

## REDISCOVERY OF TIGER HOPPER *OCHUS SUBVITTATUS* (INSECTA: LEPIDOPTERA: HESPERIIDAE) FROM UTTARAKHAND, INDIA

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### Introduction

Tiger Hopper *Ochus subvittatus* (Moore, 1878) is a small butterfly. A single subspecies is recorded from India namely, *O. s. subradiatus* Moore, 1878, distributed from Uttarakhand to north-east India (Varshney & Smetacek, 2015). It was last documented from Uttarakhand by Evans in 1949. It is worth mentioning here that this species was not recorded from Garhwal by Singh & Sondhi (2016). During a survey organized at various sites of Kumaon from March 2016 to September 2020, we have recorded a total of 09 (nine) individuals of *O. subvittatus*. These are the first records of this butterfly from Uttarakhand after a long gap and hence claimed as “rediscovery”.

### Observations

During a field survey, two individuals (Figs. 1 & 2) of *O. subvittatus* were observed at 1130 hours on 15.ix.2016 at Balighat (29.87688 N; 79.78657 E), altitude 932 m, district Bageshwar, Uttarakhand near a forest opening. It was resting on a blade of grass. A single individual was also recorded at 1030 hours on 02.x.2016 near the motor road at Baram, Pithoragarh (29.85217 N; 80.35675 E), altitude 847 m. In 2020, a total of 06 (six) individuals were observed from Tuped village (29.8672 N; 79.8065 E), altitude 1012 m, of Bageshwar district. Two were mud-puddling and the others were resting near the motor road. These individuals were recorded at 1140

hours on 11.ix.2020. Sites where *O. subvittatus* was photographed have been shown in figure 3.

The sighting of this species after a long time indicates the lack of the detailed surveys in Uttarakhand. Bageshwar is a hot spot for the butterfly fauna and hence immediate attention should be given so that the documentation and conservation of butterflies present there can be completed. In our opinion this species was always present there. The main reason behind the absence for a long time, is the small size of this species, due to which it can be easily overlooked by beginners. Another reason is the absence of observations at the right time and right place. We suggest that repeated systematic and scientifically planned surveys should be organized in different sites of Kumaon and Garhwal throughout the year to document the diversity of butterflies. There are many more butterfly species which are yet to be rediscovered or added to the known fauna of the state.

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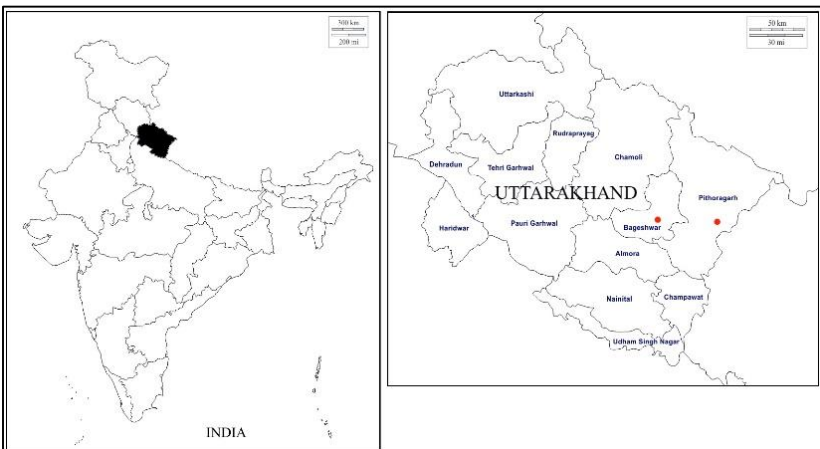


Fig.3: The red dots represents the sites where *Ochus subvittatus* was observed.