

NEW DISTRIBUTION RECORD OF *EUSPA MILIONIA* HEWITSON, 1869 (LEPIDOPTERA: LYCAENIDAE: THECLINAE) FROM SIKKIM, INDIA

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ABSTRACT

This note extends the known geographical distribution of *Euspa milionia* to Sikkim.

KEYWORDS distribution range, *Euspa milionia*, new locality, Sikkim

INTRODUCTION

Euspa Moore, 1884 comprises an Asian genus of 14 species (Das *et al.*, 2019). Sidhu (2007) discovered *E. milionia* from Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh. Within the *Euspa* genus, Koiwaya (2002) acknowledged the existence of 12 species, while more recent studies by Koiwaya (2014) unveiled the discovery of *E. uedai* Koiwaya, 2014 in China. Additionally, Huang (2016) contributed to the expanding knowledge by describing *E. zhengi* Huang, 2016 as a novel species also found in China, taking the total to 14 species.

There is one more subspecies of *Euspa milionia formosana* Nomura, 1931, which is described from Taiwan. In India, only five species of *Euspa* have been reported. They are: *Euspa milionia milionia* (Hewitson, 1869), *E. pavo* (de Nicéville, 1887), *E. mikamii* Koiwaya, 2002, *E. miyashitai* Koiwaya, 2002 (Varshney & Smetacek, 2015) and *E. motokii* Koiwaya 2002 (Das *et al.*, 2019). Recently, Das *et al.*, (2019) reported the first record of *E. motokii* Koiwaya 2002 from India and a new distribution record of *E. mikamii* Koiwaya, 2002 from Dihing-Dibang Biosphere Reserve of Arunachal Pradesh, India. More recently, Lepcha *et al.*, (2021) reported *E. pavo* from Sikkim, India.

RESULT

On 22.v.2023, two individuals of *E. milionia* were photographed (Image 1) at approximately 11:15 am in Salim Pakyel (27°31'32"N - 88°31'48"E; 1137 m amsl), Upper Dzongu, Mangan District of

Sikkim, India. These individuals were observed puddling near a water stream on the roadside (Image 2).

E. milionia is commonly known as the Water Hairstreak butterfly. Earlier, *E. milionia* was known only from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Pakistan eastwards to Nepal (Tshikolovets & Pages, 2016) and within India from Jammu & Kashmir to Uttarakhand (Varshney & Smetacek, 2015). The present record adds Sikkim to the known global distribution of *E. milionia*.

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Figure 1: *Euaspa milionia* in Sikkim.



Figure2: Habitat of *Euaspa milionia*, where the species was recorded.