

Unique specimen identifiers link 10 new species of ant directly to AntWeb

January 27 2014



This image shows a male *Temnothorax anaphalantus*, one of the species described in the study. Credit: Marek L. Borowiec

A team of scientists from the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles and the University of California at Davis describe ten new species of *Temnothorax* ants, doubling the number of species of this genus in California. What makes this discovery even more special is that each described specimen is linked to the AntWeb database by a unique

identifier. Publishing this way makes it easier to harvest the data by other on-line resources and repositories.

The era of electronic publishing in taxonomy has greatly facilitated the accessibility of specimen data. *ZooKeys*, where the new study is published, has been long spearheading the goal of wide and rapid dissemination of taxonomic information and a new publication in this journal is further taking the advantage of electronic media.

As is customary in taxonomic descriptions, the authors are providing a list of material examined for each species. Each of the specimen records is marked by a unique specimen identifier, a number that links to a record page in the AntWeb database. This data is also supplied as a supplementary text file, making it easy for the readers to access, download, and analyze these records. The presence of this information in an external database allows harvesting by other on-line resources, such as [Encyclopedia of Life](#), [Global Biodiversity Information Facility](#) (GBIF), [Species-ID](#) and [ZooBank](#).

AntWeb is an online ant database that focuses on specimen level data and images linked to specimens. In addition, contributors can submit natural history information and field images that are linked directly to taxonomic names. Distribution maps and field guides are generated automatically. All data in AntWeb are downloadable by users.

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Specimen: CAsENT0005694 *Temnothorax mib-quas* [Overview](#) | [Images](#) | [Map](#)

Classification: Order: Hymenoptera Family: Formicidae Subfamily: Myrmicinae Genus: *Temnothorax* Species: *mib-quas* Specimen: CAsENT0005694

Locality information:

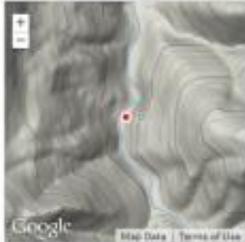
Locality: **United States: California: Solano: Cold Canyon, 19 km NNW Vacaville**
 Latitude: 38.5
 Longitude: -122.1
 Lat,Long Max Error:
 Elevation: 300 m
 Elevation Max Error:
 Locality notes: coordinates obtained from PSW Field Notes

Collection information:

Collection code: PSW10562.3
 Collected by: R. S. Ward
 Habitat: chaparral
 Date collected: 25 Feb 1990
 Date collected end:
 Method:
 Microhabitat: ex sifted litter (leaf mold, rotten wood)
 Collection notes:

Specimen information:

Life stage: 1w
 Located at: UCDC
 Owned by: UCDC, Davis, CA, USA
 Determined by: M.L. Borowiec & M. M. Probers
 Date determined: 27 Jun 2013
 Type status: ■ holotype
 Medium: pin
 DNA notes:
 Specimen notes:
 Specimen data uploaded by: California Academy of Sciences

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This image shows the specimen data of one of the new species *Temnothorax quasimodo*, as it appears on AntWeb. Credit: AntWeb



This image shows a worker *Temnothorax arboreus* one of the newly described species. Credit: Marek L. Borowiec

"We include 20 species known from California in our study but at present, there are about 60 species (including those described below) of *Temnothorax* known from North America and more than 350 [species](#) worldwide so our study is of somewhat limited scope", explain the authors. "Nevertheless, we believe that by officially describing these forms and giving a new illustrated key, we are providing a useful resource for myrmecologists working in western North America."

More information: Snelling RR, Borowiec ML, Prebus MM (2014) Studies on California ants: a review of the genus *Temnothorax* (Hymenoptera, Formicidae). *ZooKeys* 372: 27. [DOI: 10.3897/zookeys.372.6039](https://doi.org/10.3897/zookeys.372.6039)

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