

***Camponotus vagus* (Scopoli, 1763) (Hymenoptera, Formicidae) in Norway**

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The Norwegian records of the ant *Camponotus vagus* (Scopoli, 1763) are presented and the distribution is discussed. Information on its biology and habitat choice is given. *C. vagus* is an overlooked species that must be considered rare in Norway.

Key Words: *Camponotus vagus*, faunistics, biology, distribution, Norway, Østfold.

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INTRODUCTION

The genus *Camponotus* Mayr, 1861 is represented by four species in Scandinavia (Collingwood 1979): *C. herculeanus* (Linnaeus, 1758), *C. ligniperda* (Latreille, 1802), *C. fallax* (Nylander, 1865) and *C. vagus* (Scopoli, 1763).

C. herculeanus and *C. ligniperda* are known from all the Scandinavian countries. Both species are common in Norway (Kvamme 1982). *C. fallax* is known from Strömsholm, Västmanland county, Sweden, as the only locality in Scandinavia (Douwes 1995). *Camponotus* species are known as important destroyers of wood in houses, which is reflected in the English name Carpenter ants.

The fourth species, *C. vagus* (Figure 1) is a West Palaearctic species known from southern Scandinavia to north-western Africa and from Portugal to Altai (Czechowski et al. 2002). The records are scattered and isolated in Northern Europe. Southwards the species are more common (Seifert 2007). The species has previously been

recorded from Sweden and Finland. According to Collingwood (1979) an old record from Karelia Australis is represented by one single specimen in the Helsinki Museum. Two colonies have been observed at Rymättylä, Aasla in 1968 and 1969, and Rymättylä, Kuusinen in 1969. Both colonies were found in crevices of sunny rocks (Merisou & Käpylä 1975). In Sweden *C. vagus* has been recorded from Öland and Gotland. These records are more than hundred years old (Douwes 1995). *C. vagus* is easily identified by its relatively large size (worker, 6–12 mm), uniform black colour and the long and dense body hairs. *C. vagus* is known to be both carnivorous and aphidicolous (Collingwood 1979, Seifert 2007).

C. vagus colonies are commonly found in wood in dry habitats in central Europe (Pisarski 1961, Seifert 2007). However, the species is also known from nests under stones. Open sunexposed habitats are preferred (Pisarski 1961). Colonies commonly have from 1.000 to 4.000 workers, but can contain up to 10.000 individuals (Seifert 2007). *C. vagus* is considered to be strong and