

Two new records of *Rhopalocera* from Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, India (Insecta: Lepidoptera)

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Abstract

Chilades parhassius (Fabricius, 1793) and *Choaspes benjaminii japonica* Murray, 1875, are first time reported from Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory, India.

Keywords: Insecta, Lepidoptera, *Chilades*, *Choaspes*, Jammu, Kashmir, India.

Dos nuevos registros de *Rhopalocera* en el territorio de la Unión de Jammu y Cachemira, India (Insecta: Lepidoptera)

Resumen

Chilades parhassius (Fabricius, 1793) y *Choaspes benjaminii japonica* Murray, 1875, se citan por primera vez en el Territorio de la Unión de Jammu y Cachemira, India.

Palabras clave: Insecta, Lepidoptera, *Chilades*, *Choaspes*, Jammu, Cachemira, India.

Introduction

In India there are two subspecies of *Chilades parhassius* (Fabricius, 1793): *Chilades parhassius parhassius* (Fabricius, 1793) and *Chilades parhassius minuta* (Evans, 1932) and two subspecies of *Choaspes benjaminii* (Guérin-Méneville, 1843): *Choaspes benjaminii japonica* Murray, 1875 and *Choaspes benjaminii benjaminii* (Guérin-Méneville, 1843).

Chilades parhassius parhassius (Fabricius, 1793) has the range extension from Rajasthan to Kerela and eastward to Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand. While *Choaspes benjaminii japonica* Murray, 1875 has the range extension from Himachal Pradesh to Northeast India and *Choaspes benjaminii benjaminii* (Guérin-Méneville, 1843) has the range extension from Karnataka to Kerela (Varshney & Smetacek, 2015).

Chilades parhassius parhassius (Fabricius, 1793) is uncommon in peninsular and northwestern India. Can be found in Western Ghats but at low elevations from Kerela and Tamil & Nadu, northern part of Karnataka, Telangana, Goa and from Maharashtra up to Gujarat, also found in Rajasthan, Haryana, southern part of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Chhatisgarh and also distributed to Himachal Pradesh (Shimla at an altitude of 2050 m, fide Wynter-Blyth) and from Nepal where there is an old record from terai. *Chilades parhassius minuta* is recorded in Northwestern India in Punjab east to Chandigarh. There is no record of it from Jammu and Kashmir (Gasse, 2018).

Choaspes benjaminii benjaminii (Guérin-Méneville, 1843) is fairly common in Southwestern Ghats that too above 1000 m i.e., in Kerela, West Tamil Nadu and in Kodagu area of Southwest Karnataka. Whereas *Choaspes benjaminii japonica* Murray, 1875 is fairly common in Himalayas from 300-2700 m, seen West of Kangra in Himachal Pradesh and Eastern part of Uttarakhand, Nepal, Sikkim, Northwest Bengal and from Bhutan to Arunachal Pradesh and the remaining Northeast India but not recorded from Mizoram. There is no record of it from Jammu and Kashmir.

From decade, some researchers have made research in some parts of the Union Territory and have added many new sightings of Rhopalocera fauna of Jammu and Kashmir, India i.e., (Qureshi *et al.*, 2013a, 2013b, 2014; Sharma & Sharma, 2017a, 2017b, 2018a, 2018b, 2020) and many other articles by Sharma & Sharma (2017a, 2017b, 2018), Sheikh & Parey (2019a, 2019b), Sharma & Sharma (2020), Gupta & Sheikh (2021), Sheikh (2021), Singh & Sheikh (2021), Parey & Sheikh (2021), Dar *et al.* (2022a, 2022b), Sheikh *et al.* (2021), Sheikh & Gupta (2022), Sheikh & Mishra (2022a, 2022b), Sheikh & Dar (2022).

Choaspes benjaminii japonica Murray, 1875

On 15-IV-2022, author observed the Rhopalocera in Bani tehsil, and she found the *Choaspes benjaminii japonica* Murray, 1875 (Figure 1) belonging to Hesperidae family nectarine on flowers of *Melia azedarach* L. for half an hour and later on she found three to four individuals' nectarine on the same tree. The author photographed this Rhopalocera with the help of Canon Eos 1300 D, and noted down the coordinates of the area (32°42'42.8" N, 74°48'58.1" E) at an altitude of around 1350 m a.s.l. The vegetation around was *Alnus nitida* Spach, *Rubus niveus* Thunb, *Rubus ellipticus* Sm., *Berberis lycium* Royle, *Ficus carica* L., *Juglans regia* L., etc.

Chilades parhassius parhassius (Fabricius, 1793)

On 11-V-2022, author has done survey on the Rhopalocera of Bani area of Kathua district (Figure 2) of Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory where she found *Chilades parhassius parhassius* (Fabricius, 1793) (Figure 1) belonging to Lycaenidae family nectarine on *Trifolium repens* where author photographed this butterfly with the help of Canon Eos 1300 D, and noted down the coordinates of the area (32°42'26.7" N, 74°48'43.8" E) at an altitude of around 1350 m a.s.l. After this sighting author found the same species in many areas of Bani like in Duggan, Dalangal, Sida etc. The study was carried out in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir. It is located between 75.5173° E longitude and 32.3865° N latitude. The average annual rainfall is 1360 mm. The study area experiences a sub-tropical climate. The Kathua district has its border with Pakistan, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh. The vegetation around the sighting was; *Rhododendron arboretum* Sm., *Prinsepia utilis* Royle, *Quercus leucotrichophora* A. Camus, *Melia azedarach* L., *Alnus nitida* Spach, *Rubus niveus* Thunb, *Rubus ellipticus* Sm., *Berberis lycium* Royle, etc.

Identification

Identification was done with the help of following to Evans (1932), Wynter-Blyth (1957), Kehimkar (2016) and Smetacek (2018).

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Figures 1-2. 1. *Choaspes benjaminii japonica* Murray, underwings. 2. *Chilades parrhasius* (Fabricius), nectarine of *Trifolium repens*.

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