

CONFIRMING THE PRESENCE OF CORNELIAN BUTTERFLY *DEUDORIX EPIJARBAS* (MOORE, 1857) (LEPIDOPTERA: PAPILIONOIDEA: LYCAENIDAE) FROM CHHATTISGARH, INDIA.

GAURAV NIHLANI¹, FAIZ BUX² & A.M.K. BHAROS³

¹Member, Chhattisgarh Wildlife Society, Gayatri Nagar, Raipur, Chhattisgarh, India. Email-

²Research Scholar, Dept. of Botany, Govt. D.B.G.P.G. (Auto.) College, Raipur, Chhattisgarh, India.

³State Coordinator, IBCN (BNHS) and AWC (Wetland International), Chhattisgarh, B-101, Gayatri Nagar, Raipur, 492007, Chhattisgarh, India.

¹Email: gauravnihlani.1987@gmail.com

Reviewer: A.S. Sisodia

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ABSTRACT

Deudorix epijarbas is reported for the first time from Chhattisgarh state. It was sighted during an opportunistic trail survey at Devpur along with 78 species of butterflies. The confirmation of presence of the species was based on direct sighting and photographic evidence collected during the survey.

INTRODUCTION

So far, 1318 species were reported from the Indian subcontinent (Varshney & Smetacek, 2015). *Deudorix epijarbas* (Moore, 1857) is reported from Kashmir to N.E. India, West Bengal to south India and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Varshney & Smetacek, 2015). Chhattisgarh is home to 170 species of butterflies. Of these, Sisodia (2019) reported 159 species, Sisodia & Kshirsagar (2020) added 3 species, Tandan *et al.*

(2020) added 2 species, Nihlani *et al.* (2021) added 1 species, Tandan *et al.* (2021a) added 3 species, Tandan *et al.* (2021b) added 1 species and Chand *et al.* (2022) added 1 species. None of the earlier workers have reported the occurrence of Cornelian *D. epijarbas* from Chhattisgarh.

STUDY AREA

Devpur village is located in Kasdol Tehsil of Baloda Bazar district, Chhattisgarh. It is situated 40 km away from Kasdol and 118 km from Raipur. The forest type is mixed dry deciduous forest. A nursery is located (21° 22' 36"N 82° 33' 12"E) near the Devpur forest rest house, it is endowed with a plantation of indigenous species viz. Ashok (*Saraca asoca*), Kachnar (*Bauhinia variegata*), Neem (*Azadirachta indica*), Amla (*Phyllanthus emblica*), Mango (*Mangifera indica*), Guava (*Psidium guajava*), Kathal (*Atrocarpus heterophyllus*), Myrobalan (*Terminalia*

chebula), Behda (*Terminalia bellerica*), Ganga Imli (*Pithecellobium dulce*), Pomegranate (*Punica granatum*), Cashew (Kaju) (*Anacardium occidentale*) and a variety of other shrubs.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

A two day opportunistic butterfly survey on 13.iv.2022 and 14.iv.2022 was undertaken to estimate the butterfly richness of Devpur, Baloda Bazar, Chhattisgarh, which comprises of nursery, stream area, and rest house campus. While walking a trail of 1.5 km a single individual of *D. epijarbas* was spotted basking on Ashoka tree. It was immediately photographed, while it was stationary at around 10 am using a camera (Canon EOS 7D Mark II) (Fig. 1 and 2).

Results: Apart from 78 species of butterflies (Nihlani *et. al.*, *Unpublished*), this new butterfly for the state was recorded by us during our trail walk conducted at Devpur. The present finding takes the total reported count of butterflies from Chhattisgarh to 171 species. The species identification was done by consulting the standard literature (Kunte 2008; Kehimkar, 2016). The present finding confirms the presence of *D. epijarbas* in the Central Indian landscape, Chhattisgarh.

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Fig. 1. Cornelian Butterfly *Deudorix epijarbas* at Devpur Hills, Baloda Bazar, Chhattisgarh.

