PROPOSED SUSPENSION OF THE REGLES FOR PONERA LATREILLE, 1804 (CLASS INSECTA, ORDER HYMENOPTERA)

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Latreille (March 1804, Nouv. Dict. Hist. nat. 24 : 179) described the genus Ponera for his "Fourmis étranglées." This group was defined in 1802, Hist. nat. Fourmis, where it included, amongst other species, Formica contracta Latreille, 1802, and Formica crassinoda Latreille, 1802. Latreille (1810, Consid. génér. : 437) cited Formica crassinoda as the type. Westwood (1840, Introd. mod. Class. Ins. 2 : synopsis 83) cited Formica contracta Latreille, 1802, as the type.

In 1858 (Cat. Hym. Brit. Mus. 6 : 105), F. Smith erected the genus Pachycondyla for the species with which Formica crassinoda Latreille, 1802, is congeneric. The names Ponera Latreille (in the sense of Westwood) and Pachycondyla Smith have been universally accepted by hymenopterists and a large bionomic literature has grown up round the former name. Any modification of this practice would cause far greater confusion than uniformity.

We are of the opinion that it is highly desirable that in the exercise of the plenary power conferred on them by the International Zoological Congress, the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature should as soon as possible take the steps laid down by the Congress for the promulgation of an 'Opinion' to the following effect:---

The name Ponera Latreille, March, 1804 (type Formica contracta Latreille, 1802 = Formica coarctata Latreille, 1801) be added to the Official List of Generic Names. The designation of Formica crassinoda Latreille, 1802, as type of Ponera by Latreille (1810) is therefore to be set aside and the designation of Formica contracta Latreille, 1802, by Westwood (1840) to be accepted.27

27 See footnote 4 above.