

Bugs R All

Newsletter of the
Invertebrate Conservation & Information Network of South Asia (ICINSA)

Sighting of a rare species of butterfly, Indian Common Duffer from West Bengal State University Campus

The present study deals with sighting reports and first photographic record of Indian Common Duffer *Discophora sondaica zal* Westwood, [1851] (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae) from 24 Parganas (North) District, West Bengal.

The study area is located at West Bengal State University (WBSU) Campus (22.73 N & 88.43 E) and belongs to the suburban belt of North 24 Parganas, Barasat, West Bengal, India. The vegetation complex of the area includes a considerable number of trees, shrubs, climbers, and grasses. The rich plant diversity of this area provides suitable niche for butterflies.

Observation

Discophora sondaica zal was observed during a butterfly survey inside the university



Indian Common Duffer *Discophora sondaica zal* Westwood, [1851] (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae). © Md Abu Imran Mallick.

campus, (22.73 N & 88.43 E). The survey was conducted in September 2023.

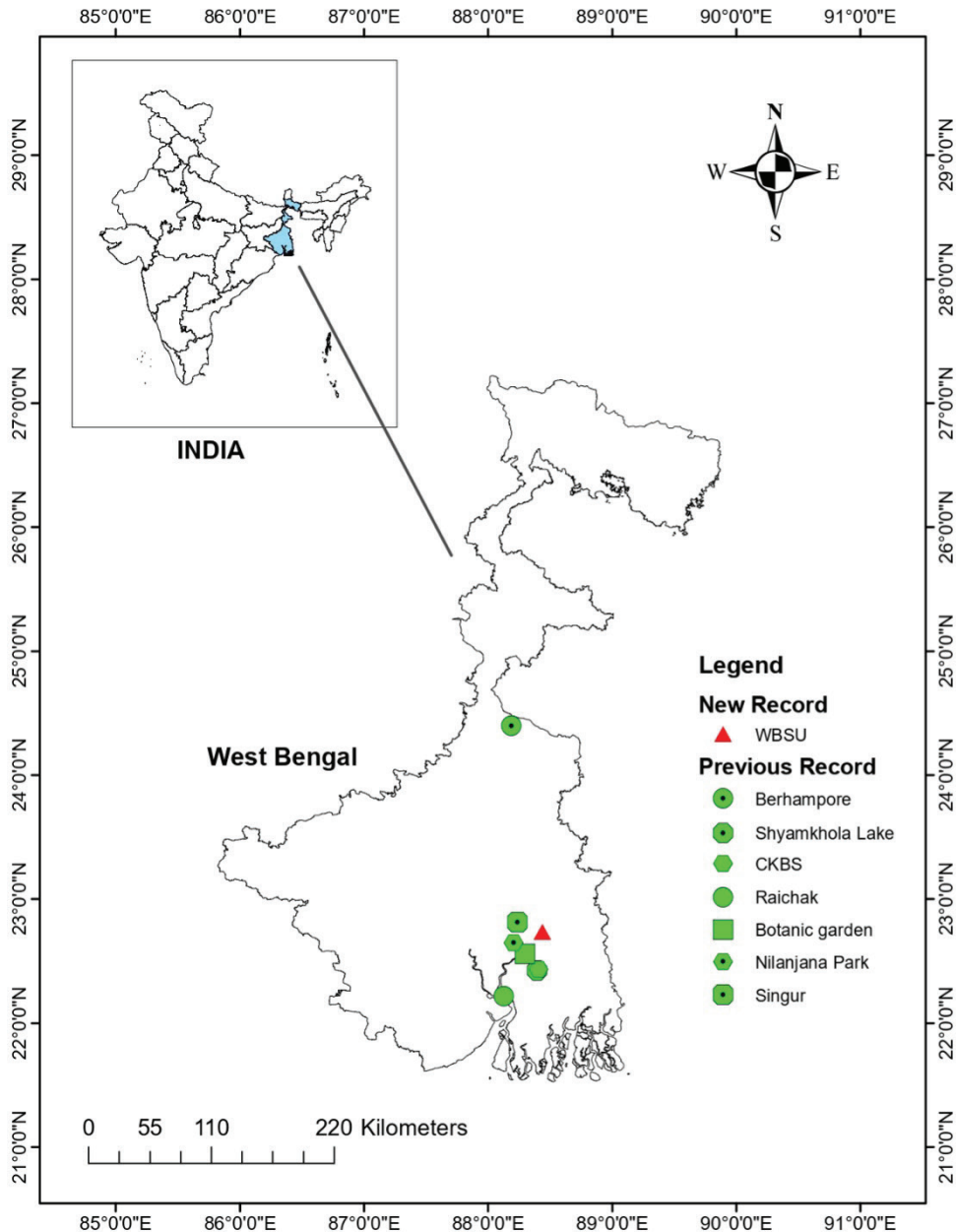
The upper wings of *Discophora sondaica zal* are dark brown and males have a series of pale blue spots on the lower half of the forewings. Females have dark brown wings and a series of white spots on the post-discal and sub-marginal

forewings. The underside of the wing is streaked with brown, striated, the distal half of the wing is lighter in color and the post-discal portion of the hind wing has some ocellus (Anon 2023). The butterfly is about 65–80 mm in size (Anon 2023).

Discophora sondaica zal is known to occur very rare in

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the areas of their distribution (Anon 2023). It is a rare species of butterfly, native to the southern and southeastern Asia and it inhabits shrub and forest. In West Bengal, it has been reported from Sundarban

(Das et al. 2019), Midnapore (Mahata et al. 2020), Berhampore, Shyamkhola Lake, CKBS, Raichak, Botanical Garden, Nilanjana Park, and Singur, West Bengal, India (Anon 2023). In India, it has

been reported from Assam, Odisha, Nagaland, and Mizoram (Anon 2023). Outside India, several accounts of the species are recorded from Singapore, Malaysia, Guangxi, Guandong, Fujian, Malay

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Peninsula, Sumatra, Borneo, and Minandano have confirmed the report of this species (Kehimkar 2016).

The sight of this rare species has great ecological significance especially when biodiversity is declining. Human-mediated effects of environmental change; habitat loss and fragmentation are major contributors to population decline or even species extinction. Thus, an ecology-based inventory of butterflies should be given a high priority in un-surveyed areas with rich biodiversity. This species is legally protected in India under Schedule I of the Wildlife (protection) Act, 1972.

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