

Bugs R All

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

Occurrence of Dark Sapphire *Heliophorus indicus* Fruhstorfer, 1908 (Lepidoptera: Lycaenidae) in Garhwal Himalaya, Uttarakhand, India



Male (30mm) specimen of *Heliophorus indicus* collected at Siroli Village (~1,645m), Chamoli District, Uttarakhand, India: a—Underside of live specimen | b—Upperside of live specimen | c—Underside of stretched specimen | d—Upperside of stretched specimen. © Arun Pratap Singh.

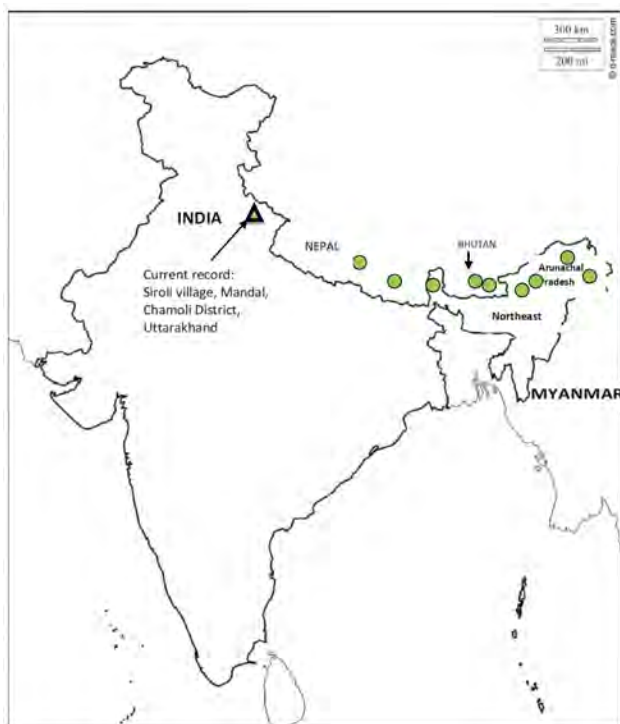
The Dark Sapphire or Indian Purple Sapphire *Heliophorus indicus* (syn. *H. epicles indicus* Fruh.) has a distribution range from Kumaon in Uttarakhand through Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, and the northeastern Indian states up to Myanmar (Evans 1932; Wynter-Blyth 1957; Gasse 2013; Kehimkar 2014, 2016; Varshney & Smetacek 2015; Anonymous 2019) in an elevation of 600–2,100 m. The male of this species is characterized by sharp forewing apex, straight termen, dark shining purple upper side, and no discal markings on the underside or markings that are reduced to a few dots between the

base and the red marginal area (Evans 1932; Wynter-Blyth 1957).

The present study reports for the first time the presence of the species along the boundary of Kedarnath Musk Deer Sanctuary in Chamoli District in the Garhwal region of Uttarakhand, 200km eastwards of Nepal. Three individuals (1 male and 2 females) were spotted during the survey. A male was photographed and collected from Siroli Village (30.469°N & 79.290°E; ~1,645m) at 11.00h on 25 October 2017. The site is located along the river Atri, on the way to

Bugs R All

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



The location of the present record of *Heliophorus indicus* in Garhwal, Uttarakhand (western Himalaya), in relation to the past confirmed records of the species across other areas of the central and eastern Himalaya.

Anusuya Devi Temple from Mandal Village, 13km from Gopeshwar towards Chopta. Two individuals, a male and a female, were again spotted at the site of previous sighting around 09.15h on 23 June 2018. The site bears a dense growth of *Polygonum* sp., the butterfly's larval food plant, along the foot trail through the village. The species, though widely distributed across the Himalaya, has so far been reported up to Kumaon region (Evans 1932) with no recent records from Uttarakhand (Singh & Sondhi 2016). These sightings therefore confirm the range extension of *Heliophorus indicus* further westwards, towards Garhwal in Uttarakhand.

References

- Anonymous (2019).** *Heliophorus indicus* (Fruhstorfer, 1908)—Dark Sapphire. Kunte, K., S. Sondhi & P. Roy (Chief Editors). *Butterflies of India*, v. 2.63. Indian Foundation for Butterflies. <http://www.ifoundbutterflies.org/sp/1114/Heliophorus-indicus>. Accessed on 20.01.2019.
- Evans, W.H. (1932).** *The Identification of Indian Butterflies*, 2nd Edition. Bombay Natural History Society, Mumbai, 454pp.
- Gasse, P.V. (2013).** Species checklists, including regional and national, of butterflies of s. Asia. In: *Butterflies of India*. Available online at http://www.ifoundbutterflies.org/PaulVanGasse/Butterflies_of%20India-Annotated_checklist-1.pdf. Accessed on 10.07.2019.
- Kehimkar, I. (2014).** *The Book of Indian Butterflies*. Bombay Natural History Society, Oxford University Press, Mumbai, 497pp.
- Kehimkar, I. (2016).** *BNHS Field Guide, Butterflies of India*. Bombay Natural History Society, Oxford University Press, Mumbai, 506pp.
- Singh, A.P. & S. Sondhi (2016).** Butterflies of Garhwal, Uttarakhand, western Himalaya, India. *Journal of Threatened Taxa* 8(4): 8666–8697. <https://doi.org/10.11609/jott.2254.8.4.8666-8697>
- Varshney, R.K. & P. Smetacek (eds.) (2015).** *A Synoptic Catalogue of the Butterflies of India*. Butterfly Research Centre, Bhimtal. Indinov Publishing, New Delhi, ii+261pp+8pl.
- Wynter-Blyth, M.A. (1957).** *Butterflies of the Indian Region*. Bombay Natural History Society, Bombay, 523pp.

Arun P. Singh¹ & Soham Seal²

^{1,2} Entomology, Forest Protection Division, Forest Research Institute (ICFRE), P.O. New Forest, Dehradun, Uttarakhand 248006, India. Emails: ¹ranoteaps@gmail.com (corresponding author), ²seal.soham@gmail.com

Citation: Singh, A.P. & S. Seal (2019). Occurrence of Dark Sapphire *Heliophorus indicus* Fruhstorfer, 1908 (Lepidoptera: Lycaenidae) in Garhwal Himalaya, Uttarakhand, India. *Bugs R All* #175, In: *Zoo's Print* 34(7): 33–34.

Bugs R All is a newsletter of the Invertebrate Conservation and Information Network of South Asia (ICINSA) edited by B.A. Daniel, published with the financial support of Zoological Society of London. For communication, Email: daniel@zooreach.org

