

FIRST RECORD OF COMMON CILIATE BLUE BUTTERFLY *ANTHENE EMOLUS* (INSECTA: LEPIDOPTERA: LYCAENIDAE) FROM UTTAR PRADESH, INDIA

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Abstract

Common Ciliate Blue *Anthene emolus* is reported for the first time from Uttar Pradesh.

Introduction

The Common Ciliate Blue, *A. emolus* (Godart 1824) is found from India to Southeast Asia. On the Indian subcontinent, the known distribution of *A. lycaenina* is from Uttarakhand (Sondhi, 2017) through Nepal eastwards to Arunachal Pradesh, the hills of north-eastern India and Bangladesh. The species is also known to occur in Orissa, Jharkhand, Bihar, Goa and from Southern Maharashtra to Kerala (Evans, 1932; Wynter-Blyth, 1957; Cantile, 1963; Smith, 1994; van Gasse, 2013, Varshney & Smetacek, 2015; Kehimkar, 2016).

Methodology

After a fine monsoon, on 30.ix.2020, the first author, Sushmita, photographed two worn individuals of this species with her mobile phone camera (Realme Note 5 Pro), feeding on flowers in the Butterfly Park of Lucknow Zoo (26° 50' 35.9" N 80° 57' 04.5" E; 121m above mean sea level), Hazratganj, District Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India. A third individual, apparently freshly emerged, was photographed by Babita Sharma at the same location with her cell phone camera (Redmi Note 9 Pro, Xiaomi) on 27.x.2020. Peter Smetacek identified and confirmed these photographs as *Anthene emolus* (Common Ciliate Blue).

Discussion

This is the first record of *Anthene emolus* from Lucknow district as well as from Uttar Pradesh. The butterfly park of Lucknow is situated in Nawab Wajid Ali Shah Zoological Garden (Lucknow Zoo). The climate of Lucknow is mild and generally warm and temperate (climate-data.org). *A. emolus* is essentially a forest species, which inhabits moist, dense forests at low elevations. They are active in open areas, at the edges of the forests and forests clearings (Bhakare & Ogale, 2018).

The records of the species at the same location a month apart suggest that there is a breeding colony of this species established in the Lucknow Zoo.

Conclusion

There is no record of *A. emolus* from Uttar Pradesh, India. Since it has been recorded from Bihar (Varshney & Smetacek, 2015), so it was expected from the neighboring state, Uttar Pradesh and the present report is a confirmatory record rather than a notable range extension.

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Fig.1 & 2: Common Ciliate Blue in Lucknow