

ISSN 0972- 1800

BIONOTES

VOLUME 23, NO. 4

QUARTERLY

OCTOBER—DECEMBER, 2021



Date of Publication: 24th April, 2022

BIONOTES

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

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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

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
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Cover Photo of *Athyma nefte* by Rajib Dey

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CONFIRMATION OF THE PRESENCE OF *MATAPA ARIA* (INSECTA: LEPIDOPTERA: HESPERIIDAE) IN UTTAR PRADESH

SUSHMITA¹, BABITA SHARMA² AND ASHOK KUMAR³

^{1, 2 & 3} Department of Zoology, B.S.N.V P. G College,
University of Lucknow, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India

^{1*} sushmitawildlife@gmail.com

Reviewer: Peter Smetacek

Abstract: Confirmatory records of *Matapa aria* from Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh are reported.

Introduction

The Common Redeye *Matapa aria* Moore (1866) is a widespread Asian Hesperiid. On the Indian sub-continent, it has been reported from Gujarat to West Bengal and southward to Kerala; Delhi; to Northeast India (Varshney & Smetacek, 2015). It is also reported from Bangladesh, Myanmar and Sri Lanka (Kehimkar, 2016). Although the species has been recorded from Delhi, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal (Varshney & Smetacek, 2015) it had not been recorded from Uttar Pradesh. It was, therefore, uncertain whether the Himalayan and Peninsular Indian populations were geographically isolated or not, since the species was only reported from a single locality, Delhi on the Gangetic Plain. Robinson *et al.* (2001) report seven species of bamboos as larval host plants for *M. aria* out of which two are present in Barabanki, *Bambusa arundinacea* and *Dendrocalamus strictus*. There are no previous records of *M. aria* from Uttar Pradesh.

Methodology

On 5.x.2021, the first two authors photographed the butterfly in the forest of Ram Sanehi Ghat, district Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh (N26°47'14.0'' E081°32'05.1''); 123 m above sea level. These photos were identified using Kehimkar (2016) and Bhakare & Ogale (2018). Two days later, on 7.x.2021, near Bani Konder Road of tehsil Ram Sanehi Ghat, the

authors collected 5 male specimens of *M. aria*. The collected specimens were deposited in the collection of the Butterfly Research Centre, Bhimtal, Uttarakhand.

Material Examined: 5 ♂♂: Bani Konder Road, Ram Sanehi Ghat Tehsil, Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh. 7.x.2021. Leg. Sushmita & Babita Sharma. Coll. Butterfly Research Centre, Bhimtal, Uttarakhand.

Forewing length: 19 – 20 mm.

Discussion

This is the first time that the Common Redeye *M. aria* was recorded from Uttar Pradesh. The presence of this butterfly confirms that this species is established on the Gangetic plain and there is no actual gap in the distribution between the populations in Gujarat to West Bengal, Delhi & Utrakhand to Northeast India.

Conclusion

There is no previous record of *M. aria* from Uttar Pradesh, India. Since it has been recorded from Delhi (Varshney & Smetacek, 2015), it was expected from the neighbouring state, Uttar Pradesh and the present report is a confirmatory record rather than a notable range extension.

Acknowledgement

Authors are thankful to the Principal Chief Conservator of Forest Mr. Pawan Kumar

Sharma and the DFO of Barabanki, Mr. N.K Singh. We are also grateful to the forest department staff of Ram Sanehi Ghat range for helping us in the field work. We express our gratitude to our family and friends for their support and encouragements for this study.

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Figs. 1 & 2: *Matapa aria* in Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh