

Sir:

On a recent foray into the Meaculina Valley (we were looking in a mid-level cave for signs of tools left by *H. habilis* or related groups) I came upon a creature that may be of interest to you, as it was intertwined with a colony of Occlupanids of various sorts. At first we thought it was related to the genus *Planeria*, or perhaps the last instar of [E. kuehniella](#), endemic in the area. But on closer observation we noted it was clearly a different species, and of the phylum *Plasticae*. What I found most interesting was what seemed its symbiotic relationship with what I might think of as perhaps similar to gut bacteria, visible for the complete length of the subject, and from both the dorsal and ventral sides (which indeed are hard to tell apart). The function of what I might call this ferrolingual substance may be something of which you are completely aware, but it was new to me. I posited at the time that it may have a directional or navigational function, as it did seem to have a strong magnetoreactive response. However, it may be structural as well, though I am unaware of skeletal development in any species of its size and ecological niche.

Clearly these creatures are social, perhaps eusocial, though it is hard to make that inference without observing their behavior over a period of time. As they are clearly slow moving and we "had miles to go before (we) sleep", we were not able to observe over a period of time, and know nothing further as to mating habits or reproduction. As well, they may be considered, along with *A. mellifera* (with which I am intimately acquainted) and others of the order Hymenoptera, a superorganism. I leave that to you.

I was able to capture some of these, and enclose a photo herewith.



R. Williams