

Biodiversity Record: A dubious bar flitter butterfly laying eggs at Lornie Nature Corridor

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Subject: Dubious bar flitter, *Quedara monteithi monteithi* (Insecta: Lepidoptera: HesperIIDae: HesperIIDae).

Subject identified by: Simon Chan Kee Mun.

Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Lornie Nature Corridor along Lornie Road; 1 May 2021; 1052 hrs.

Habitat: Secondary forest edge.

Observers: Simon Chan Kee Mun and Loh Jing Ling.

Observation: On the bright and hot morning, a female example was seen flitting about in one area of the forest fringe containing a specimen of the fan palm, *Livistona rotundifolia* (Fig. 1). She rested a few times, each time for more than five minutes (Fig. 2), then proceeded to land on one of the leaves of the fan palm and lay an egg at the tip of the leaf (Fig. 4). She took another rest, this time with slightly opened wings (Fig. 3), and deposited one more egg on the tip of another palm leaf (Fig. 5) before flying away from the area.

On 19 June 2021, while looking around for the caterpillar, we noticed one in a rolled-up leaf of the same plant on which the female had laid eggs (Fig. 6).

Remarks: *Quedara monteithi monteithi* is regarded as a rare skipper butterfly in Singapore, and observed mainly in the forested areas of the nature reserves. It has a forewing length of 17–19 mm, and is sexually dimorphic with the male lacking the short white bar on the forewing (Khew, 2015: 318).

The single larva observed in a rolled leaf on the fan palm (Fig. 6), with a broad black stripe on its head, is most likely a *Quedara monteithi monteithi* based on photographs of the caterpillar (Tan, 2021). *Daemonorops angustifolia* is the known host plant of *Quedara monteithi monteithi* (Khew, 2015: 318). However, in the featured sighting, we report the fan palm, *Livistona rotundifolia* (Fig. 1), to be another species of host plant for this butterfly.



Fig. 1. In situ top view of the fan palm, *Livistona rotundifolia*, on which the *Quedara monteithi monteithi* butterfly had laid eggs. (Photograph by: Simon Chan Kee Mun).



Fig. 2. Lateral view of the female *Quedara monteithi monteithi* butterfly with wings folded. (Photograph by: Simon Chan Kee Mun).



Fig. 3. Rear dorso-lateral view of the *Quedara monteithi monteithi* female resting in between laying eggs, with her wings slightly opened. (Photograph by: Simon Chan Kee Mun).



Fig. 4. The first egg laid by the *Quedara monteithi monteithi* at the tip of the fan palm leaf. (Photograph by: Simon Chan Kee Mun).



Fig. 5. The second egg laid by the *Quedara monteithi monteithi* on another leaf on the same fan palm plant. (Photograph by: Simon Chan Kee Mun).



Fig. 6. The head of the caterpillar observed on 19 June 2021 inside a rolled-up leaf of the fan palm, on which the *Quedara monteithi monteithi* had laid eggs. (Photograph by: Simon Chan Kee Mun).

Literature cited:

Khew SK (2015) A Field Guide to the Butterflies of Singapore. 2nd Edition. Ink On Paper Communications Pte Ltd, Singapore, xxv + 375 pp.

Tan H (2021) *Quedara monteithi monteithi*. Butterfly Circle Checklist. <http://www.butterflycircle.com/checklist/show/butterfly/275> (Accessed 8 September 2021)