



Three additions to the known butterfly (Lepidoptera: Rhopalocera and Grypocera) fauna of Goa, India

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Studies on the fauna of Goa are few. Compared to other fauna the butterflies of the State are fairly well documented. The most dependable study on the butterflies of the Western Ghats has been by Gaonkar (1996) which documents 330 species of which 251 species have been reported from Goa. In recent works, 97 species have been documented from the Bondla Wildlife Sanctuary (Borkar & Komarpant 2004), and 90 common and a few rare species have been depicted by Rangnekar (2007). The State Fauna Series by Zoological Survey of India, Western Regional Station, Pune, follows the compilation by Gaonkar (1996) and enumerates 251 species of butterflies from Goa (Sharma & Borkar 2008).

We have encountered three species not recorded previously from Goa, which takes the total number of butterflies recorded from the state to 254 species. The three species are reported below.

1. Black-vein Sergeant (*Athyma ranga* Moore) (Image 1)

Family: Nymphalidae

Sub-family: Limenitidinae

On 15 May 2007, a male Black-vein Sergeant was photographed mud-puddling en route to the Savri Falls in the Netravali Wildlife Sanctuary. The specimen was worn out. Omkar Dharwadkar photographed another specimen on 09 January 2009 at Collem in the Mollem National Park. The records from two separate locations and different seasons suggest that the specimens recorded were not merely stragglers from further south.

2. White-banded Awl (*Hasora taminatus* (Hübner)) (Image 2)

Family: HesperIIDae

Sub-family: Coeliadinae

On 28 December 2008 one individual of this species was observed mud-puddling around 1130hr along with Common Pierrot (*Castalius rosimon* Fabricius), Dark Grass Blue (*Zizeeria karsandra* Moore), Common Emigrants (*Catopsilia pomona* Fabricius) and Large Oakblue (*Arhopala amantes* Hewitson) in the premises of "Aaranyak", the tented accommodation facility of the Department of Forest, Govt. of Goa, in the Mollem National Park. Attempts to photograph the butterfly were in vain as it flew from one spot to another and finally vertically into the canopy. Further visits to the location did not result in sighting of the White-banded Awl, although the other butterflies mentioned above were present at the site. The species was later photographed while mud-puddling along the riverside at Netravali on 25 January 2009 by both the authors.



Image 1. Black-vein Sergeant *Athyma ranga*



Image 2. White-banded Awl *Hasora taminatus*

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3. Coon (*Psolos fuligo* (Mabille)) (Image 3)

Family: Hesperidae

Sub-family: Hesperinae

This butterfly has been observed at three forested locations. The first occasion was in Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary, Cancona in southern Goa on 09 August 2008 while walking along the motorable road leading to the tree-top watch tower along with Raju David (Naturalist, Taj & CC Africa). A single butterfly was observed flying about in the undergrowth and laying eggs on a *Curcuma* plant. The next individual of this species was observed in Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary, Sattari, in northern Goa on 24 August 2008 on the route to village Derode via Nanoda. The third individual was sighted in Bhagwan Mahaveer Wildlife Sanctuary along a riparian patch in Tambdi Surla on 23 November 2008. The individual was observed perched on a leaf in the open.

These records suggest that this butterfly, too, is established in this area. The point to be noted is that its larval hostplant, *Curcuma*, has been present in the state, but the butterfly has not been reported. It will probably be impossible to determine whether the above records of this butterfly represent a population that is in the process of colonizing parts of Goa or whether these individuals belong to long established populations that were overlooked in the past.

Discussion

The above three species were hitherto known from Karnataka southwards and are known to prefer moist evergreen forests. The present records extend their distribution northwards to Goa. Since Goa lies at the confluence of the Northern and Southern Western Ghats, these records are of interest as they suggest that further species may extend their range in the years to come. It is noteworthy that none of these species are known migrants.

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Image 3. Coon *Psolos fuligo*

associations of butterfly species in Bondla Wildlife Sanctuary of Goa, India. *Zoos' Print Journal* 19(10): 1648-1653.

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