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First Vouchered Record for *Strumigenys louisianae* (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) in Illinois

Diane L. Wood¹*, Casey L. Brennan¹

Abstract

We report the first known vouchered collection of *Strumigenys louisianae* (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) from Illinois. Two specimens were captured in pit-fall traps during a field study at Fults Hill Prairie Nature Preserve in Monroe County.

In the ant tribe Dacetini, *Strumigenys* Smith contains 834 species (Bolton 2013) with a worldwide distribution (Smith 1931, Bolton 2000). Of the New World species, *Strumigenys louisianae* Roger is well represented throughout the Neotropics but within the Nearctic (specifically United States) it is mainly a southern distribution (Fig. 1) (Smith 1947, Brown 1953, Bolton 2000).

While *S. louisianae* is quite striking in morphology, its being overlooked has been attributed to its coloration, its small size (\approx 2-3 mm), and habit of thanatosis (Smith 1931, Van Pelt 1958). This species has been predominantly collected in forested systems, and nests are typically located in rotting logs and soils (Smith 1931, 1947; Van Pelt 1958; Brown and Wilson 1959). It is exclusively predacious and preferentially preys upon collembolans (Wilson 1953).

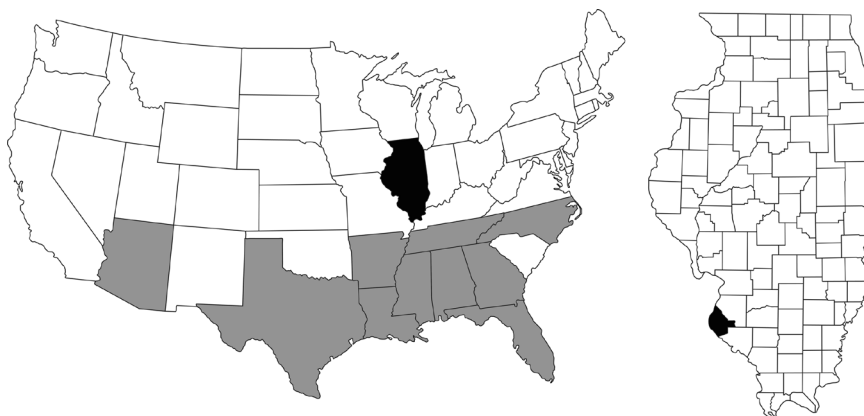


Figure 1. Known U.S.A. distribution of *Strumigenys louisianae* Roger in grey with black indicating new state collection (left) and county where specimens were collected (right).

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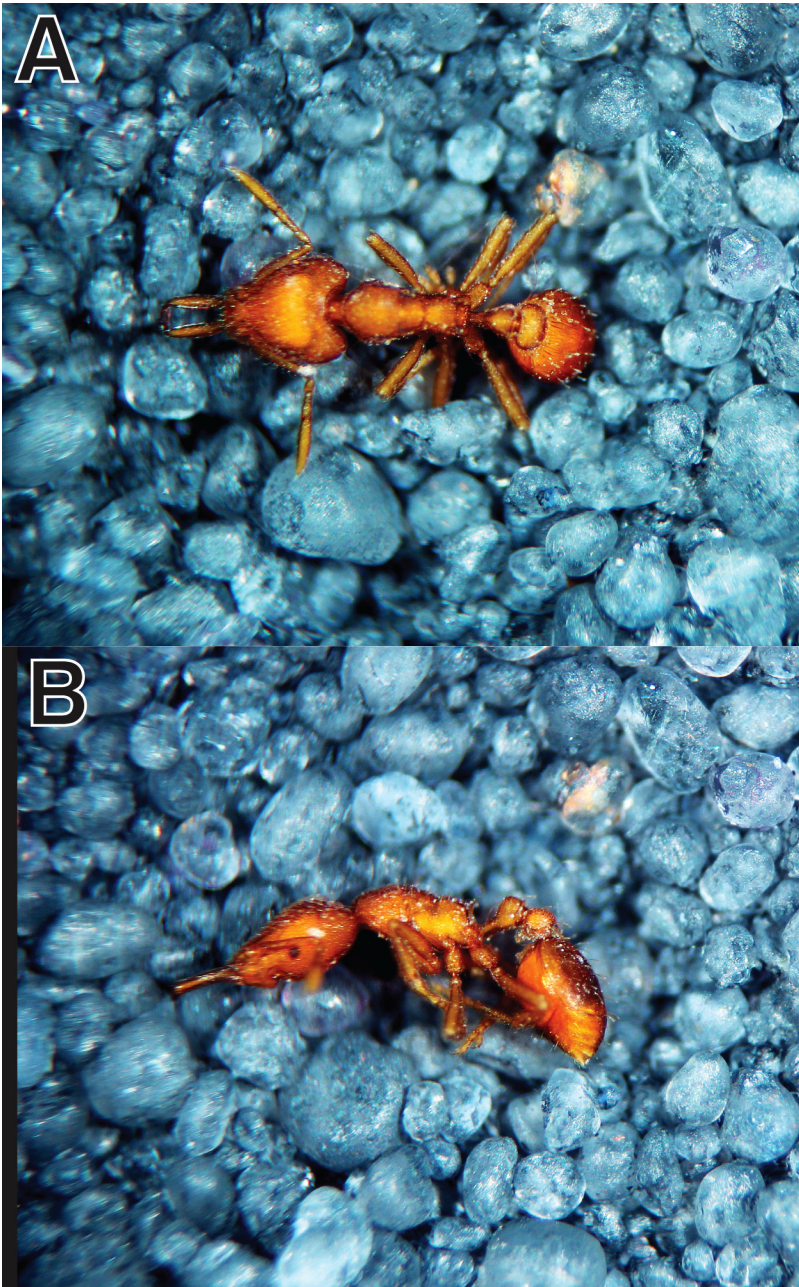


Figure 2. Digital images, (A) Dorsal view (B) Lateral view, of *Strumigenys louisianae* Roger individual collected from the hill prairie complex at Fults Hill Prairie Nature Preserve, Monroe County, Illinois.

While conducting a research project at Fults Hill Prairie Nature Preserve, Monroe County, Illinois, two specimens of *S. louisianae* were collected from pitfall traps in the hill prairie complex. One specimen was collected on 19 September 2010 and the second on 3 August 2011. This is the first known vouchered collection of *S. louisianae* from Illinois (Fig. 2). Ross et al. (1971) listed this species as occurring in Illinois. However, DuBois and LaBerge (1988) indicated that there were no known collected specimens for the state. Of the two individuals, one is housed in the invertebrate collection at the Wildlife Field Office, Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Illinois, and the other is housed in the Biology Department Invertebrate Collection, Southeast Missouri State University, Cape Girardeau, Missouri.

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