

Rediscovery of the spotted guava blue butterfly in Singapore

Tsang Kwok Choong

ketsang2@mac.com

Subject: Spotted guava blue, *Virachola subguttata malaya* (Insecta: Lepidoptera: Lycaenidae).

Subject identified by: Tek Lin Seow, Gan Cheong Weei and John Howes.

Observer: Tsang Kwok Choong.

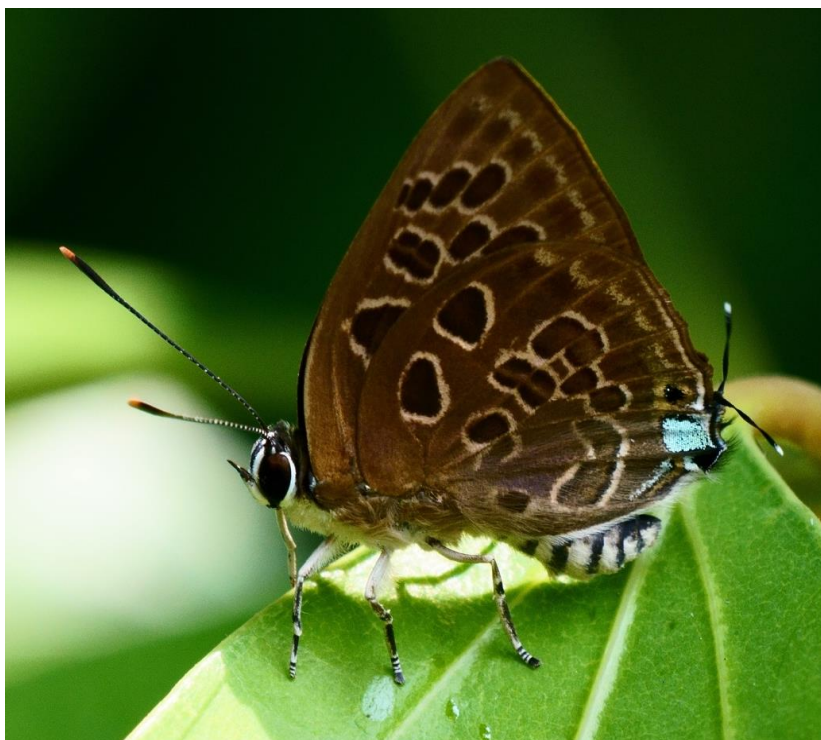
Location, date and time: Singapore Island, Central Catchment Nature Reserve, edge of Upper Seletar Reservoir; 7 August 2019; 1030 hrs.

Habitat: Secondary forest.

Observation: An adult example was photographed perched on a leaf of a forest plant (see picture attached).

Remarks: On 7 August 2019, the featured photograph was posted on iNaturalist (iNaturalist, 2019) where the subject was identified by Tek Lin Seow, a butterfly expert in Malaysia, who recognised it as a rediscovery for Singapore. Local butterfly enthusiasts Gan Cheong Weei and John Howes concurred with the identification.

Virachola subguttata malaya was listed as extant in Singapore in 1956 (Corbet & Pendlebury, 1992). However, there were no subsequent sightings of this butterfly in the country for the next six decades, and it was believed to be locally extinct (Jain et al., 2018). The featured subject is likely to be the first Singapore record of *Virachola subguttata malaya* in over 60 years. The spotted guava blue also occurs in Malaysia and Thailand where it is regarded as rare in both countries (Corbet & Pendlebury, 1992; Ek-Amnuay, 2012).



Photograph by Tsang Kwok Choong

References:

- Corbet AS & Pendlebury HM (1992) *The Butterflies of the Malay Peninsula*. 4th edition. Malayan Nature Society, Kuala Lumpur. 595 pp., 69 pls.
- Ek-Amnuay P (2012) *Butterflies of Thailand*. 2nd edition. Baan Lae Suan Amarin Printing, Bangkok. 943 pp., 420 pls.
- iNaturalist, 2019. Spotted Guava Blue (*Virachola subguttata malaya*). Observed: Aug 7, 2019. Submitted: Aug 7, 2019. <https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/30354697>. Accessed 31 July 2020.
- Jain A, Khew SK, Gan CW & Webb EL (2018) Butterfly extirpations, discoveries, & rediscoveries in Singapore over 28 years. *Raffles Bulletin of Zoology*, 66: 217-257.