

***PSILOGRAMMA VATES* (LEPIDOPTERA: SPHINGIDAE) IN GUJARAT**

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Introduction

The hawk moth *Psilogramma vates* was described by Butler (1875) from Sri Lanka as *Diludia vates*. Butler (1876) inversely synonymized this species with *D. abietina*. Moore (1882) also reported it from Sri Lanka. Kirby (1892) corrected the inverted synonymy made by Butler (1876). Swinhoe (1892) included *D. vates* from India but only on the basis of hearsay. Hampson (1892) treated it as junior synonym of *Pseudosphinx discistriga* (Walker, 1856) along with *Psilogramma increta* (Walker, [1865]), *Psilogramma melanomera* (Butler, 1875), *Meganoton rubescens* (Butler, 1876), *Megacorma obliqua* (Walker, 1856) with a distribution “China and throughout India and Ceylon”. Rothschild & Jordan (1903) placed *vates* as a synonym of *Psilogramma menephron* (Cramer, [1780]) from the “Oriental Region”. Bell & Scott (1937) followed this treatment and noted that it occurred “throughout the Indian Sub-region, China and eastwards to the Solomon Islands”. D’Abrera (1986) did not include *P. vates*. Kitching & Cardiou (2000) synonymized *P. vates* with *P. increta*.

Eitschberger (2001) reinstated *vates* as a valid species in the genus *Psilogramma*. Rothschild & Jordan. The distribution of the species on the Indian mainland remains unclear, evident from the chaotic taxonomic history of the species.

Observation

On 2 October, 2017, a series of 10 male and 5 female specimens of *Psilogramma* were attracted to a mercury vapour lamp reflected

off a white wall in Bakore, Mahisagar district, Gujarat. Since it was unclear which *Psilogramma* species it was or whether there were more than one species, all the variants available were taken. On examination of the collected materials, they turned out to consist of a single species, *P. vates* (Fig. 1-4) with pale, intermediate and dark forms, active at the same time and further confirmed by Ian Kitching, NHM, London)

Material Examined

15 exs. (10 males; 5 females). Forewing Length: 39-42mm; expanse: 86-92mm. 2.x.2017, Bakhore, Mahisagar district, (23° 35’N 73° 58’E), Gujarat, India. Leg. et Coll. Smetacek, Bhimtal.

Result and Discussion

Hitherto, this taxon was not reported from Gujarat previously and the present records constitute a westward extension to the known distribution of the species. The number of individuals attending the light suggest that it is well established in the area.

Acknowledgement

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Fig.1



Fig.2



Fig.3



Fig.4

Fig.1, 2, 3 & 4: *Psilogramma vates*, Bakhor, Gujarat, 2017, showing different color morphs