

Record of Black Rajah from Lumbini, Nepal

The genus, *Charaxes* is moderately diverse group of the brush-footed butterfly family (Nymphalidae). They are found in the Mediterranean, Africa, southern & southeastern Asia, and Indo-Australian region. The powerful rapid flight is their most striking feature (Rothschild & Jordan 1899). Black Rajah *Charaxes solon* Fabricius, 1793 is a charismatic tropical butterfly with 17 subspecies; three subspecies are found in the Indian subcontinent, viz: *C. s. cerynthus* Fruhstorfer, 1914, *C. s. solon* Fabricius, 1793, and *C. s. sulphureus* Rothschild, 1900 (Toussaint et al. 2019). Among Asian *Charaxes*, it is a rare species from an African lineage (Müller et al. 2010; Toussaint et al. 2019).

In Nepal, the distribution



Charaxes solon recorded from Lumbini, Nepal.
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of *C. s. solon* is not well known. Two individuals were recorded from eastern Nepal in 1979 (Smith 1989), one from Kanchanpur west in 2019, and the fourth record reported from Dhankuta (Sajan 2021). An individual

of *C. s. solon* was sighted on 19 July 2021 from Lumbini at 150 m msl near Mayadevi Temple (27.470 N, 83.275 E), Rupandehi District, during a butterfly survey. Lumbini Development Trust area is a sacred garden rich in flora

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and fauna. Around 305 plant species are found in the area (Siwakoti 2008). *Dalbergia sissoo*, *Tamarindus indica*, and *Pithecellobium dulce* are some of the host plant species found around.

The species was feeding on the scat. It was initially confused for *Polyura dolon* but later identified as *Charaxes solon*. It sucked up for five minutes and flew away. The photograph of feeding individual was identified with the help of literature (Bhakare & Ogale 2018).

C.s. solon had silvery grey on the underside, with a pale discal band and a few obscure markings. There were wavy black lines and a few basal black spots. Both wings had a series of yellow sub-marginal spots. The upper side was black with yellowish-white discal band that curves towards the apex. Males and females have similar appearances, but females are longer tailed (Bhakare & Ogale 2018).

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- Bibek Gyawali**
Institute of Forestry, Tribhuvan University, Pokhara, Nepal.
bibekgyawali79@gmail.com.
- Citation:** Gyawali, B. (2022) Record of Black Rajah from Lumbini, Nepal. Bugs R All #239, In: *Zoo's Print* 37(4): 16–17.

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

