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Late Dr. R. K. Varshney, Aligarh, India

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India
petersmetacek@gmail.com

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Address for Correspondence

Butterfly Research Centre, Bhimtal,
Uttarakhand 263 136, India. Phone: +91
8938896403.

Email: butterflyresearchcentre@gmail.com

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Cover Photo of founder of BIONOTES *Late* Dr. R.K. Varshney

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OBSERVATION OF *OROLESTES SELYSI* (INSECTA: ODONATA: LESTIDAE) FROM ASSAM, INDIA

REJI CHANDRAN¹, THOMSON SABURAJ², SURESH V KURUP³ AND A. VIVEK CHANDRAN⁴

^{1,2,3 & 4} *Society for Odonate Studies, Velloparampil, Kuzhimattom PO, Kottayam, Kerala – 686533*

^{*4} *Department of Geology and Environmental Science, Christ College, Irinjalakuda, Thrissur, Kerala 680125, India.*

avivekchandran2@gmail.com

Reviewer: Peter Smetacek

Introduction

Orolestes McLachlan, 1895 (Lestidae) is a genus of damselflies. It has five species distributed mostly in Southeast Asia (Paulson & Schorr, 2021). Two species, *O. selysi* McLachlan, 1895 and *O. durga* Lahiri, 1987 have been recorded from India (Kalkman *et al.*, 2020). Of these two species, *O. selysi* is known to occur in Darjeeling (India), Vietnam, Lao People's Democratic Republic and parts of China (Dow & Subramanian, 2010), while *O. durga* is known only from the type series collected from Arunachal Pradesh. Fraser (1933) opines that *O. selysi* is either very rare or local and can be easily distinguished from all other Indian Lestids by its coloured wings.

Observations

Four large individual Lestids were seen and photographed at 1030 hrs on 21.ii.2021 from Dehing-Patkai National Park, Assam (27.316124° N; 95.476927° E). Three of the individuals were male, of which two were similar to each other. The similar individuals had green eyes, olivaceous green thorax and wings that were coloured blackish brown between hyaline base and apex. The apical border of this fascia had a milky white border. The dorsum of their abdomen was black, but segments 3 and 4 had median bluish areas ringed with black at both the ends. Segments 8, 9 and 10 were sky blue with black apical

rings and segment 10 was slightly notched. The superior anal appendages were long, slender, regularly curved and forcipate.

The third male had completely hyaline wings which revealed long pterostigma covering about 5 cells. It was similar to the other two males in all other respects. The lone female observed was shorter, more robust, had yellowish green eyes and completely hyaline wings.

Discussion

The two similar males were identified positively as *Orolestes selysi*. We believe this is the first photographic record of this species from the wild in India and it is definitely a first record for the state of Assam. The dissimilar male is probably a hitherto unreported aberration of the same species, as the only species of the genus in India with unmarked and transparent wings is *O. durga*, which is considerably smaller and has abdominal segments 8 to 10 black instead of sky blue (Lahiri, 1987). The female of *O. selysi* remains to be formally described.

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Fig. 1: *Orolestes selysi* adult male



Fig. 2: *Orolestes cf. selysi* male with uncoloured wings



Fig. 3: *Orolestes cf. selysi* female