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THE KNOWN RANGE OF *MYRMICA SEMIPARASITICA* (FORMICIDAE : HYMENOPTERA)

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The ant *Myrmica semiparasitica* was described recently upon only two different samples (Francoeur 2007). One included males and alate gynes recovered from *Myrmica* species swarms on top of mount Rigaud, Québec (Leprince and Francoeur 1986). The other includes ergates of *M. punctiventris* and *M. semiparasitica* extracted in 1982 by S.P. Cover (MCZ, Harvard University) from a colony in Long Island, Suffolk County, New York. New survey data extend this territory towards the western side of the deciduous forest biome.

The species was discovered in surveys made in Ohio by the second author. The Ohio material, consisting of two queens and four ergates, was collected by sieving forest leaf litter and subsequent extraction with Winklers. Only three samples, out of more than 120 collected, were found to contain individuals of *M. semiparasitica*. All collection sites were located within the boundaries of the Cleveland Metroparks system in the northeastern part of the state.

The Ohio records are as follows: Ohio, Cuyahoga Co., Brecksville Reservation, KI933, 41°18'52"N 81°37'0"W, altitude 284m, 8 July 2005, one ergate; Brecksville Reservation, KI956, 41°18'14"N 81°36'31"W, altitude 276m, 16 July 2005, 1 female and three ergates; Euclid Creek Reservation, KI1750, 41°33'25"N 81°32'6"W, altitude 237m, 22 May 2007, 1 female.

All sampling locations fell within mixed mesophytic forest stands dominated by oak (*Quercus rubrum*, *Q. alba*), maple (*Acer rubrum*, *A. saccharum*), and hickory (*Carya* spp.), with scattered individuals of American elm (*Ulmus americana*), basswood (*Tilia americana*), and black cherry (*Prunus serotina*). All sites were characte-

rized by an open understory composed of graminoids, Mayapple (*Podophyllum peltatum*), Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), some ferns and tree seedlings. In all cases the depth of the litter layer did not exceed 25 mm, and almost no bare ground and no rock cover of any kind were present within the sampling locations.

In all three cases *M. punctiventris* (the probable host of *M. semiparasitica*) ergates were found in the samples containing *M. semiparasitica* (16, 9 and 15 individuals were collected respectively); no other *Myrmica* species were present in the samples.

The species is also reported from Illinois by Laura Rericha, an ecologist working for the Forest Preserve District of Cook Co. In 2002, she collected *M. semiparasitica* from a remnant, dry-mesic White Oak woodland bluff along the Mazon River, in Grundy County. The sample includes several ergates, one queen and one weakly ergatogynal individual. Repeated yearly visits to the site did not allowed to trace any other colony of the species, nor *M. punctiventris* or *M. pinetorum* (pers. comm. to Francoeur).

These new data confirm that Oak woodland is the habitat preferendum of *M. semiparasitica*. Its presently known territory covers the northern half of the eastern deciduous biome. Since the range of the host species covers the southern half as well ([Antweb](#); Smith 1979), it is expected that *M. semiparasitica* will be discovered much further south in the future.

References

Antweb *M. punctiventris* at <http://www.antweb.org>

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Mixed mesophytic stand at Brecksville Reservation (KI 956) (photo by K. Ivanov)

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