

FIRST RECORD OF SPOTTED PALMFLY *ELYMNIAS MALELAS* (INSECTA: LEPIDOPTERA: NYMPHALIDAE) FROM BIHAR

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ABSTRACT

The Spotted Palmfly *Elymnias malelas* is reported for the first time from Bihar.

INTRODUCTION

One species of the genus *Elymnias* Huebner, 1818, the Common Palmfly *E. hypermnestra* (Linnaeus, 1763) is known to occur in Bihar (Varshney & Smetacek, 2015). Members of the genus are usually found in shady forests at low elevations, where their larval host plants, species of monocotyledons including palms and bananas (Karmakar *et al.*, 2018), occur.

Elymnias malelas (Hewitson, 1863) is commonly known as the Spotted Palmfly, with two subspecies in India, i.e. *E. malelas malelas* and *E. malelas nilamba* Fruhstorfer, 1911. *E. m. malelas* is reported from Sikkim to N.E. India while *E. m. nilamba* is reported from Kumaon in Uttarakhand (Varshney & Smetacek, 2015). Smith (2006) reported *E. m. malelas* from the Kathmandu valley and central and eastern Nepal.

OBSERVATION

We observed four individuals of *E. malelas* near Kanwar lake bird sanctuary at Jaimanglagarh village situated in Bhagalpur district (Bihar) (25.594148 N, 86.172313 E, Elevation 35 m) on banana plants in the morning hours on 05.01.2022. We photographed them and these were conclusively identified as males of *E. malelas*.

DISCUSSION

The individuals observed were males. January is not a period when there are many butterflies about and perhaps this is why the species has escaped observation earlier. Since banana is the larval host plant of the species, it is likely that they had bred in the area and were waiting for females to emerge in the locality.

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Figure: 1 & 2: *E.malelas*; figure 3: habitat area

