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NOTE

FIRST RECORD OF BANDED LINEBLUE *PROSOTAS ALUTA* DRUCE, 1873 (INSECTA: LEPIDOPTERA: LYCAENIDAE) FROM BANGLADESH

Rajib Dey, Ibrahim Khalil Al Haidar, Sajib Rudra & M. Rafiqul Islam

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First record of Banded Lineblue *Prosotas aluta* Druce, 1873 (Insecta: Lepidoptera: Lycaenidae) from Bangladesh

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Butterfly diversity in Bangladesh is very rich and may exceed 400 species (Chowdhury & Hossain 2013), but the exact number is not known till date. Baksha & Choudhury (1983, 1985) reported 33 species comprising of 17 pierids and 16 papilionids. Larsen (2004) annotated a checklist of 236 species. Ahmad et al. (2009) compiled 148 species in Encyclopedia of Bangladesh. Chowdhury & Hossain (2013) documented a photographic field guide with 225 species of butterflies from Bangladesh. IUCN Bangladesh (2015) stated status of 305 species of butterflies. There is no other more comprehensive list of butterflies available in Bangladesh. Habib et al. (2016), however, recorded 146 species of butterfly from Kaptai National Park (KNP) including *Prosotas dubiosa*. Hitherto, five species under the genus *Prosotas*: *bhutea*, *dubiosa*, *lutea*, *nora*, and *pia* have been previously recorded from Bangladesh (Chowdhury & Hossain 2013; Larsen 2004). *P. aluta* is reported from India, Myanmar, Malaysia, Philippine, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, Vietnam, China, Nepal, and Bhutan but not in Bangladesh until this report (Evans 1932; Cassidy 1990; Hirowatari 1992; Huang & Xue 2004; Kehimkar 2013; Khew 2014; Monastyrskii & Devyatkin 2016). Though, new records of butterflies are being

added in the existing list, there is still an opportunity to explore new habitats and discover around 200–250 species of butterflies in the country.

The Kaptai National Park (KNP) situated at Kaptai Upazila (sub-district) in Rangamati District falls between the Karnaphuly River and Kaptai mountain ranges (22.5°N and 92.33°E) (Figure 1). It is about 57km north of Chittagong (Chittagong) City and 12km south of Rangamati Town comprising an area of 54.64km² (5,464ha, 13,502acres). The park was previously known as Sitapahar Reserve and was declared a national park in 1999. It comprises two forest ranges: Kaptai and Karnaphuli. The KNP is sub-tropical mixed evergreen forest decked with hills, streams, valleys and plain lands. The area in the landscape context is very good, but disturbed by shifting cultivation, secondary plantation and human settlement. Nonetheless, the KNP is very rich in flora and fauna. The area is known as a butterfly hotspot in Bangladesh (Habib et al. 2016).

The survey was conducted on butterfly diversity twice a month from January 2017 to December 2018. As the study was carried out on butterfly diversity hence emphasis was given on sunny periods of the day, when

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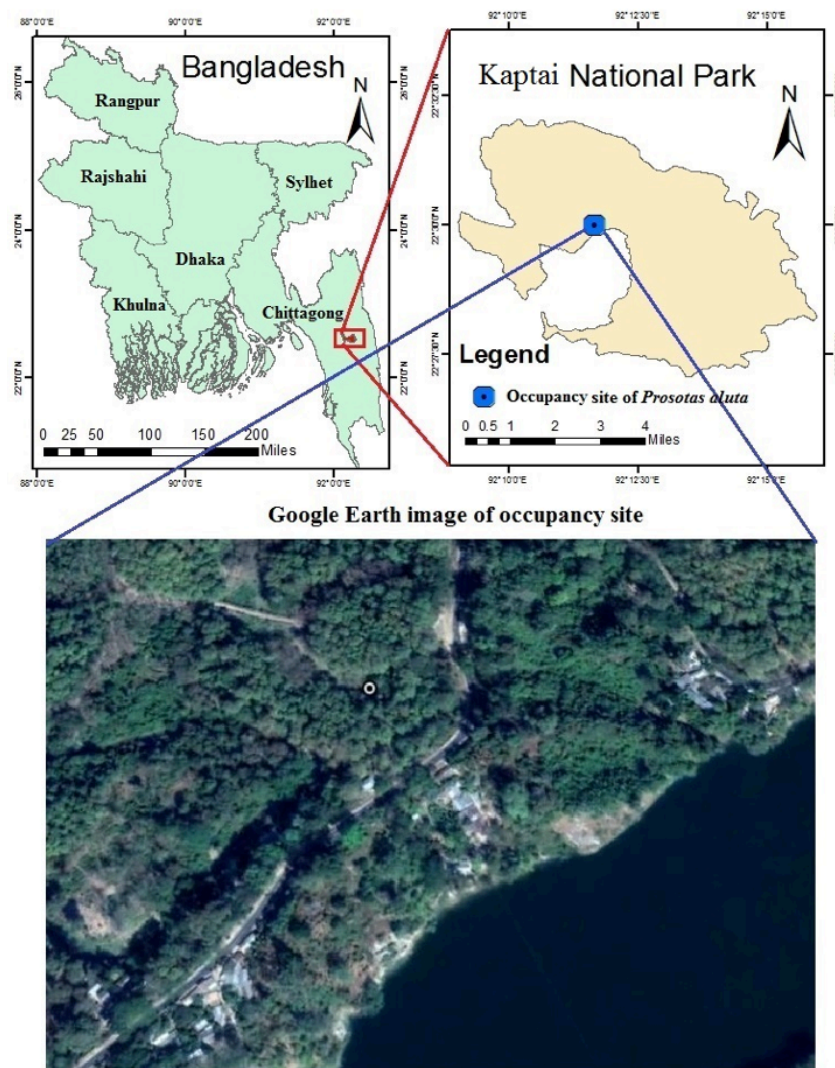


Figure 1. The area in KNP, Bangladesh where *Prosotas aluta* was recorded during the present survey.

butterflies are more active. Butterflies were searched for through the existing roads, trails, streams and bridle paths.

The observed butterfly was photographed but the specimen neither killed nor collected. So, the specimen was identified based on photographic document following the keys developed by Bingham (1907) and field guides (Chowdhury & Hossain 2013; Kehimkar 2013).

An individual of *Prosotas aluta* (Image 1) was found at about 11:50AM (GMT+6) on 07 September 2018 in a hill stream named 'Baro Chara' (22.501°N & 92.184°E, 9m). The butterfly was puddling on small hilly rocks and sandy clay. The observed individual is characterized by the tail in the hind wing like other lycaenid butterflies (Kehimkar 2013). Moreover, shiny silky brown cilia, brown tails with white tip, black head and antennae, bluish thorax and abdomen indicate that the photographed specimen is a species under the genus *Prosotas* (Bingham 1907). The

specimen is also characterized with dark brown under wings, spaces between discal lines filled with dark bands in both wings, and discal band and end cell band joined together to form a black discal area in the underside of hind wing (Kehimkar 2013). In addition, sub-basal and discal bands in the underside of hind wing inwardly and outwardly edged with slender white lines and discal band greatly broad in the middle (Bingham 1907).

Previously the species was recorded from Cachar and Khasi Hills (Parsons & Cantlie 1948) of India which is close to Bangladesh. So, Larsen (2004) listed the species in a possible checklist of butterflies in Bangladesh. The species has also been recorded from the Baghmara National Park of Garo Hills in Meghalaya (Kunte et al. 2012) and from Jeypore-Dehing Forest in Assam of India (Gogoi 2013). Subsequently, the species has been recorded from the Kaptai National Park of Bangladesh (aerial distance: ~266km from Cachar, ~330km from Garo Hills, ~367km



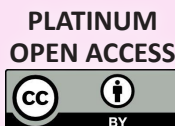
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Image 2. Underwing image of *Prosotas aluta* while puddling in Kaptai National Park.

from Khasi Hills and ~575km from Jeypore-Dehing Forest). The northeastern region (greater Sylhet) of Bangladesh also comprises some mixed evergreen forested areas similar to KNP. In addition, the northeastern part is closer to the Cachar, Garo Hills, Khasi Hills and Jeypore-Dehing Forest (aerial distance: ~112km, ~124km, ~164km and ~413km respectively). So, the species may also be found in the northeastern mixed evergreen forests of Bangladesh. The record of *Prosotas aluta*, however, confirms its existence in Bangladesh after the compilation of butterflies by Larsen (2004) and Red List of Threatened Species (butterfly) by IUCN Bangladesh (2015).

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Conservation Application

Do wildlife crimes against less charismatic species go unnoticed? A case study of Golden Jackal *Canis aureus* Linnaeus, 1758 poaching and trade in India

– Malaika Mathew Chawla, Arjun Srivathsa, Priya Singh, Iravatee Majgaonkar, Sushma Sharma, Girish Punjabi & Aditya Banerjee, Pp. 15407–15413

Review

Hazards of wind turbines on avifauna - a preliminary appraisal within the Indian context

– Himika Deb, Tanmay Sanyal, Anilava Kaviraj & Subrata Saha, Pp. 15414–15425

Communications

Analysis of stereotypic behaviour and enhanced management in captive Northern Giraffe *Giraffa camelopardalis* housed at Zoological Garden Alipore, Kolkata

– Tushar Pramod Kulkarni, Pp. 15426–15435

A new species of shieldtail snake (Reptilia: Squamata: Uropeltidae) from Kolli Hill complex, southern Eastern Ghats, peninsular India

– S.R. Ganesh & N.S. Achyuthan, Pp. 15436–15442

The insect fauna of Tenompok Forest Reserve in Sabah, Malaysia

– Arthur Y.C. Chung, Viviannye Paul & Steven Bosuang, Pp. 15443–15459

Tiger beetles (Coleoptera: Cicindelinae) of Davao Region, Mindanao, Philippines

– Milton Norman Medina, Analyn Cabras, Harlene Ramillano & Reagan Joseph Villanueva, Pp. 15460–15467

An assessment of the conservation status of a presumed extinct tree species *Wendlandia angustifolia* Wight ex. Hook.f. in southern Western Ghats, India

– Chellam Muthumperumal, Paramasivam Balasubramanian & Ladan Rasingam, Pp. 15468–15474

Short Communications

Additional morphological notes on the male of *Icius alboterminus* (Caleb, 2014) (Aranei: Salticidae) with new distribution records from India

– Dhruv A. Prajapati & R.D. Kamboj, Pp. 15475–15480

Three moss families (Bryopsida: Calymperaceae, Hyopertygiaceae, & Pterobryaceae): new distribution records to bryoflora of Andhra Pradesh, India

– Ananthaneni Sreenath, Midigesi Anil Kumar, Paradesi Anjaneyulu & Boyina Ravi Prasad Rao, Pp. 15481–15488

Notes

Mating behavior of the Yellow-throated Marten *Martes flavigula* (Mammalia: Carnivora: Mustelidae)

– Abinash Parida, Meesala Krishna Murthy & G.S. Solanki, Pp. 15489–15492

New to Myanmar: the Rosy Starling *Pastor roseus* (Aves: Passeriformes: Sturnidae) in the Hkakabo Razi Landscape

– Sai Sein Lin Oo, Myint Kyaw, Nay Myo Hlaing & Swen C. Renner, Pp. 15493–15494

New records of *Heloderma alvarezii* (Wiegmann, 1829) (Sauria: Helodermatidae) on the coast of Oaxaca and increases to its distribution in Mexico

– Jesús García-Grajales, Rodrigo Arrazola Bohórquez, María Arely Pengüilly Macías & Alejandra Buenrostro Silva, Pp. 15495–15498

Description of a new subspecies of the genus *Microcerotermes* Silvestri, 1901 (Amitermitinae: Termitidae: Isoptera) and the first record of another termite species from Meghalaya, India

– Khirud Sankar Das & Sudipta Choudhury, Pp. 15499–15502

A new record of the hoverfly genus *Dasysyrphus* Enderlein, 1938 (Insecta: Diptera: Syrphidae) from India

– Jayita Sengupta, Atanu Naskar, Aniruddha Maity, Panchanan Parui, Sumit Homchaudhuri & Dhriti Banerjee, Pp. 15503–15506

First record of Banded Lineblue *Prosotas aluta* Druce, 1873 (Insecta: Lepidoptera: Lycaenidae) from Bangladesh

– Rajib Dey, Ibrahim Khalil Al Haidar, Sajib Rudra & M. Rafiqul Islam, Pp. 15507–15509

Notes on *Ptilomera agriodes* (Hemiptera: Heteroptera: Gerridae) from Eastern Ghats, India

– J. Deepa, A. Narahari, M. Karuthapandi, S. Jadhav & C. Shiva Shankar, Pp. 15510–15513

***Didymocarpus bhutanicus* W.T. Wang (Gesneriaceae): a new addition to the herbs of India**

– Subhajit Lahiri, Sudhansu Sekhar Dash, Monalisa Das & Bipin Kumar Sinha, Pp. 15514–15517

Rediscovery of *Epilobium trichophyllum* Hausskn.: a rare and endemic plant from Sikkim Himalaya, India

– David L. Biate & Dinesh K. Agrawala, Pp. 15518–15521

Additions of woody climbers (Lianas) to the flora of Manipur, India

– Longjam Malemnganbee Chanu & Debjyoti Bhattacharyya, Pp. 15522–15529

Molecular characterization of stinkhorn fungus *Aseroë coccinea* Imazeki et Yoshimi ex Kasuya 2007 (Basidiomycota: Agaricomycetes: Phallales) from India

– Vivek Bobade & Neelesh Dahanukar, Pp. 15530–15534

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