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

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

A note on common and vernacular names for tiger moths of the genus *Olepa*

The system of scientific naming of an organism is binomial nomenclature, where the scientific name will be having two components. The first component is the generic name or the genus and the second component is the species epithet which is usually a qualifier, like an adjective or a noun in the genitive case. The system of binomial nomenclature was proposed by the Swedish botanist and physician, Carolus Linnaeus in the mid 1700s. Due to his contribution in the field of taxonomy, Linnaeus is known as the 'father of taxonomy'. Taxonomy is a branch of biology of naming, describing, and classifying organisms and includes all plants, animals, fungi, and microorganisms. This system of naming species begins with assigning all species a universal Latin name. All the faunal taxonomic nomenclature and taxonomy is followed after the 'ICZN codes' managed by International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN 2012).

Common English names and vernacular names are given to many taxa to locally connect with the people. Giving vernacular or common English name is useful to remember it easily and also to converse with the local people who are not comfortable with using the strange-sounding scientific

names used by most of the taxonomists.

While coining a vernacular or common English name, it should be kept in mind that they should be brief and descriptive. These names help bridge the gap between the scientist and the common man. The common people particularly farmers, nature enthusiasts and people working in other related fields of biology usually use common English or vernacular names than scientific names (Armstrong & Villet 2019). Communication with the local people to make them understand about goals of conserving the species may be promoted if the use of vernacular names is in practice (Vadivalagan et al. 2012; Cockburn et al. 2014; Bardekar et al. 2019).

The moth genus *Olepa* Watson, 1980 is from the family Erebidae and the subfamily Arctiinae. Recently, three new species and two new subspecies of *Olepa* moth, namely, *O. ghatmatha* Kalawate, 2020; *O. suryamal* Kalawate, 2020; *O. zedesi* Kalawate, 2020; *O. schleini chandrai* Kalawate, 2020 and *O. suryamal rekhae* Kalawate, 2020 (Kalawate 2020a, b) have been described from the northern Western Ghats, parts of Maharashtra, India. The caterpillars of these moths are polyphagous (Gaur & Kumar

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Table 1. Common English and Vernacular names (for species reported from India) suggested for tiger moth species from the genus *Olepa* Watson, 1980.

	Species of the genus <i>Olepa</i>	Suggested common English name	Suggested vernacular (Marathi) name
1.	<i>O. ocellifera</i> Walker, 1980	Spotted Tiger Moth	ठिपकेरी वाघ पतंग
2.	<i>O. duboisi</i> Orhant, 1986	Scarlet Tiger Moth	शेंदरी वाघ पतंग
3.	<i>O. kakatii</i> Orhant, 2000	Kakati's Tiger Moth	काकातीचे वाघ पतंग
4.	<i>O. ricini</i> Fabricius, 1775	Ricinus Tiger Moth	रिसिनस वाघ पतंग
5.	<i>O. schleini</i> Witt et al., 2005	Witt's Tiger Moth	विटचे वाघ पतंग
6.	<i>O. clavatus</i> Swinhoe, 1885	Striped Tiger Moth	पट्टेरी वाघ पतंग
7.	<i>O. toulgoeti</i> Orhant, 1986	Southern Indian Tiger Moth	दक्षिण भारतीय वाघ पतंग
8.	<i>O. koslandana</i> Orhant, 1986	Crimson Tiger Moth	तांबडा वाघ पतंग
9.	<i>O. coromandelica</i> Dubatolov, 2011	Coromandel Tiger Moth	कोरोमंडलचा वाघेरी पतंग
10.	<i>O. ghatmatha</i> Kalawate, 2020	Ghatmatha Tiger Moth	घाटमाथाचे वाघ पतंग
11.	<i>O. suryamal</i> Kalawate, 2020	Suryamal Tiger Moth	सूर्यमाळचे वाघ पतंग
12.	<i>O. zedesi</i> Kalawate, 2020	Zedesi Tiger Moth	झेडेसायचे वाघ पतंग
13.	<i>O. schleini chandrai</i> Kalawate, 2020	Chandra's Tiger Moth	चंद्राचे वाघ पतंग
14.	<i>O. suryamal rekhae</i> Kalawate, 2020	Rekha's Tiger Moth	रेखाचे वाघ पतंग

2019) and recorded on feasting upon many economically important agricultural and horticultural crops. They are recorded on *Calotropis* sp., *Camellia sinensis*, *Campsis grandiflora*, *Gossypium* sp., *Ricinus communis*, *Helianthus annuus*, *Zea mays*, *Coccinia grandis*, *Solanum melongena*, *Ipomoea batatas*, *Musa* sp., and cucurbits (Shubhalaxmi 2018). This genus is mainly distributed in southern and southeastern Asia (Walker 2007) with the only exception of *O. schleini* Witt et al., 2005 from Israel (Kalawate et al. 2020a). There are a total of 14 species and two subspecies reported from this genus from the world (Kalawate et al. 2020b). In

the present paper I propose English common name and vernacular names to the newly described species along with the other species from the genus (Table 1).

These vernacular/common/local names are expected to be useful for communicating with the local public and documentation of the moth details for the Peoples Biodiversity Registers (PBR), State Biodiversity Authorities (SBA) as well as National Biodiversity Authorities (NBA). Also, some of them are pests for some of the food crops and the common names are handy for the farmers and agriculturists.



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