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#### NOTE

A CENTURY LATER THE MANIPUR ARGUS *CALLEREBIA SUROIA*TYTLER, 1914 (LEPIDOPTERA: NYMPHALIDAE: SATYRINAE)
RECORDED IN ITS TYPE LOCALITY IN MANIPUR, INDIA

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Callerebia (Butler, 1867) is a genus of the subfamily Satyrinae in the family Nymphalidae. The genus is restricted to the Sino-Himalayan region - ranging from Kashmir to southwestern China and central China (Bruna et al. 2000). The genus consists of approximately 12 species, composed of medium to medium-large butterflies with

a dark brown coloration and a large bipupilled ocellus on the upper forewing. The butterflies of the genus possess small heads and bodies, and a prominent eye in relation to their broad, rounded wings. The hind wings are extended in a more or less prominent lobe at the anal angle. The antennal club is thin, only slightly thickening towards the tip. The markings are very variable but follow a fairly constant arrangement in all the species: the upper ground colour is dark brown to blackish; the forewing has a bi-pupilled apical ocellus; with or without one tornal spot in the upper hindwing; the under hind wings are often covered by whitish scales of different densities, tones and patterns: with or without one or two tornal ocelli in the under hindwing; in addition, some species have a set of up to four postdiscal white dots on the under hindwing (Roy 2013).

The Shirui Kashong Peak (SKP) is located just 7km away from Shirui Village and 25km from Ukhrul Town. The peak is at 25°06′20.04″N and 94°27′23.91″E at 2,763m from sea level. It is located at Ukhrul District on the eastern part of the Manipur State. The peak and Shirui Village are bordered by Ukhrul in the west, Langdang Village in the south, Mapum Village in the

# A CENTURY LATER THE MANIPUR ARGUS CALLEREBIA SUROIA TYTLER, 1914 (LEPIDOPTERA: NYMPHALIDAE: SATYRINAE) RECORDED IN ITS TYPE LOCALITY IN MANIPUR, INDIA

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east, Sihai Village in the northeast and Lunghar Village in the north.

During 12–16 July 2016, we conducted a survey on the Lepidoptera fauna of the Shirui Kashong Peak (25°06′20.04″N & 94°27′23.91″E) between 1,320m and 2,763m altitude (Figs. 1 & 2) and surrounding areas. Butterflies were observed at different altitudes of the peak and surrounding areas during the day. Light trapping was done for nocturnal moths at night. During the survey we encountered different species of butterflies and moths. In this present paper we report the sighting of the rare satyrid butterfly *Callerebia suroia* Tytler, 1914 after more than a century since Tytler (1914) describe the species from the same locality, Shirui Hills, Manipur.

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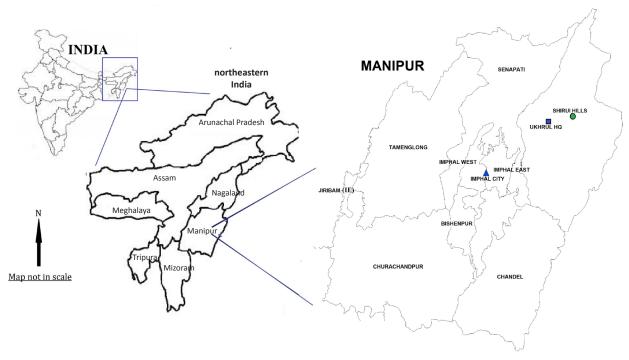


Figure 1. Study area; Shirui Kashong Peak and surrounding Shirui Village, Ukhrul District, Manipur, India (Map prepared by using DIVA GIS 7.1)

#### Manipur Argus Callerebia suroia Tytler, 1914

Callerebia suroia Tytler, 1914 is only reported from Manipur in India (Varshney & Smetacek 2015). Outside India, the species is reported from northeastern Myanmar (Talbot 1947); Dali, Kunming at Yunnan province of China (Okano & Okano 1985; Huang 2003) and northern Vietnam (Inoyashi 2016). The species C. suroia Tytler, 1914 has been subject to several taxonomic revisions. Tytler 1914 described it as a species, distinguishing the species from C. orixa by morphological characters, Tytler makes no mention of C. polyphemus. Evans (1927), treated suroia as the synonym of Erebia annada polyphemus. Goltz (1939) treated suroia as a subspecies of C. orixa. Evans (1932) placed the species in the genus Erebia and treated it as a subspecies of *Erebia annada*. This arrangement was followed by Talbot 1947. Later Okano & Okano (1985) reinstated suroia as a valid species of Callerebia based on the different wing markings and also in the different shape of male genitalia vulva from C. orixa. Bruna et al. (2000) considered that *C. polyphemus* was a "widely distributed polytipic species" and thus treated suroia as a subspecies of *C. polyphemus* and raised the status of *C.* annadina to a distinct species, because of its sympatric distribution in northwestern Yunnan with C. suroia. Huang (2003), however found no difference between the male and female genitalia of C. annadina and C.

polyphemus thus treated *C. annadina* as a subspecies of *C. polyphemus* and *suroia* as a distinct species as originally described. Huang (2003) mentioned that there is no difference in androconia between male *C. suroia* and all the subspecies of *C. polyphemus*, but did find differences in the genitalia. Due to overlapping distributional pattern of *C. suroia* and *C. polyphemus*, separation of these two species is very difficult. The only reliable feature which separates *C. suroia* from *C. polyphemus confusa* is the appearance of fainter and thinner striation on the underside of the hindwing which is usually denser in *C. polyphemus confusa* (Huang 2003).

The detailed description of *C. suroia* is illustrated in Tytler (1914) (Image 3). The appearance of *C. suroia* is also very similar to *C. orixa*. "Upperside of forewing with a much broader orange ocellar ring, especially on the distal side of ocellus; Underside of forewing similar to above (*C. orixa*); hindwing with a sub basal and discal reddish-brown band, tornal ocellus absent, white striae denser and more conspicuous than in *C. orixa*" (Talbot 1947). *C. suroia* can be easily distinguished from all the subspecies of *C. polyphemus* by the more yellowish and broader ring of the forewing subapical ocellus; hindwing underside discal line is always clear; hindwing underside striation is fainter and usually denser than in *C. polyphemus* and *C. ulfi* and distal branch of valve is usually longer than in *C. polyphemus* and always much



Figure 2. Google Earth map showing the observation site of Callerebia suroia Tytler, 1914 at Shirui Kashong Peak, Ukhrul District, Manipur.



Image 1. Open wing posture of Callerebia suroia Tytler, 1914

longer than in C. ulfi (Huang 2003).

## Sighting of Manipur Argus Callerebia suroia Tytler, 1914

In this note we report the sighting of C. suroia Tytler, 1914 from Shirui Kashong Peak, which is the type locality of the species by Tytler (1914). On 13 July 2016 at around 14:30hr, we found the butterfly flying near the footpath leading to the peak of the summit (25°06'46.48"N & 94°26'56.67"E at an altitude of 2,330m) (Fig. 2). The butterfly settled for some time with open wings on soil (Image 1) and later it flew away and sat on a rock with closed wings (Image 2) and sipping on wet rocks. Later, due to the disturbance by hikers the butterfly flew away towards the cliff. The butterfly is mainly found near the rocks which are surrounded by perennial herbaceous plants like Roscoea ngainoi Mao & Bhaumik (Zingiberaceae), Lililium mackliniae Sealy (Liliaceae), Allium sp. (Amaryllidaceae), Swertia sp. (Gentianaceae), Aconitum sp. (Ranunculaceae) and many grasses which grow in much colder mountainous regions (Images 4 & 5). The day was quite cloudy with less sunshine and intermittent rain on the peak. The present sighting of the butterfly from Shirui Kashong Hill, Ukhrul District is important and significant because it is the first photographic record of this species after more than a century in India.

#### Conclusion

Some members of the genus *Callerebia* are known to be very local. Thus our sighting of *C. suroia* Tytler, 1914 in Shirui Kashong Peak (where the habitat is well



Image 2. Closed wing posture of Callerebia suroia Tytler, 1914

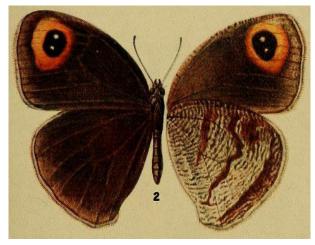


Image 3. Illustration of *Callerebia suroia* Tytler, 1914 from the original description of the species. (Photo courtesy: Tytler 1914, pl. 1, figure 2)



Image 4. Habitat of *Callerebia suroia* Tytler, 1914 at Shirui Kashong Hill range



Image 5. Rocks surrounded by perennial plants and grass; a suitable habitat for *Callerebia suroia* Tytler, 1915 at Shirui Kashong Hill range.

protected and undisturbed) gives us an opportunity to understand the ecology of this butterfly. Further studies on the ecology of this butterfly will give us an idea why butterflies of this genus are local which will help us to initiate further steps towards the conservation of habitats of these butterflies.

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