

Bugs & All

Invertebrate Conservation & Information Network of South-Asia (ICINSA)

Newsletter of the

First record of the Common Tinsel from the hilly state of Himachal Pradesh, India



Image 1. Underside of the *Catapaecilma major* Druce, 1895 from surrounding hilly terrain of Balh Valley, Himachal Pradesh, India (©Jitender Kumar).

The butterfly diversity is one of the indicators for monitoring health of the ecosystem. As the butterflies are very sensitive to the changing environment, this makes them a subject of interest among the scientific community and researchers to study their relationship with the environment. There are several studies and the historical records (de RhePhilippe1931; Wynter-Blyth 1941–1947) and numerous recent publications on butterflies diversity and distribution in the Himalayan region (Kumar & Juneja 1977; Saini et al. 2009; Singh & Banya 2013; Chandel et al. 2014; Sharma & Sharma 2017; Sodhi et al. 2017; Kunte et al. 2020).

The Himalayan region is characterized by the unique geobotanical landscape that inhabits rich biological diversity. The mountainous habitat provides a wide scope for the ecological study of the butterfly species. The present record of the butterfly species is the part of long term monitoring of butterfly diversity in the surrounding hills of the Balh Valley, Himachal Pradesh, India. The valley is characterized by a flat area extending from Gutkar (near Mandi City) to Sundernagar, surrounded by a hilly area with moderate topography (Fig. 1). The region is characterized by sub-temperate, sub-humid mid-hill agro-climatic conditions.

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The hills are dissected by the perennial or seasonal drainage system, which carries the sediment to the lowland area. The flat area is either extensively cultivated or facing enormous modernization that is even spreading to the fringes of mountain ranges. So, the surrounding hilly region was extensively studied to check the butterfly diversity. The Common Tinsel Butterfly *Catapaecilma major* Druce, 1895 was noticed in the Balh Valley, Himachal Pradesh, India. This is the first records of the butterfly in the hilly state, which was recorded earlier in eastern, western India and some recent sighting from the hilly state of Uttarakhand (Fig. 2).

This butterfly species was noticed many times in the month of July 2020 near Ner Chowk. The available literature was studied including the online resources, and

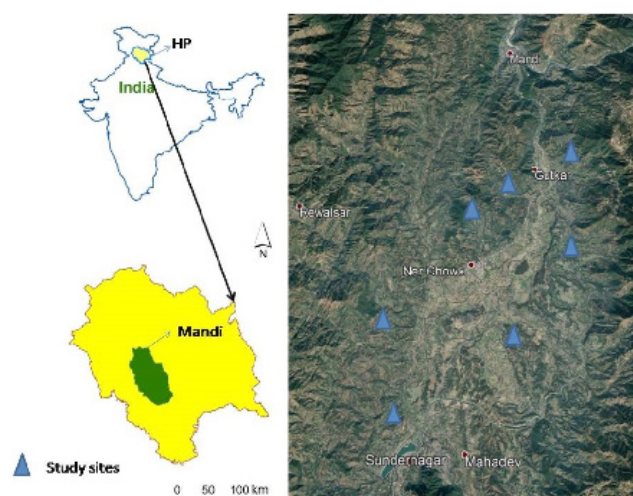


Fig. 1. Map showing location of study sites with respect to India.



Fig. 2. Map showing distribution of *Catapaecilma major* Common Tinsel in India (adapted from Kunte 2020).

the species has no record in the past. The study area is also characterized by diverse vegetation including; *Terminalia chebula*, *Terminalia bellirica*, *Berberis asiatica*, *Carissa congesta*, *Pistacia integerrima* and *Tinospora cordifolia*. The butterfly mainly wanders on the top canopy where *Terminalia* sp. can be the host plant.

The present record of *Catapaecilma major* Druce, 1895 Common Tinsel in Himachal Pradesh shows the distribution of the butterfly species is slightly towards the northern side. The successive encounter of this species in the area confirms the existence of the butterfly species in Himachal Pradesh, India.

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