

ISSN 0972- 1800



VOLUME 22, NO. 3

QUARTERLY

JULY-SEPTEMBER, 2020



Date of Publication: 28th September, 2020

BIONOTES

**A Quarterly Newsletter for Research Notes and News
On Any Aspect Related with Life Forms**

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From Volume 21

**Published by the Entomological Society of India (ESI), New Delhi (Nodal Officer: V.V.
Ramamurthy, ESI, New Delhi)**

And

Butterfly Research Centre, Bhimtal

Executive Editor: Peter Smetacek

Assistant Editor: Shristee Panthee

Butterfly Research Trust, Bhimtal

Published by Dr. R.K. Varshney, A Biologists Confrerie, Raj Bhawan, Manik Chowk,
Aligarh (up to volume 20 (2018)) R.N.I. Registration No. 71669/99.

Cover Photo of *Spialia zebra* by Mukesh Panwar

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ADDITION OF THE BUTTERFLY *APPIAS GALBA* (WALLACE, 1867) TO THE FAUNA OF MANIPUR, INDIA

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Introduction

The genus *Appias* Hübner, [1819] is represented by nine species in India, of which *Appias albina darada* (C & R Felder, [1865]), *Appias indra indra* (Moore, 1857), *Appias lalage lalage* (Doubleday, 1842), *Appias lyncida elenora* (Boisduval, 1836) and *Appias libythea olferna* Swinhoe, 1890 are reported from Manipur (Talbot, 1939; Majumdar, 2004; Singh *et al.*, 2011; Varshney & Smetacek, 2015). All these butterflies have been observed and photographed from many localities in the hills and valleys of Manipur but *Appias galba* was never encountered.

Appias galba, the Indian Orange Albatross is the most colorful and beautiful of the Albatrosses. This butterfly can be easily recognized by its dark orange colour above with prominent black veins on both wings, whereas the underside is a light yellowish orange, especially in males. The species occurs from north eastern India (Sikkim) to Bhutan, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, S. China and Singapore. The

butterfly is well established throughout the area.

Observations

On 16.v.2020, HH photographed a specimen of this species at Khujairok (24°41'50.5"N 93°46'03.7"E, 804 m ASL) near Irengbam village, Kangpokpi District. On the same day, PSE photographed another individual about 500 m uphill on the same stream (24°41'49.6"N 93°45'52.4"E, 804 m ASL). The species was earlier spotted by HH on 13.x.2019 at Lamshilu stream, near Kwatha Khunou at Tengnoupal district but unfortunately the butterfly was not photographed. The butterfly was seen puddling on the rocky bed of the dry hill stream. Throughout its distribution, the butterfly is on the wing from March to June. The October record would suggest that there is a second annual generation, but so far there is no photographic proof for this. It has been noted mainly basking on rocks, the ground, or on dried streambeds. It can be seen flying close to the ground and is seen mostly on sunny days. Its larval food plant, *Urtica* species

(Nettles) grows abundantly in the area. The butterfly is rare according to Evans (1932) but in recent years, due to the popularity of butterfly photography, it has been observed in many localities of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Nagaland, for which photographs are available on various social media forums.

The present record from the Irengbam village confirms the presence of this species in Manipur. Further works in all parts of Manipur will confirm the status of this species in Manipur.

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Figure 1: Sighting locality (Blue balloons) of *Appias galba* at Manipur



Figure 2: *Appias galba*