

RARE SIGHTINGS OF *ARGIOPE CATENULATA* (ARACHNIDA: ARANEIDAE) FROM TWO KOLKATA WETLANDS, WEST BENGAL, INDIA

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Two different female individuals of *Argiope catenulata* (Doleschall, 1859) have been recorded in two wetland areas in and around Kolkata. The first one was observed in one of the pisciculture wetland (bheri) complexes of Katipota (22°28'49.8"N; 88°26'02.8"E) in the southern flank of the East Kolkata Wetland complex on 20.08.2019, while the second individual in Subhash Sarobar (22°34'01.0"N; 88°23'57.0"E) on 27.08.2019, both during the latter part of the day (between 01 pm – 04 pm). Prior to the present observation, only a sole record of the species from Kalikapur near Dhapa in Kolkata was reported by Tikader & Biswas (1981).

Both the individuals showed similar choice of habitat, orientation and web decorations in the reported wetlands. Both of them were recorded near the bank of the wetlands, specifically building their webs amongst the emergent macrophytic vegetation along the banks. *A. catenulata* usually prefers a humid area for web construction (Sebastian & Peter, 2009). Characteristic vertical orb webs were built,

with the spiders on the front face of the webs facing the water body. Both the spiders have been found resting on the hubs of their webs, facing downwards and waiting for prey. This type of orientation is typical to orb-weaving spiders that sit on the hub facing downwards, waiting for their prey (Nakata & Zschokke, 2010). In each case, the spiders have decorated their orbs with white silken zigzag ribbons forming a linear stabilimentum at the centre of the orb-web, arranged as two short vertical strands – one above and one below the hub.

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