

Biodiversity Record: A pitcher blue butterfly at Dairy Farm Nature Park

Simon Chan Kee Mun

Toh Yi Drive, Singapore 590012; Email: simonchan268@yahoo.com.sg

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Subject: Pitcher blue, *Virachola kessuma deliochus* (Insecta: Lepidoptera: Lycaenidae: Lycaeninae).

Subject identified by: Simon Chan Kee Mun.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Dairy Farm Nature Park, along the higher level of two trails leading to Wallace Trail (Fig. 1); 30 January 2021; 1349hrs.

Habitat: Secondary forest.

Observers: Simon Chan Kee Mun and Loh Jing Ling.

Observation: On that blistering afternoon, one example (Figs. 2, 3) with forewing length of about 15 mm, was spotted feeding on the flowers of a bandicoot berry bush (*Leea indica*).

Remarks: The larva of the pitcher blue butterfly inhabits seed pods of the pitcher plants *Nepenthes gracilis* and *Nepenthes rafflesiana*, where it feeds on the maturing seeds (Tan, 2010). In Singapore, this species is regarded as rare. It inhabits the fringes of forested nature reserves, and has been recorded from urban parks along the Southern Ridges (Khew, 2015: 271).



Fig. 1. View of the habitat. The *Leea indica* bush is in the background on the right side of the path. (Photograph by: Simon Chan Kee Mun).



Fig. 2. In situ lateral view of the pitcher blue butterfly feeding on *Leea indica* flowers. (Photograph by: Simon Chan Kee Mun).



Fig. 3. Magnified lateral view of the same pitcher blue butterfly. (Photograph by: Simon Chan Kee Mun).

Literature cited:

- Tan H (2010) Life History of the Pitcher Blue. Butterflies of Singapore. A Tribute to Nature's Flying Jewels. <https://butterflycircle.blogspot.com/2010/03/life-history-of-pitcher-blue.html?m=1> (Accessed 10 April 2021).
Khew SK (2015) A Field Guide to the Butterflies of Singapore. 2nd Edition. Ink On Paper Communications Pte Ltd, Singapore, xxv + 375 pp.