

**CENTER FOR SYSTEMATIC ENTOMOLOGY TRAVEL GRANT REPORT
FLORIDA STATE COLLECTION OF ARTHROPODS
(13–16 JUNE 2023)**

6 OCTOBER 2023

To whom it may concern,

Kal Ivanov and I visited the Florida State Collection of Arthropods in Gainesville on 13–16 June of this year. Food and lodging during our visit were funded by a \$1275 travel grant from the Center for Systematic Entomology using funds drawn from the Stewart and Jarmila Peck endowment. Our goals were to curate the collection's undetermined ants (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) and chafers (Coleoptera: Scarabaeidae: Melolonthinae), respectively.

During this time, except for June 15, undetermined ants from the Nearctic region were examined and identified to genus or species by Ivanov. The total number of ants identified (1,322) covers most of the Nearctic backlog thus facilitating future work in the collection. The identified specimens represent 62 native and introduced taxa from across North America north of Mexico and include more than half (46) of the genera known from the Nearctic. The examination of these specimens allowed for the identification of *Tetramorium insolens* (Smith, F., 1861) that represents a new record for Florida and only the second record of this panglobal tramp species in North America. Fantastic high-resolution images of this taxon were captured by Jonathan Bremer (FSCA; many thanks). The captured data will be used in an upcoming publication focusing on the nonnative ant taxa of Florida (Booher *et al.*, Florida Entomologist, in prep.). The next step will be to return to the collection and put names to all specimens previously identified to genus and identify the few remaining Nearctic taxa before shifting focus to the backlog of Neotropical and Palearctic taxa.

Working from approximately 8 am to 6 pm on each of the four days, a total of 29 drawers packed with undetermined melolonthines from nearly all zoogeographical regions were examined and sorted to tribe by Evans. Gareth Powell and Kyle Schnepf assisted with this effort by sorting all Melolonthinae from the miscellaneous Coleoptera and Scarabaeidae in advance of our visit. An exact count of the specimens sorted to tribe was not undertaken, but the total likely approached at least 15,000 specimens. Sorted specimens were transferred to unit trays with tribal labels affixed to the first specimen in each unit tray. This effort rendered the Melolonthinae collection more accessible to FSCA staff and visiting researchers. The next step will be to return to the FSCA for at least an additional two weeks to sort each tribe to genus and, if possible, species.

Many thanks to the Center for Systematic Entomology for supporting our work at the FSCA.

Sincerely,



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Left to right: Gareth Powell, Krystal Ashman, Kyle Schnepf, Art Evans, Paul Skelley, Kal Ivanov