

FIRST RECORD OF LEECH'S SWIFT *CALTORIS BROMUS* LEECH, 1894 (INSECTA: LEPIDOPTERA: HESPERIIDAE: HESPERIINAE) FROM WEST BENGAL, INDIA

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Abstract

Caltoris bromus is reported from Madhyamgram (22°42' N; 88°27' E), North 24 Parganas district, West Bengal, India. *Phragmites* is recorded as a new larval host plant for the species.

Introduction

On 16. viii.2020, a 4th instar caterpillar of an unknown Hesperiid was sighted and photographed at Madhyamgram (22°42' N; 88°27' E, 15m asl), North 24 Parganas district, West Bengal, India on a *Phragmites* sp. (Poaceae) plant. The observation was made in a small overgrown patch of wetland. The caterpillar had rolled the host leaf which was in a vertical position. The author could observe the caterpillar's head peeping out from the rolled leaf as it was busy feeding. The author collected the caterpillar and put it into a clay pot along with leaves of the same plant in his home garden. It grew into an adult butterfly by feeding on the leaves provided. On 2.ix.2020, the freshly eclosed butterfly (Figure: 01& 02) was photographed. The photographs were compared with Corbet *et al.* (1992) and keys enlarged by Evans (1949) were used to identify the specimen.

Results

The observed individual was characterised by its dark brown upperside with the spot in space 1b of the forewing (Corbet *et al.*, 1992). Additionally, the mid tibia was unspined, placing it under *Caltoris* Swinhoe, 1893 (Ek-Amnuay, 2012). In the examined specimen, the underside hindwing has two spots in spaces 2 & 3; the upper forewing has two cell spots, with the upper one smaller than the lower.

A key to identify Indian *Caltoris* species based on fascies

- 1.UnH spots in space 2 and sometimes in space 3, UpF two cellspots2, 3
- UnH spots in space 2 and sometimes in space 3, UpF no cellspots..... *kumara*
- 2.UpF upper cell spot always rather larger than lower cell spot..... *canaraica*
- UpF upper cell spot always smaller than lower cell spot3
- 3.Both FW always a non-hyaline spot in space 1b.....*bromus*

Caltoris bromus has been reported from Assam, N.E. India and Myanmar (Van Gasse, 2013; Varshney & Smetacek, 2015). This record confirms the presence of *Caltoris bromus* in West Bengal. Robinson *et al.* (2001) record *Bambusa* and grasses as larval hostplants for this species from Hong Kong. This appears to be the first record of the species on *Phragmites* and is therefore an unrecorded larval host plant for this species.

Acknowledgement

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Fig.1: A 4th instar caterpillar feeding from the host plant

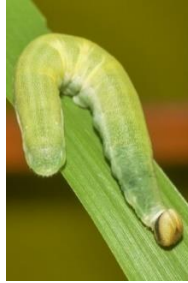


Fig.2: A 5th instar caterpillar resting on the host plant



Fig.3: A pupa formed on the host plant



Fig.4: An underside view of freshly eclosed *Caltoris bromus*



Fig.5: An upperside view of freshly eclosed *Caltoris bromus*