petiole truncate posteriorly with backwardly pointed spines in continuation of its upper surface; elongate abdomen with striae in concentric arches from back to front on basal segment.


Distribution: India: West Bengal, Maharashtra, Orissa, Sikkim.

2. Genus Pachycondyla Smith


Type-species: Formica crassicornis Latreille, 1802.
2. *Pachycondyla rufipes* (Jerdon)


![Pachycondyla rufipes](image)

*Pachycondyla rufipes*

**Diagnostic characters** : W. TL 13–15 mm. Dull black; mandibles, antennae, legs and apical two abdominal segments castaneous red; whole body covered with abundant reddish-yellow pilosity which are long and thick on apical abdominal segments. Head, thorax and petiole coarsely punctured; abdominal segments rugose with coarse longitudinal ridges. Head quadrangular; family longitudinally striate mandibles with obsolete teeth on masticatory margin; occiput slightly emarginate. Thorax massive; pro-mesosetotal suture well marked, meso-metosotal suture obsolete; apical face of metasomal truncate and concave, smooth and shining, strongly margined above and on sides. Petiole twice as broad as long, convex, rounded above, posterior margin with number of blunt processes, posterior face deeply concave; abdomen massive, cylindrical.

**Material examined** : 6 W. India, West Bengal, Kolkata, Rabindra Sarovar, December 2001 – November 2002.

**Distribution** : India : Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Karnataka, Kerala, Meghalaya, Orissa, Sikkim, West Bengal, Western India, Himalayas from Siwaliks to Assam (Bingham, 1903).


3. Genus *Platthyrea* Roger


**Type-species** : *Pachycondyla punctata* Smith, 1858.

![Platthyrea parralela](image)

*Platthyrea parralela*

**Diagnostic characters** : W. TL 3–4.5 mm. Black with silky pruinosity, opaque; mandibles, antennae, legs and apex of abdomen brownish yellow. Head broadly rectangular, broader posteriorly than in *front*; triangular mandibles with broad, dentate masticatory margin; transverse clypeus without distinct posterior margin; antennal carinae laminate but rather narrow, antennae 12–segmented. Thorax elongate, broad and strongly convex in front, pro-mesosalotal suture fine but distinct; meso-metosotal suture obsolete; metasomal emarginate posteriorly. Cylindrical petiole twice as long as broad, truncate on both sides; abdomen massive.

**Material examined** : 16 W. India, West Bengal, Kolkata, Rabindra Sarovar, December 2001–November 2002.

**Distribution** : India : West Bengal, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu.

II. Subfamily DOLICHODERINAE Forel

**Key to the genera**

1. In dorsal view 5 gastric tergites visible: the fifth one small but continuing the line of gaster and not bent forward, anal orifice situated apically .................. *Technomyrmex*
In dorsal view only 4 gastral tergites visible; the fifth one bent forward, anal orifice situated ventrally.  

4. Genus Tapinoma Foerster

1850. Tapinoma Foerster, Hym. Stud., 1: 43, W. F.

Type-species: Formica erratica Latreille, 1798  
(=Tapinoma collina Foerster, 1850).

4. Tapinoma melanocephalum (Fabricius)

1793. Formica melanocephala Fabricius, Ent. Syst., 2: 353, W.

**Tapinoma melanocephalum**

**Diagnostic characters**: W. TL 1.5–2 mm. Head, sometimes thorax also dark brown; thorax and abdomen or abdomen alone yellowish white. Head longer than broad, oval; broad, triangular mandibles armed with numerous minute teeth; antennae long, scape extending beyond top of head. Thorax not emarginate, if viewed from side; sutures distinct, very short basal portion of metanotum passing into much longer obliquely sloping portion by an obtuse angle. Petiole short with overhanging elongate oval abdomen.

**Material examined**: 48 W. India, West Bengal, Kolkata, Rabindra Saravor, December 2001–November 2002.

**Distribution**: India: Arunachal Pradesh, Karnata, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and almost throughout the country.

**Elsewhere**: Oceania, South America and spreaded through the tropics of both hemispheres.

GHOSH et al.: Ants (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) of Rabindra Saravor, Kolkata.

5. Genus Technomyrmex Mayr


Type-species: Technomyrmex strenua Mayr, 1872.

5. Technomyrmex albipes (Smith)


**Technomyrmex albipes**

**Diagnostic characters**: W. TL 2.5–3 mm. Black, mandibles reddish brown, tarsi white; covered with thin silky-white pubescence. Head longer than broad, widely emarginate posteriorly; broad triangular mandibles with numerous small teeth; clypeus with anterior margin medially and circularly incised. Thorax broad, deeply emarginate at meso-metanotal suture; pro and mesonotum together forming a convex gibbosity with distinct suture in between; convex metanotum with longer apical portion sloping backwards. Petiole is simply an oval flat thickening in the middle; gibbous abdomen posteriorly conical with an apical cloacal aperture overhanging the petiole.

**Material examined**: 33 W. India, West Bengal, Kolkata, Rabindra Saravor, December 2001–November 2002.

**Distribution**: India: West Bengal and almost throughout our limits.

**Elsewhere**: Java, New Guinea, Oceania, Sulawesi.
III. Subfamily FORMICINAE Lepeltier

Key to the genera

1. Antennae 11-segmented .......................................................... Plagiolepis
   - Antennae 12-segmented .......................................................... 2

2. Head more or less cordiform; eyes large, mandibles trigonal in shape, multidentate; antennae long, scape passing much beyond the occiput, last segment of flagellum much shorter than preceding one Oecophylla
   - Different set of characters .......................................................... 3

3. Antennae inserted at a perceptible distance from posterior margin of clypeus .......................................................... Camponotus
   - Antennae inserted immediately above posterior margin of clypeus, almost touching it .......................................................... Paratrechina

   6. Genus Camponotus Mayr

   Type-species: Formica lignipoda Latreille, 1802.

6. Camponotus compressus (Fabricius)

1787. Formica compressa Fabricius, Mant. Insect., 1 : 307, W.


Camponotus compressus

Diagnostic characters: W. Major TL 10-15 mm; Black, opaque, finely reticulate and punctate; mandibles, flagellum of antennae and legs castaneous brown; pubescence sparse.

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Head triangular, broad posteriorly; mandibles with 7 teeth; clypeus medially vertically carinate, middle portion anteriorly reduced into a lobe; scape of antennae cylindrical. Thorax anteriorly produced into a collar; legs long, tibiae compressed, prism-shaped. Petiole oval, convex in front, flat posteriorly; abdomen broad and massive.

Minor: TL 5-8 mm. Similar, smaller and slender; mandibles with 5 teeth.


Distribution: India, West Bengal, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Orissa, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu.


Remarks: Tiwari et al. (1998) reported this species from Lilly Pool (Rabindra Sarovar), Kolkata.

7. Camponotus dolendas Forel


Diagnostic characters: W. Major TL. 7-9 mm; Black, mandibles, antennae, legs and posterior margins of abdominal segments testaceous; pubescence entirely wanting. Head subtrangular, sides convex; carinate clypeus with median lobe distinctly rectangularly produced; mandible with 7 teeth. Thorax short and broad; legs with tibiae compressed and with scattered spines on undersides. Petiole broad and flat with silky pilosity; abdomen broadly oval.

Minor: TL 5-7 mm. Slender, head narrower. Pro-meso and basal half of metanotum form a gentle curve, apical half almost truncate. Petiole conical.


Distribution: India, West Bengal, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, North West Himalayas.

7. Genus Oecophylla Smith


Type-species: Formica smaragdina Fabricius, 1775
   (= Formica virescens Fabricius, 1795).
8. *Oecophylla smaragdina* (Fabricius)


*Oecophylla smaragdina*

*Diagnostic characters* : W. TL. 8–10 mm. Yellowish red. Head quadrangular without mandibles; mandibles long, dentate, apical tooth acute and curved; clypeus strongly convex; antennae 12-segmented. Thorax elongate; pronotum convex, anteriorly narrowed into collar; mesonotum saddle-shaped; metanotum rounded above. Petiole elongate, scarcely nodiform; abdomen short, oval.


*Distribution* : India : Mostly throughout the country, except desert and treeless areas.

*Elsewhere* : Australia, China, Java, Myanmar, New Guinea, Sri Lanka.

*Remarks* : Tiwari *et al.* (1998) also reported this species from Safari Park (Rabindra Sarovar), Kolkata.

8. Genus *Paratrechina* Motschulsky


Type species : *Formica longicornis* Latreille, 1802

( = *P. currens* Motschulsky, 1863).

9. *Paratrechina longicornis* (Latreille)


*Paratrechina longicornis*

*Diagnostic characters* : W. 2.5–3.5 mm. Dull coppery brown, mandibles, antennae and legs pale whitish brown; the body with abundant long, erect hairs. Head oval, as broad in front as posteriorly, vertex rounded; eyes large; mandibles with 5–6 teeth on masticatory margin; rounded clypeus convex; antennae filiform, scape extending beyond top of head by more than half its length. Thorax elongate, rounded above, sutures distinct, metanotum rounded; legs remarkably long and slender. Petiole not so broad as high, rounded above; anteriorly gibbous abdomen, oval.


*Distribution* : India : West Bengal, Manipur, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Orissa, Andaman & Nicobar Is. and mostly throughout the country.


9. Genus *Plagiolepis* Mayr


Type-species : *Formica pygmaea* Latreille, 1798.

10. *Plagiolepis jerdonii* Forel


Plagiolepis jerdonii

Diagnostic characters: W. TL 1–1.5 mm. Brownish black, antennae, tibiae and tarsi lighter; subopaque; with moderate whitish pubescence; few erect hairs on front of head and apex of abdomen. Head a little longer than broad, transverse, slightly emarginate posteriorly; mandibles subtriangular; Clypeus convex and carinate; antennae slender, extended slightly beyond top of head. Thorax short and broad; pronotum and mesonotum convex; meso-metanotal emargination well-marked; basal portion of metanotum very short, less than half the length of oblique apical portion. Petiole transverse above, lower, inclined to the front; abdomen oval.


Distribution: India: West Bengal, Karnataka, Western India, Kerala, Maharashtra.

IV. Subfamily PSEUDOMYRMECINAE Emery

10. Genus Tetraponera Smith


Type-species: Eciton nigrum Jerdon, 1851 (≡ Tetraponera atrata Smith, 1852).

11. Tetraponera allborans (Walker)


Tetraponera allborans

Diagnostic characters: W. TL 5–6 mm. Black, polished and shining; legs lighter in colour; mandibles and antennae reddish yellow; only a few scattered pale hairs, no pubescence. Head longer than broad; posterior lateral angles rounded; mandibles broad; Clypeus vertical, anteriorly crenulate, posterior portion produced slightly; antennae short; ocelli not present; eyes lateral and a little to the front. Thorax anteriorly flat and compressed; pronotum nearly square anteriorly produced into a short neck; pro-mesonotum suture distinct; mesonotum longitudinally ovate; meso-metanotal suture emarginate; raised metanotal convex and compressed. Petiole elongate; postpetiole broader than petiole, conical; abdomen elongate.


Distribution: India: West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Western India.

Elsewhere: Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Indonesia (Sumatra), Kalimantan, China.

12. Tetraponera rufonigrum (Jerdon)

1851. Eciton rufonigrum Jerdon, Madras J. Lit. Sci., 17: 111, W.


Diagnostic characters: W. TL 10–13 mm. Head, postpetiole and abdomen black; mandibles, antennae, thorax and petiole light brick-red; pilosity and pubescence sparse; shining, closely and minutely punctured. Head little longer than broad; occiput transverse; cheeks straight; broadly linear mandibles with 5 to 6 teeth on masticatory margin; ocelli present. Thorax elongate; broad pronotum with dentate anterior lateral angles; pro-mesonotal suture arched to the front; meso-metanotal suture deeply emarginate; metanotum longer than pro-and mesonotum together. Petiole elongate; abdomen oval, acute at apex; sting excised.
4. Eyes absent; antennae with 9 segments .............................................. Carebara
   - Eyes present; antennae with 11 segments ....................................... Pheidologeton
5. Antennae with 9 segments ................................................................................................. Meranoplus
   - Antennae with 10-12 segments ......................................................................................... 6
6. Antennae with 11 segments; propodeum with a pair of spines which curves backwards and upwards; junction of postpetiole and gaster strongly dorsoventrally compressed and narrow in profile ............................................. Recurvidris
   - Antennae with 12 segments; other characters different ................................................... 7
7. Lateral portion of elytra dorsoventrally flattened and thin; strongly prominent outer mandibles ................................................................. Cardiocondyla
   - Characters different ........................................................................................................... 8
8. Hairs on body trifid, thickly spread all over or sting with a lamelliform appendage ............ Tetramorium
   - Hairs simple, sparse; no lamelliform appendage on sting .................................................. 9
9. Propodeum bisinuous, apical margin of mandible with third tooth from apex smaller than fourth or reduced third tooth followed by a minute denticle before fourth larger tooth or masticatory margin with two large apical and one or two enlarged basal teeth; in between irregularly crenulate or bluntly dentate ...................................................... Pheidole
   - Propodeum unarmed, evenly rounded; mandible not as above ......................................... Monomorium

11. Genus Cardiocondyla Emery

   - Type-species: Cardiocondyla elegans Emery, 1869.

13. Cardiocondyla nuda (Mayr)

Cardiocondyla nuda

Diagnostic characters: W. TL 2.5–3 mm. Head, thorax and petiole red and finely granulate; abdomen jet-black, polished and shining. Head oval, convex in front, posteriorly rounded; broad mandibles armed with 5 teeth; clypeus narrow; 12-segmented antennae elongated. Thorax as long as or little longer than head but narrower than head; anterior angles of pronotum rounded; metanotum cubical, basal part about twice as long as the truncate apical part. Postpetiolo much broader than petiolo and both together about half the length of thorax; abdomen oval.


Distribution: India: West Bengal, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Meghalaya, Sikkim.

Elsewhere: Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Oceania.

14. Cardiocondyla tiwarii sp. nov.

Holotype: Worker: TL 1.6mm; HL 0.43mm; HW 0.34 mm; CI 79; SL 0.30 mm; SI 88; PW 0.19 mm; AL 0.46 mm

Colour: Head, thorax and pedicel brownish red; legs pale honey yellow; scape of antennae concolorous with legs, basal flagellar segments brownish yellow, brown colour increasing to apex so that club blackish brown; gaster shining, black.

General sculpture and hair pattern: Head regularly and superficially faintly reticulate; thorax dorsally reticulate as on head but more feeble than head; meso and meta sternum of thorax finely punctate, punctures antero-dorsally fading so that anterior margin of
prosternum appears smooth, polished; petiole above and mandibles smooth, polished; post petiole, peduncle of petiole and sides of petiole superficially with light reticulations; gaster smooth; whole body covered with small regularly arranged abundant white appressed pubescence; pubescence more visible on head and gaster; anterior margin of clypeus with three long setae, median longer than other two; pilosity almost absent.

Head: Distinctly longer than broad; posterior margin transverse in front view; postero-lateral corners rounded, sides nearly convex; mandibles with two fine acute apical teeth followed by three minute teeth towards base; clypeus extended anteriorly, antero-median part slightly depressed inwards; anterior margin arched; posterior margin not distinctly defined; frontal lobes short, subparallel, close together. Antennae 12-jointed, scape reaching just to vertex, F1 elongate, F2 to F9 transverse, club very massive, three jointed; terminal club segment more than two times length of preceding two together; club distinctly longer than remaining flagellar segments together (14:10); eyes rounded, prominent, lateral, situated in front of mid line.

Thorax: Length subequal to length of head (excluding mandibles) in profile; sutures absent on thorax, in dorsal view, thorax broad anteriorly, narrowing posteriorly and laterally constricted at meso-metanotal suture; pronotum anteriorly rounded, antero-lateral corners of pronotum rounded, propodeum with two small teeth projecting straight backwards, its length and basal width almost equal in profile; spine longer than distance between its bases in dorsal view.

Abdomen: Convex; Petiole node sub globose, its length and breadth almost subequal; peduncle of petiole shorter than node; node rounded above; post petiole in a lower level than petiole, flat above; 1.3x broader than long in dorsal view. Gaster broadly oval, almost flat above; ventrally convex; T1 covering 2/3 its length.


Paratypes: 4W, with same data as holotype.

Discussion: So far, 11 species have been reported from this genus from India (Seifert, 2002). This species C. tiwarii sp. nov. comes close to C. minutior Forel. But it differs from the said species by distinct characters like eyes not hairy (C. minutior with hairy eye) and gaster not microreticulate (gaster microreticulate in C. minutior). Moreover, the metanotal spines of C. tiwarii pointing backwards; whereas that of C. minutior pointing upwards.

Etymology: The species is named after Dr. R.N. Tiwari for his contribution to Indian Formicidae.

GHOSH et al.: Ants (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) of Rabindra Sarovar, Kolkata.

12. Genus Carebara Westwood


Type-species: Carebara lignata Westwood, 1840.

15. Carebara lignata Westwood


Carebara lignata

Diagnostic characters: W. TL. 2-2.5 mm. Pale yellow; masticatory margin of mandibles brown; head finely and closely punctate; thorax above and abdomen smooth and shining; pilosity pale and abundant. Head subquadratic, anteriorly and posteriorly rounded; subtriangular mandibles with minutely dentate masticatory margin; clypeus convex, produced back posteriorly between bases of antennae; 9-jointed antennae with distinct club on flagellum. Thorax broad; pronotum rounded anteriorly; meso-metanotal suture distinct; basal portion of metanotum short. Petiole narrower than postpetiole, both rounded above; abdomen broadly oval.

Material examined: 3 W. India, West Bengal, Kolkata, Rabindra Sarovar, December 2001 – November 2002.

Distribution: India: West Bengal, Assam.

Elsewhere: China, Myanmar, Malayan subregion.

13. Genus Crematogaster Lund


Type-species: Formica scutellaris Oliv., 1792.
16. *Crematogaster rothneyi* Mayr


*Diagnostic characters*: 7 W. TL 3–3.5 mm. Head, thorax and petiole ferruginous red; abdomen deep brown; pale yellow pilosity fairly abundant, especially on abdomen; head entirely sculptured, abdomen smooth. Head longitudinally finely striate; little broader than long; occiput transverse; eyes large, placed above the middle of head; mandibles finely striate; clypeus short, anteriorly truncate; short 12–segmented antennae with 3–segmented club. Thorax rugulose; reticulate pronotum rounded anteriorly, flat above; pro-mesonotal suture indicated; meso-metanotal suture distinct; basal portion of metanotum rectangular, longitudinally striate, apical portion finely punctured, shining; long spines stout and divergent. Petiole as broad as long, broader anteriorly; postpetiole tuberculate, the anterior one small, other two larger; abdomen broadly cordate.


*Distribution*: India: West Bengal, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu.

14. Genus *Meranoplus* Smith


Type-species: *Cryptocerus bicolor* Guérin, 1844.

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17. *Meranoplus bicolor* (Guér.)


*Diagnostic characters*: W. TL 4–5 mm. Head, thorax, legs and petiole ferruginous red; abdomen black; pilosity long, soft and abundant; head and thorax coarsely sculptured; abdomen finely reticulate. Head little longer than broad, broader posteriorly; dentate mandibles obscurely straite, pubescent; clypeus convex, inclined downwards; antennae 9–segmented, antennal furrow lateral and deep. Pro-mesonotal shield of thorax about as broad as long, anterior angles dentate and posterior sides produced backwards into long, somewhat laminate spines, overhanging metanotum; the latter vertical with a carina on each side ending above in an acute spine. Petiole smooth, triangular with bevelled apex; postpetiole globose; abdomen cordate.


*Distribution*: India: West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh and nearly throughout the country excepting hot, dry places.

*Elsewhere*: Myanmar to Malayan subregion.
15. Genus *Monomorium* Mayr


Type-species: *Monomorium minutum* Mayr, 1855.

18. *Monomorium destructor* (Jerdon)


*Monomorium destructor*

**Diagnostic characters**: W. TL 2.5–3 mm. Head and thorax reddish yellow; antennae, legs and petiole lighter in color. Abdomen dark brown; smooth and shining with few scattered punctures. Head rectangular, convex, posteriorly transverse; mandibles with 4 small teeth; clypeus anteriorly arched, obesately carinate; scape of 12-segmented antennae just reaching the top of the head; eyes small, placed below the middle of head. Thorax elongate, promesonotum convex; meso-metanotum suture deeply impressed, slightly emarginate; basal portion of metanotum narrow and rectangular, passing by a somewhat rounded curve into truncate apical portion. Petiole moderately sharp but rounded above, higher than postpetiole; post petiole globose; abdomen oval.

**Material examined**: 2 W. India, West Bengal, Kolkata, Rabindra Sarовар, December 2001 –November 2002.

**Distribution**: India: West Bengal, Southern India and almost throughout the country. Elsewhere: Sri Lanka and spread throughout hot and dry regions of both hemispheres.

19. *Monomorium floricola* (Jerdon)


*Monomorium floricola*  

**Diagnostic characters**: W. 1.5–2 mm. Head, petiole and legs reddish brown, thorax lighter; abdomen dark brown; smooth polished and shining; pilosity almost wanting; few erect hairs on head anteriorly and on apex of abdomen. Head rectangular, occiput slightly emarginate; narrow mandibles armed with 4 teeth; clypeus convex, obesately carinate; scape of 12-segmented antennae just reaching the top of head, club remarkably thick; eyes placed below the middle. Thorax proportionately long; pro-mesonotum somewhat pyriform; meso-metanotum suture distinct; basal portion of metanotum rectangular, apically truncate. Petiole anteriorly elongate; post petiole broader; abdomen oval.

**Material examined**: 3 W. India, West Bengal, Kolkata, Rabindra Sarовар, December 2001 –November 2002.

**Distribution**: India: West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andaman & Nicobar Is., Orissa, Meghalaya, Manipur and spread throughout India.

**Elsewhere**: Sri Lanka, Australia, New Caledonia Is., Oceania.

**Remarks**: Tiwari et al. (1998) also reported this species from Lilly Pool (Rabindra Sarовар), Kolkata.

20. *Monomorium latinode* Mayr


Monomorium latinode

Diagnostic characters: W. TL 3–3.5 mm. Light castaneous brown; mandibles, antennae and legs lighter in colour; smooth, polished and shining. Head longer than broad, posteriorly transverse; clypeus anteriorly arched, carinae almost obsolete. Thorax elongate; pro-mesonotum convex, broad; emarginate at meso-metanotal suture, which is deeply impressed; basal portion of metanotum rectangular, posteriorly truncate. Petiole long in profile, convex anteriorly and posteriorly; postpetiole broader than petiole; abdomen long, oval.


Distribution: India: West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Orissa, Manipur and spread throughout India.

Elsewhere: Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Indonesia (Borneo), Formosa (Taiwan).

Remarks: Tiwari et al. (1998) reported this species from ‘Lilly Pool’ (Rabindra Sarовар), Kolkata.

21. Monomorium monomorium Bolton


Diagnostic characters: W. TL 1.5–2 mm. Head and thorax dark brown, abdomen black; smooth, polished and shining; pilosity very sparse. Head rectangular, posteriorly transverse; narrow mandibles with 4 teeth on masticatory margin; clypeus very convex, anteriorly rounded; scape of 12–segmented antennae nearly reaching up to the top of the head; eyes comparatively large, placed in the middle of the head. Pro-mesonotum convex; meso-metanotal suture distinct and emarginate; metanotum compressed, basal portion rectangular, apical portion truncate. Petiole rounded; postpetiole broader than long, not broader but lower than petiole; abdomen oval.


Distribution: India: West Bengal, Karnataka.


22. Monomorium pharaonis (Linnaeus)


Diagnostic characters: W. TL 2.5–3 mm. Reddish yellow, posterior portion of abdomen black; head rugulose and opaque, abdomen smooth and shining; pilosity almost wanting. Head longer than broad; posterior margin transverse; mandibles linear, narrow clypeus obliquely carinate and convex; the scape of 12–segmented antennae reaching nearly to top of head. Pro-mesonotum convex, distinctly longer than broad, rounded anteriorly, narrowing posteriorly; meso-metanotal suture distinct; metanotum rectangular, somewhat flat, apically truncate. Petiole somewhat cuneiform, rounded at the top; postpetiole broader, globose; abdomen oval, anteriorly truncate.


Distribution: India: West Bengal, Karnataka and almost throughout the country.

Elsewhere: Spread over the tropical regions of both hemispheres.

16. Genus Pheidole Westwood


Type-species: Atta providens Sykes, 1835.
23. *Pheidole roberti* Forel


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**Pheidole roberti**

*Diagnostic characters*: S. TL 3.5–4 mm. Head and abdomen brownish black; thorax yellowish brown; head longitudinally finely striate and posteriorly widely punctate. Thorax transversely striate; anterolateral corners of pronotum submargined; mesonotum depressed. Petiole small; postpetiole more than twice broader than petiole, sides sharply angulate.


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24. *Pheidole* sp.

*Distribution*: India: West Bengal, Karnataka, Meghalaya, Sikkim.

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17. Genus *Pheidologeton* Mayr


*Type species*: *Oecodomia diversa* Jerdon, 1851.

25. *Pheidologeton diversus* (Jerdon)


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**Pheidologeton diversus**

*Diagnostic characters*: S. TL 5–10 mm. Dark chestnut brown, antennae and legs lighter in colour; head anteriorly longitudinally striate; the posterior lobes of head, anterior pronotum and basal portion of metanotum transversely striate; petiole rugose; rest of the body smooth and shining. Head rectangular, sides straight, a deep impression down the front which bears
a single large ocellus; mandibles long with 2 teeth on apex of masticatory margin; clypeus narrow, posteriorly clearly defined and rounded; 11–segmented antennae with pubescence; eyes small. Pro and mesonotum of thorax convex; pro-mesonotal suture lightly impressed; scutellum gibbose; metanotum depressed, spines erect long and stout. Petiole thick, subtriangular, upper margin transverse and emarginate, with a stout broad keel on lower side; postpetiole broader than petiole, upper margin rounded; abdomen broadly oval.

**Material examined**: 2 S, 6 W. India, West Bengal, Kolkata, Rabindra Sarovar, December 2001–November 2002.

**Distribution**: India: West Bengal, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Sikkim.

**Elsewhere**: Malaysia, Myanmar.

18. Genus *Recurvidris* Bolton


Type-species: *Trigonogaster recurvispinosus* Forel, 1890.

26. *Recurvidris recurvispinosa* (Forel)


**Diagnostic characters**: W. TL 2–2.5 mm. Orange yellow, eyes black, mandibles brown; pubescence almost absent; erect sparse hairs on head, thorax and abdomen. Head elongate, rectangular, anteriorly truncate; narrow mandibles with 4 teeth; vertical clypeus medially bicarinate, anterior margin complete and arched; scape of 11–segmented antennae almost reaching posterior margin of head. Thorax elongate, broad anteriorly; pro-mesonotum forming a single convexity; pro-mesonotal suture absent; meso-metanotum suture deep, emarginate; metanotum dorsally flat, strong spines curved upwards and forwards from their bases. Petiole with long thick peduncle in front with an acute ventral spine, node low and weakly conical, postpetiole reduced, shallow in profile; basal segment of abdomen dorsally flat, strongly convex ventrally.

**Material examined**: 1 W. India, West Bengal, Kolkata, Rabindra Sarovar, December 2001–November 2002.

**Distribution**: India: West Bengal, Assam, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Uttaranchal.

**Elsewhere**: China, Hongkong, Japan, Myanmar, Nepal.

19. Genus *Solenopsis* Westwood


Type species: *Atta geminata* Fabricius, 1804

(= *Solenopsis mandibularis* Westwood, 1841).

27. *Solenopsis geminata* (Fabricius)


Diagnostic characters: W. TL 3–4.5 mm. Pale yellow to reddish yellow, abdomen and boarders of mandibles marked with brown; smooth and shining. Head square; mandibles short with 4 teeth; middle of elytra produced back between antennal carinae, apices of each side projected as small teeth beyond anterior margin; antenna 10-segmented. Narrow thorax; pronotum rounded anteriorly; pro-mesonotal suture obsolete; mesonotal convex; meso-metanotal suture deep and emarginated, basal portion of metanotum passing into apical portion by a regular curve. Petiole squamiform, pedunculate anteriorly; postpetiole broader, oval; abdomen oval.


Distribution: India: West Bengal, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Karnataka, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Orissa, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu.

Elsewhere: Spread pretty nearly over the tropics of the two hemispheres (Bingham, 1903).

20. Genus *Tetramorium* Mayr


Type-species: *Formica caespitum* Linnaeus, 1758.

28. *Tetramorium walshi* (Forel)


DISCUSSION

The study shows that the community of ants is rich in this Rabindra Sarovar area. Diversity of the species of ants reveals the fact that ants can withstand the human interferences which is caused mainly due to recreational activities of the local residents. Green grasses, bushes and trees help to maintain their niche to some extend.

29 species under 20 genera of ants recorded from this area indicates that this type of habitat, though within the city, may be considered the abode of insects, ants in particular.

Prolonged and vigorous searching may yield more variation in the species composition of ants of this small and changing habitat. Diversity of species over a small area is the indicator of good environmental health of the place. The floral wealth and undisturbed habitat are very much in need for the diversity. But to make the Sarovar merely a place for recreation, concretization within the Sarovar has already been started. Even tree felling is also seen...
frequently. These activities should be restricted to restore the floral and faunal wealth, as well as the virginity and good health of the environment which is beneficial for the city overall.

During that period (December 2001–November 2002) collections were also made from the divider of the side-by-road – Southern Avenue, which is one of the busiest roads of Kolkata. The divider is also with full of greens, ornamental bushes and trees, maintained by the Department of Forests, Govt. of West Bengal. Different activities to maintain the garden is inevitable, which was noticed during the time of collection. Moreover, vehicular pressure on the road, to and fro, is considerable. The exhausts from those vehicles come directly on the divider. The lead, mixed in the fuel, and other obnoxious gases and particles of the vehicular exhausts pollute the area which might have adverse effect on the faunal wealth of that place, particularly on the soil dwellers. 17 species of ants under 16 genera are recorded from the collections made from that divider during that period. Though this collecting spot is adjacent to the Sarовар and more or less same type of vegetation is noticed, less diversification of the species of ants may be the ill-effect of the pollution and anthropogenic disturbances of that area. On the contrary, the population structure of individual species was seen to vary greatly. In that polluted environment also Solenopsis geminata was seen to flourish quite well, nearby road to away from it, outnumbering all other species recorded from there. This dominance indicates the ability of that species to withstand the pressure of pollution effectively and to utilize the opportunity of poor-presence of other species of ants.

However, thorough investigation is needed to reach the conclusion properly.

SUMMARY

This paper deals with the ants of Rabindra Sarовар, the Lake of National Importance, situated at the Southern part of Kolkata. 29 species of ants under 20 genera and 5 subfamilies are recorded here with diagnostic characters, keys to subfamilies, genera and species. Among these, description of a new species, Cardiocondyla tiwarii is also incorporated.

Moreover, for comparison of the diversity of species of ants between unpolluted and polluted habitats, 17 species of ants under 16 genera and 4 subfamilies are recorded from the divider of side-by-road – Southern Avenue, which spot is exposed to constant vehicular pollution, as well as man-made disturbances.

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REFERENCES


