

Life stages of Giant Uraniid Swallowtail moth on *Endospermum chinense* at Kamrup District, Assam

Lyssa zampa (Butler, 1869) is a common moth species of the family Uraniidae, also known as the Giant Uraniid Swallowtail. It has the distribution from the Himalaya to Borneo and the Malay Peninsula. Earlier known from southern and southeastern Asia, the moth has recently been recorded from various countries such as Taiwan (Heppner & Wang 1996) and Korea (Jeong et al. 2016).



The larval feeding pattern on leaves of *Endospermum chinense*. © Sachin Ranade.

Being a large moth (wingspan of 10–16 cm), its attraction to urban lights and sometimes mass emergence of adults, the moth attracts the attention of observers (Jain & Tea 2020). It is most abundant from June to November depending on the location (Holloway 1998, 2020). I had seen this species in Buxa Tiger Reserve, West Bengal and in Rani Reserve Forest, Kamrup District, Assam. On 20 February 2018, at the Rani Reserve Forest in Kamrup



Early larva of *Lyssa zampa*. © Sachin Ranade.

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Empty chrysalis of the moth. © Sachin Ranade.



Adult moth *Lyssa zampa*. © Sachin Ranade.

District of Assam, a few moth larvae were seen on a six feet tall tree sapling. There were a couple of late instars and four early instar larvae. The younger instars feed by scraping the leaf lamina while older instars

feed on the whole lamina creating uneven shaped holes. The larvae were observed in the wild and photographs were taken. One of the late instar larvae climbed down on 22 February 2018 and was

observed to have woven a silk web, binding the dried leaves at the base of the sapling. Its dried excreta were also attached to it. It pupated on 24 February and an adult emerged on 19 March 2018 (23 days). The tree sapling was identified as *Endospermum chinense* Benth. (Family Euphorbiaceae). The leaf has characteristic round glands at the junction of the leaf stalk and leaf lamina. It is a well-known tall tree species and its native range is from Sikkim to south China and Indo-China (Balkrishnan & Chakraborty 2007; POWO 2019).

The larvae of genus *Lyssa* feed on *Endospermum* and other members of the rubber tree family (Euphorbiaceae). Five species and subspecies of Genus *Lyssa* are described to be associated with seven species of *Endospermum* (Semper 1896–1902; Altena 1953; Lees & Smith 1991).

These observations suggest that it is the first confirmed record of *Endospermum chinense* from Assam, India, adding to the list of known host plants of this species. It



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also adds first-hand observations on the adult moth's presence from March to November in Assam, India.

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