

## Recent range extensions of some introduced Hymenoptera, with observations

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During the course of fieldwork in the North Island between December 2000 and January 2001, extensions to the distributions of the following introduced aculeate Hymenoptera were noted:

### ***Hylioides concinna* (Fabricius)** (Apoidea: Apidae: Hylaeinae)

This distinctive, orange and black Australian solitary bee was observed making serial nests in abandoned Cerambycidae (Coleoptera) burrows in stems of *Lupinus arboreus* and *Acacia longifolia* var. *sophorae* in the sand dunes at Castlecliff (WI). The bees were very conspicuous as they hovered around large bushes of boxthorn (*Lycium ferrocissimum*) and took nectar from the flowers. Two nests and two adults taken in January 2001, were placed in the Otago Museum collections. I observed further adults at Hawera (TK), and Seatoun, Wellington (WI). Mr Frank Chambers informs me that *H. concinna* has also recently become established at Opunake (TK).

### ***Ancistrocerus gazella* (Panzer)** (Vespoidea: Eumenidae)

Females of this black and yellow tube-nesting species were observed nesting in abandoned cerambycid burrows in lucerne and *Acacia* in company with *H. concinna* in the sand dunes at Castlecliff. The nest closures made by both species were unusual in containing much sand and less moulded mud than I have previously seen. Three nests and four adults were taken for the Otago Museum collections. I observed *A. gazella* at Pohangina (WI), and Seatoun Heights (WI) but did not take specimens from these localities.

### ***Podalonia (tydei) suspiciosa* (Smith)** (Apoidea: Sphecidae: Sphecinae)

This Australian species, until about 1996 confined in New Zealand to the northern North Island (ND, CL, BP) is now abundant on exposed sand in the dunes at Castlecliff Beach (WI). I searched for it unsuccessfully on marine beaches and dunes for 30 km north and south of the mouth of the Wanganui River. Thirty adult males and females, two larvae and two cocoons were taken for the Otago Museum collections.

### ***Amblyopone australis* Erichson** (Formicidae: Ponerinae).

This ant is now abundant in Wanganui, nesting in cracks in pavement at Gonville, Castlecliff. Specimens have been deposited in the Otago Museum collections.

***Polistes (Polistes) chinensis* Fabricius** (Vespidae: Polistinae).

This species was found to be abundant throughout Wanganui (WI) and to be nesting in the sand dunes at Castlecliff.

*Polistes chinensis* is now established in Alexandra, Central Otago. On 7 April 1999, a large nest and 27 adults were found by Mr W. Grant in a container that had come from Auckland, on Dunstan Road. The wasps were flying in and out of the container. In November 1999, three adult females were observed in different parts of Alexandra. A female captured by Mr M. Tubbs on 9 November 1999 was captured on its nest in a shrub in the garden of a house in urban Alexandra. Mr Tubbs said he had seen other *P. chinensis* nests in Alexandra. In August 2001, one live adult female specimen captured in Alexandra was sent to Bruce McKinlay, Department of Conservation, Dunedin. On 25 October, Mrs J. Holgate of 16 Bruce Place, Alexandra, sent me two small nests, both with live *P. chinensis* females, and a very large nest with 130 cells which had been made in a *Pittosporum* shrub on her property. She wrote saying that she had several *P. chinensis* nests on her property last year, and that this year *P. chinensis* females had made new nests on her property in the milk box, on the concrete block wall of her driveway, and in another *Pittosporum* bush. On 28 February 2002, Mr Paul Buck of Dunedin photographed a large nest in a cavity on schist rock on the rail track just outside Alexandra. The clear colour photographs he gave me show many capped cells and at least 35 adult wasps on the outside of the nest.

On 2 October 2001, a live female captured in Malvern St, Glenleith Dunedin, by Mr Selwyn Inglis, was brought to the museum. Mr R. B. Morris reported seeing live females at The Cove, Otago Peninsula, in March 2001, suggesting that this species has the potential to become established in Dunedin, or may already be established.

Specimens of all the above species from these new localities have been deposited in the Otago Museum collections.