

# FIRST RECORD OF BANDED ROYAL BUTTERFLY *RACHANA JALINDRA* (INSECTA: LEPIDOPTERA: LYCAENIDAE) FROM JHARKHAND, INDIA

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## Introduction

The Banded Royal *Rachana jalindra* (Horsfield, 1829) (Lycaenidae) is a butterfly that is not often encountered. On the Indian subcontinent, it has so far been reported from the Western Ghats, Maharashtra, Odisha, Sikkim, Arunachal, the North Eastern states and West Bengal in India, as well as from Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar (Kehimkar, 2016). Within India, there are three subspecies, *R. j. tarpina* (Hewitson, 1878) from the Andaman Is.; *R. jalindra indra* (Moore, [1884]) from Odisha; Sikkim to N. E. India and *R. j. macanita* Fruhstorfer, 1912 from Goa to Kerala (Varshney & Smetacek, 2015). On the underside, *R. j. indra* is distinguished from *R. j. macanita* by the discal band being chocolate in *indra* rather than dark brown as in *macanita* (= *macarita* in err.); hindwing tornal green scales more prominent and the white diffused areas beyond discal band more extensive in *indra* (Evans, 1932).

## Observation

An individual of *R. jalindra* was observed on 29.i.2019 feeding on marigold (*Tagetes*) flowers in the Biodiversity Park, Ranchi, Jharkhand (23.2547 N, 85. 3469 E). The Biodiversity Park is a part of natural sal (*Shorea robusta*) forest native to the area on the outskirts of Ranchi city. The butterfly fed on the flowers for a few minutes while it was

being photographed. On subsequent days, it was not observed in the area.

## Discussion

The butterfly photographed was indisputably identified as belonging to *R. jalindra* despite only underside views being available. In addition, on the basis of its extensive white diffused area beyond the discal line, it can be placed in the subspecies *indra*, which is known from neighbouring Odisha (Varshney & Smetacek, 2015). This is the first record of this species from Jharkhand. It is not a common species throughout its distribution, so it is not surprising that it escaped observation earlier. The species feeds in the larval stage on *Helicanthes elasticus* (*Loranthus elasticus*) (Sevastopulo, 1973), which is plentiful in the area. Like other members of the group, the species is never found in numbers (P. Smetacek, pers. comm.).

## References

- Evans, W. H. 1932. *The identification of Indian butterflies*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Bombay Natural history Society, Bombay. x + 454 pp. 32 pl.
- Kehimkar, I. 2016. *Butterflies of India*. Bombay Natural History Society, Mumbai. 505 pp.
- Sevastopulo, D. G. 1973. The food-plants of Indian Rhopalocera. *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* 70: 156-183.



Fig.1: *Rachana jalindra*