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Next step in the invasion: *Trichomyrmex mayri* (FOREL, 1902) new to the Philippines (Hymenoptera: Formicidae)

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Abstract: *Trichomyrmex mayri* (FOREL, 1902), an invasive species of ant is recorded from the Philippines for the first time.

Key words: ants, invasive species, new country record.

INTRODUCTION AND RESULTS

Trichomyrmex mayri was described as trinome *Monomorium* (*Parholcomyrmex*) *gracillimum* var. *mayri* FOREL, 1902 from the whole India (“Inde entière”) (FOREL 1902). Later, FOREL (1911) considered it as a subspecies of *Monomorium destructor* (JERDON, 1851). BOLTON (1987) raised this taxon to a species rank and noted that *Monomorium destructor* r. *gracillimum* var. *karawajewi*, described from Sudan and Israel by FOREL (1913), is its junior synonym. Finally, the species was transferred by WARD *et al.* (2015) to the genus *Trichomyrmex* MAYR, 1865.

BOLTON (1987) noted *T. mayri* as a species widespread in the Palearctic and suggested an Indian subcontinent as a place of its origin. He confirmed also its records from Africa: Egypt, Mali, Niger, Sudan and Asia: India, Iraq, Israel, Malaysia, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Syria, Thailand and Yemen. From Asia it was also recorded from southern China, Indonesia, Iran, Myanmar, and Vietnam (FOREL 1913, SANTSCHI 1924, TAK 2010, GUÉNARD & DUNN 2012, SHIRAN *et al.* 2012). Recently, *T. mayri* was noted from Qatar and United Arab Emirates and confirmed from other countries of the Arabian Peninsula (SHARAF *et al.* 2016). First record from Europe was based on three workers collected in southern Spain (AntWeb resources). BOLTON (1987) and SHARAF *et al.* (2016) suggested that in the regions west of India this is an invasive species with westward spread more successful than eastward. The latest data, however, also suggest effective expansion to the east and northeast of the Indian subcontinent and Indochina. It was noted from three localities in Western Australia, Northern

Territory and Queensland of northern Australia (CROSS *et al* 2016, ANDERSEN *et al.* 2018, ATLAS OF LIVING AUSTRALIA, web data). We have found this species in materials from the Philippines studied recently by us:

PHILIPPINES, Luzon, Morong Bataan, BTPI Park, 14.71138 N/120.28832 E, IV 2018, 80 m, leg. P. & G. Kowalski. Numerous workers were collected in the whole area.

BTPI Park (The Bataan Technology Park) is a part of The Philippine Refugee Processing Center (PRPC), which was established and funded by the United Nations as home to many refugees from Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia as well as ethnic minorities (Chinese). Also, tourist resorts were founded on the border of BTPI. Areas in the park are mainly covered with secondary forest, bushes and flowers. Plants are mostly of exotic origin or invasive for the Philippines. It is not surprising, therefore, that there are also many invasive and widely-distributed Asian ant species in BTPI. Apart of *Trichomyrmex mayri* we have also found the following ant taxa in the material collected within the park: *Anoplolepis gracilipes* (SMITH, 1857), *Camponotus cf. maculatus*, *Cardiocondyla mauritanica* FOREL, 1890, *Colobopsis leonardi* (EMERY, 1889), *Dolichoderus thoracicus* (SMITH, 1860), *Odontoponera denticulata* (SMITH, 1858), *Oecophylla smaragdina* (FABRICIUS, 1775), *Solenopsis geminata* (FABRICIUS, 1804), *Tapinoma melanocephalum* (FABRICIUS, 1793), *Tetramorium languinosum* MAYR, 1870, *Tetramorium simillimum* (SMITH, 1851), *Tetramorium smithi* MAYR, 1879, *Tetramorium walshi* (FOREL, 1890), and *Trichomyrmex destructor* (JERDON, 1851).

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Figs. 1–2. *Trichomyrmex mayri* (FOREL) major worker from BTPI Park (scale bar = 0.5 mm): 1. dorsal view, 2. lateral view (photo L. Borowiec).

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