

OR308

The developmental basis of caste evolution in ants

Ehab Abouhe

For over 100 years, social insect biologists, from Darwin, to William Morton Wheeler and E.O Wilson, have been fascinated by the remarkable morphological diversity of the worker castes of ants. However, the origin and evolution of worker caste diversity remains a fundamental, yet unresolved, question. Here, I describe the last 20 years of research in my lab showing that developmental processes are key understanding this question and for connecting genes to societal regulation.