



Universität  
Basel

## Research Project

### Myrmicinosporidium durum: an enigmatic disease of ants

#### Project funded by own resources

**Project title** Myrmicinosporidium durum: an enigmatic disease of ants

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#### **Organisation / Research unit**

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**Project start** 01.01.2016

**Probable end** 31.12.2022

**Status** Completed

Ants fulfill central roles in many ecosystems, acting as ecosystem engineers and interacting with many groups of organisms. Consequently ant diversity, behaviour and evolution have all been often the focus of research. However, little is known about diseases of ants and how they affect ant population dynamics. In this project we study Myrmicinosporidium durum a fungal parasite of ants in the canton Basel-Stadt. While studying material from ant diversity surveys made in 2014-2015, the disease was mostly found affecting the thief ant Solenopsis fugax, it has in 2016 spread to several other species, including species never before reported as hosts. In a next step we aim to sequence samples of the parasite collected from the different ant species.

**Keywords** ants, disease, formicidae, fungal parasite

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