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RECORD OF THE WHITE-PATCH SERGEANT *ATHYMA PUNCTATA* (INSECTA: LEPIDOPTERA: NYMPHALIDAE) FROM ANINI, ARUNACHAL PRADESH, INDIA

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Reviewer: Piet van der Poel

Abstract: *Athyma punctata* was first reported from the Indian subcontinent in 2019. We report a sighting of the species from Anini, Dibang valley, India.

Introduction & Discussion

We report the sighting of a White-Patch Sergeant *Athyma punctata* Leech, 1890 from Dibang valley, Arunachal Pradesh based on a male photographed on 26.vi.2021. The butterfly is rare in montane forest at moderate elevation (alt.1500m - 1700m).

The species was considered to be restricted to SE Tibet, S. China, N. Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam by earlier workers (Ek-Amnuay, 2012; Inayoshi, 2010; Io, 2000). However, in recent times it was recorded from Zhemgang (South Bhutan) (Fig. 1), at around 1500m in 2017 which was the first record of the species from the Indian subcontinent (Saito *et al.*, 2019).

The species differs in facies from other species of the genus in having prominent oval white patches on the discal and subapical areas of the forewing. The hindwing has a large oval white discal patch (Seitz, 1906; Ek-Amnuay, 2012). There is an additional gray cell streak as well as a triangular spot beyond the cell on the forewing and a narrow postdiscal band on the hindwing (Ek-Amnuay, 2012). The female is yellowish/orangish in colour.

The species was recorded from Acheso, Dembuen circle, Dibang valley district at an elevation of 1500 mt on 26.vi.2021, at 1.06 PM which confirms that the species occurs across a wide range of the Eastern Himalaya (Fig. 2). The species is extremely rare and not recorded in recent surveys from the Dibang valley (Gogoi, 2012; Singh, 2015; Singh & Das, 2016; Chandra *et al.*, 2019) and the species being found in the temperate zone, it is probably restricted to the higher elevations of the Dibang valley.

Our record suggests that *Athyma punctata* is widely distributed in the Eastern Himalaya although rarely recorded, being reported in recent times from Zhemgang in South Bhutan and from Arunachal Pradesh. It is also known to occur in the Kachin area of N. Myanmar which also suggests that the species should occur at mid-elevations of the Namdapha National Park in India. Hence, in future more surveys are needed in the Eastern Himalaya to ascertain its distribution and status on the subcontinent.

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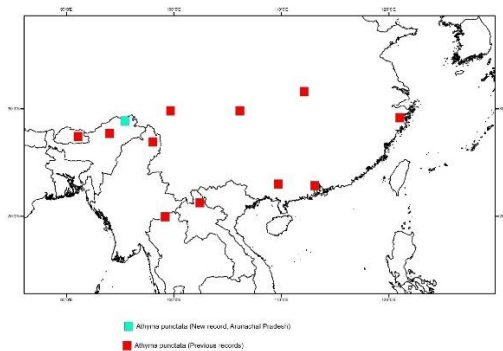


Fig.1: Map showing the present sighting of *Athyma punctata* from Arunachal Pradesh along with past records



Fig.2: *Athyma punctata* at Anini, Dibang valley, Arunachal Pradesh, India