

**RECENT RECORD OF A RARELY RECORDED SPECIES, THE VEINED PALMER *HIDARI BHAWANI* DE NICÉVILLE, 1888 (LEPIDOPTERA: HESPERIIDAE: AEROMACHINI) FROM JORHAT, ASSAM, INDIA**

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Veined Palmer or the Crescentic Skipper *Hidari bhawani* de Nicéville, 1888 is one of the three species of the genus *Hidari* Distant, 1886 (Hesperiidae: Hesperinae: Aeromachini) found in southeast Asia, recorded from India. The other two species of the same genus being, the Coconut Skipper *Hidari irava* (Moore, 1858), that occurs in northern Myanmar, Thailand, eastern Malaysia, as well as on Indonesia (Sumatra, Java), Borneo and the Sula Islands and the Long-spotted Skipper *Hidari doesoena doesoena* (Martin, 1895) found in Indonesia (Sumatra) (www.nic.funet.fi).

*H. bhawani* has been recorded as a 'very rare' species having distribution extending from Assam (Lakhimpur), Arracan (Arakan) Coast and Toungoo, Myanmar, Langkawi Islands, Malaysia (Evans 1932, 1949). Besides this, Norman (1953) had also recorded a male of this rarely recorded species from a brick wall from Sivasagar District, Assam in June 1952. The distinguishing features of this palmer from its congener *H. irava* Moore (Evans

1932) is the pale yellow coloration below, having underneath hind wing evenly straited with brown streaks near costa and near dorsum. Specimens of *H. bhawani* from Sivasagar in Assam (female: 18.vi.1952) and from Tungoo, Bago region of Myanmar (male: 24.viii.1928) have been kept in the Bristish Museum can be viewed at the the Indian Foundation of Butterflies (Anonymous 2015a). Another image of this species from Cambodia can also be viewed online (Chartier 2015), while the species has also been recorded from northern Thailand (Anonymous 2015b).

There are no recent records of this species from India; Smetacek (2006, 2007) checklist of South Asian skippers butterflies does not mention this genus. Gogoi (2013) who studied Hesperidae around Kaziranga-Karbi Anglong in Assam did not record this species. Recently, *H. bhawani*, (a male) was recorded on 26 March 2014 at the Rain Forest Research Institute (RFRI) campus (26°46'53.52"N & 94°17'29.74"E; ca. 97m altitude) in Jorhat, Assam. Another individual was recorded on 4 November 2014 again in the RFRI campus. Both these individuals were photographed, the former sitting on the wall in the RFRI building at day time (Images 1–3) and the latter during the night (20:35 hr) on 04 November 2014, perched below a light (Image 4). These records are significant as they are the third and fourth records of the species from India. Besides, it gives the presence and flight period of this very rare species



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*Hidari bhawani*  
Veined Palmer



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Image 1. Veined Palmer *Hidari bhawani* (side view of underside; male; 26.iii.2014)



Image 2. Veined Palmer *Hidari bhawani* (upperside; male; 26.iii.2014-RFRI coll.)



Image 3. Veined Palmer *Hidari bhawani* (underside; male; 26.iii.2014-RFRI coll.)



Image 4. Veined Palmer *Hidari bhawani* (underside; 04.ix.2014)

in Assam in the months of March and November as well, not known earlier. The distribution range of this South-east Asian species is Assam in northeastern part of India to Malaysia through Myanmar, Thailand and Cambodia. The holotype of *H. bhawani* was collected in Myanmar basking on a dead palm branch in 1883 (de Niceville 1888). Its presence may be linked to the palm trees and bamboos present in bambusetum of the RFRI campus and in adjoining areas. The larval food plants of the genus *Hidari*, i.e., *H. irava* is *Bambusa* sp. and *Cocus nucifera* (Day 2015).

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