

STRUMIGENYS YALEOPLEURA species
nov.

Insecta: Hymenoptera: Formicidae:
Myrmicinae: Dacetini

DIAGNOSIS, WORKER: A small species of the *godeffroyi* group, subgroup of *S. perplexa*, or of the *S. lyroessa* group, subgroup of *S. biroi*. From the other known Australian and Melanesian species of the *perplexa* subgroup, *S. yaleopleura* differs by its broad, shallow, posterior cephalic excavation, which recalls that of the Fijian *S. scelestus*; by the rather strongly convex vertex with evenly arcuate lateral margins, and by the short, thick, tapered mandibles without mesal lamellate margins. The mandibles are transitional to those of the *lyroessa* group, but are a little longer relatively than in any members of that group in the region, and are narrower basad. Additional states of diagnostic value are the smooth and shining pleura and disc of postpetiole, and details of pilosity.

HOLOTYPE, WORKER: TL 2.2, HL 0.53, HW 0.41 (CI 77), ML 0.20 (MI 38), SL 0.25 (SI 61), WL 0.55 mm (largest specimen seen).

Similar in general form of head and mandibles to the Australian species of the *perplexa* subgroup, but the head has the dorsolateral margins (sides of vertex in full-face view) more strongly and evenly convex, hiding the eyes from direct dorsal view; and the mandibles are relatively shorter than in most of these (an undescribed Australian

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species has mandibles even shorter), and lacking the lamelliform mesal margins. Lateral mandibular margins convex, especially near insertions; mesal margins approximately straight to near bases, where they curve mesad to form low basal lobes (normally hidden beneath clypeus) approaching in degree of development those of the *S. lyroessa* group, so that the mandibular shafts are broad-basad, tapering to less than half the basal width at apices in a fashion intermediate in this respect between *S. perplexa* and such species of the *lyroessa* group as *S. biroi*. Apical armament of mandible consists of an apical fork of two teeth and one distinct (at 85x) intercalary denticle; dorsal tooth of fork longest, ventral tooth shorter, and intercalary denticle rather robust, acute, and about half as long as the adjacent ventral tooth; preapical tooth a little shorter than the dorsal apical tooth and distant from it by almost its length, and very slightly recurved, spiniform, situated at about the apical quarter of the shaft length.

Eye modest in size, with at most 5-6 facets in greatest diameter; without a preocular indentation or concavity. Apical antennomere incrassate, longer than funiculomeres I-IV taken together; IV thick, but distinctly longer than broad. Scape gently curved and gradually incrassate near midlength.

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Alitrunk as in *S. perplexa*, but a little more slender, weakly concave in postmesonotal area, feebly convex over propodeal dorsum (posterior alitruncal dorsum nearly straight in some paratypes). Propodea: teeth lamellate, short, acute, uptilted, continued ventrad by an infradental lamella of moderate width and sigmoidal in outline—concave just below the tooth, convex ventrad, without a ventral projection or plate. Petiole with slender anterior peduncle and rounded, moderately raised node with gently sloping anterior face; node slightly broader than long (W ca. 0.12 mm) as viewed from above. Postpetiolar disc small, convex, smooth and shining, about 0.15 mm wide and half again as broad as long. Spongiform appendages of both nodes exceptionally voluminous, completely surrounding postpetiole. Anterior gastric border also thick and spongiform; basal costulae coarsely filiform, extending to nearly 1/3 the length of basal tergum; remainder of gaster smooth and shining.

Head, alitrunk and petiole densely reticulopunctulate and opaque, except for nearly the whole of the sides of the alitrunk, which are smooth and glassy-shining, and a small, weakly sculptured area on posterior summit of petiolar node. Mandibles and appendages finely and densely reticulopunctulate, weakly shining to opaque.