

New Singapore records of the blue tiger, *Tirumala limniacea*

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Subject: Blue tiger, *Tirumala limniacea* (Insecta: Lepidoptera: Papilionoidea: Nymphalidae).

Subject identified by: Gan Cheong Weei.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island: West Coast Road, Varsity Park Condominium next to Clementi Woods Park; 6 January 2016, 1533-1546 hrs and 7 January 2016, 0757-0809 hrs.

Habitat: Urban parkland.

Observers: Gan Cheong Weei

Observation: On the afternoon of 6 January 2016, a male *Tirumala limniacea* was observed feeding on the leaf of *Crotalaria retusa* (INATURALIST.ORG, 2018; Fig. 1, 2 & 3). The next morning, the butterfly, possibly the same individual, was noted at the same location, again on the plant *Crotalaria retusa* (INATURALIST.ORG, 2017; Fig. 4). Later in the morning, fumigation was carried out at the housing estate. The butterfly was seen flying towards Clementi Woods Park during the fumigation. Subsequently, it was not seen again at Varsity Park.

Remarks: The blue tiger is a butterfly that occurs in South Asia and Southeast Asia. It belongs to the subfamily Danainae of the brush-footed butterfly family Nymphalidae. Three species of *Tirumala* are recorded in Peninsular Malaysia (Corbet; 1992), of which *Tirumala septentrionis* is the most common. *Tirumala guatama* is much rarer and has only been recorded from Langkawi Island, and *Tirumala limniacea* seems to be the rarest of the three.

Because the genus *Tirumala* was not recorded from Singapore, the sighting of the very rare *Tirumala limniacea* in a residential estate there comes as a big surprise. A possible explanation for the unexpected appearance of this butterfly in Singapore is that it had been brought into Singapore as a pupa along with plants for landscaping imported from Malaysia.

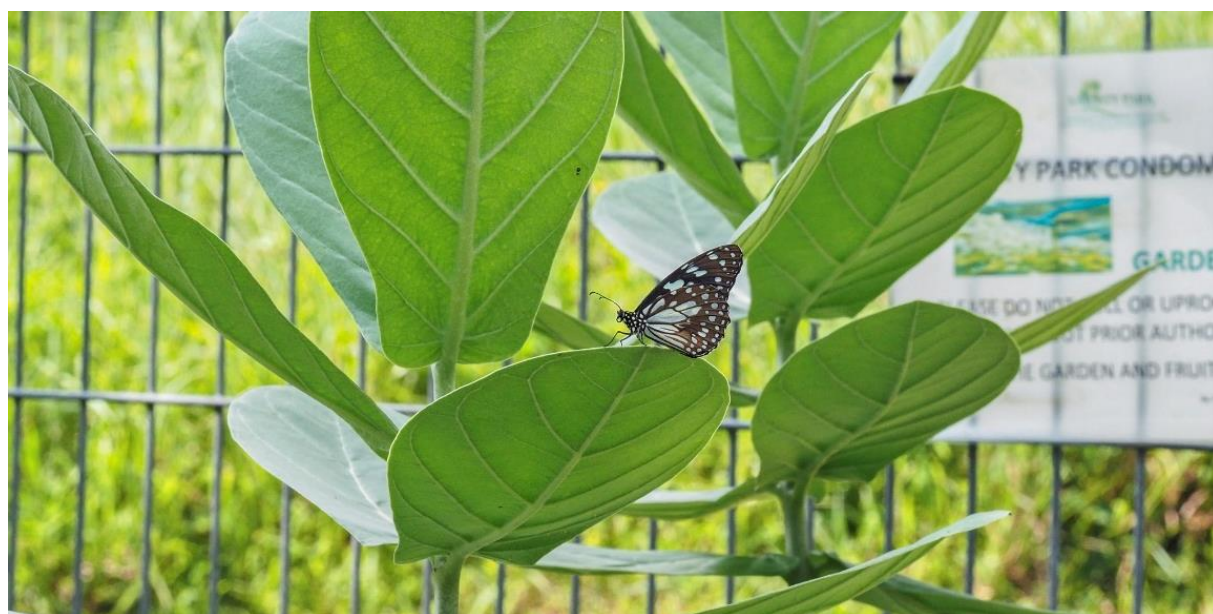


Fig. 1. *Tirumala limniacea* was first sighted at Varsity Park Condominium garden on 6 January 2016 at 1533 hrs. Photograph by Gan Cheong Weei



Fig. 2. *Tirumala limniace* and *Danaus genutia* (right) feeding on the leaf of *Crotalaria retusa* at 1538 hrs on 6 January 2016.



Fig. 3. Side view of *Tirumala limniace* on *Crotalaria retusa* at 1546 hrs on 6 January 2016.



Fig. 4. At 0809 hrs on 7 January 2016, *Tirumala limniace* was feeding on the leaf of *Crotalaria retusa*.

Photographs by Gan Cheong Weei

References:

- Corbet, A. S. & H. M. Pendlebury, 1992. *The Butterflies of the Malay Peninsula*. 4th edition (revised by J. N. Eliot). Malayan Nature Society, Kuala Lumpur. 595 pp., 69 pl.
- INATURALIST.ORG, 2017. Blue Tiger (*Tirumala limniace*). Observed: Jan 7, 2016. Submitted: Apr 14, 2017. <https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/5686676>
- INATURALIST.ORG, 2018. Blue Tiger (*Tirumala limniace*). Observed: Jan 6, 2016. Submitted: Sep 22, 2018. <https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/16788875>