

**FORMICA MAXIMA MOORE, 1842 (INSECTA, HYMENOPTERA):  
PROPOSED SUPPRESSION UNDER THE PLENARY POWERS IN  
ACCORDANCE WITH ARTICLE 23(a-b). Z.N.(S.)2023**

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The names *Myrmecia regularis* Crawley, 1925; *Myrmecia nigriceps* Mayr, 1862; and *Myrmecia vindex* Smith, 1858, are at present widely used for three species of bull-dog ant in the south-west of Western Australia. The ants are large and conspicuous members of the insect fauna and, because of their powerful stings, are well-known. The names are in general current use in the sense of Article 79(b)—see attached list.

2. The name *Formica maxima* Moore, 1842, occurs in a descriptive vocabulary of the Aboriginal language. The description is undoubtedly of an ant of the genus *Myrmecia* but the name lacks a type specimen. If a neotype were to be selected from the geographical area to which the description relates, (i.e. the south-west of Western Australia), the name *F. maxima* would certainly be a senior synonym of one of the names, *M. regularis*, *M. nigriceps*, *M. vindex* or *Myrmecia vindex basirufa* Forel, 1907 (the latter is currently held possibly to be a full species but it is a name not in general current use—see 4 below.)

3. The name *Formica maxima* Moore, 1842, is not known to have been used except in the two editions of Moore's work (1842, 1884) and in two editions of a contemporary general work by a missionary (Salvado 1851 and 1854).

4. Although *M. vindex basirufa* Forel, 1907, is not known to be a name in general current use (see attached list), stability would not be served by causing it, through neotype selection for *F. maxima* Moore, to become the junior subjective synonym of *F. maxima* Moore, 1842, since the taxonomy of *M. vindex* and *M. vindex basirufa* is not fully understood and *F. maxima* might, through synonymy of *basirufa* with *vindex*, be caused to replace *M. vindex*, a stable name in general current use.

5. The Commission is requested to use its Plenary Powers (Art. 79) to suppress the name *Formica maxima* Moore, 1842, for the purposes of the Law of Priority but not the Law of Homonymy and to place it on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names.

6. In accordance with Article 80, until the Commission's decision is known, the name *Formica maxima* Moore, 1842, is not to be used as the valid name of a south-western Australian species of ant in the genus *Myrmecia*.

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List of publications demonstrating general current use of the names *Myrmecia*

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*regularis* Crawley, 1925, *M. nigriceps* Mayr, 1862, and *M. vindex* F. Smith, 1858, and the usage of *M. vindex basirufa* Forel, 1907.

1. *Myrmecia regularis* Crawley, 1925. *Ann. Mag. nat. Hist. Ser. 9*, 16 : 579-580.

Sudd, 1967 : 116; Haskins, C. P. and E. F., 1964 : 268 *et al.*; Wheeler, G. C. and J., 1964 : 444; Douglas and Brown, 1959 : 18; Freeland, 1958 : 11; Haskins, C. P. and E. F. 1955 : 116 *et al.*; Haskins and Whelden, 1954 : 35 *et al.*; Brown, 1953 : 29 *et al.*; Wheeler, G. C. and J., 1952 : 113; Clark, 1951 : 91 *et al.*

2. *Myrmecia nigriceps* Mayr, 1862. *Verh. zool.-bot. Ges. Wien*. 12 : 728. Brown and Taylor, 1970 : 955; Haskins, C. P. and E. F., 1964 : 270 *et al.*; Douglas and Brown, 1959 : 15 *et al.*; Freeland, 1958 : 11; Brown, 1953 : 22 *et al.*; Wheeler, G. C. and J., 1952 : 112; Clark, 1951 : 64 *et al.*; Clark 1934 : 7; Wheeler, W. M., 1933 : 38 *et al.*; Clark, 1927 : 33.

3. *Myrmecia vindex* Fr. Smith, 1858. *Cat. Hym. Brit. Mus.* 6 : 144-145. Wheeler, G. C. and J., 1971 : 254; Brown and Taylor, 1970 : 955; Haskins, C. P. and E. F., 1964 : 267 *et al.*; Douglas and Brown, 1959 : 14 *et al.*; Haskins, C. P. and E. F., 1955 : 119; Haskins and Whelden, 1954 : 35 *et al.*; Brown, 1953 : 22 *et al.*; Clark, 1951 : 67 *et al.*; Haskins, C. P. and E. F., 1950 : 483; Wheeler, W. M., 1933 : 36 *et al.*

4. *Myrmecia vindex basirufa* Forel, 1907. *Fauna Sudwest. Aust.* 1 : 264. The known references are: Douglas and Brown, 1959 : 17; Clark, 1951 : 70 *et al.*; Wheeler, W. M., 1933 : 37.

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