

A NEW ALTITUDINAL RECORD FOR THE BLUE PANSY BUTTERFLY *JUNONIA ORITHYA* FROM BHUTAN

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The Blue Pansy *Junonia orithya* (Linnaeus, 1758) (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae: Nymphalinae) is a widespread butterfly that occurs from tropical Africa through Asia to Australia (Smetacek, [2016]). It is found throughout the Indian subcontinent, ascending to 2,740 m in the hills (Wynter-Blyth, 1957). However, Kehimkar (2016) reported “up to 2,100 m” for the species, while van der Poel & Wangchuk (2007) reported it up to an elevation of 2500 m in Bhutan. Van der Poel & Smetacek (2022) reported it up to an elevation of 2160 m in Nepal.

A butterfly of this species was observed during recent forest fire mopping operations on 18.i.2023 at Gomchey Village, Geney Gewog under Thimphu Dzongkhag at an altitude of 2754m (N: 27.31263383; E: 89.60395730) (Fig. 1). The image of butterfly was captured between open area and Blue Pine (*Pinus wallichiana*) forest on a clear, sunny day.

This record confirms that the species occurs up to around 2750 m elevation, as reported by Wynter-Blyth (1957). That it should occur so high in January, which is the coldest part of the year, is unusual.

REFERENCES

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Figure: *Junonia orithya* on 18.i.2023 at Gomchey Village