

BUTTERFLIES OF VANSDA NATIONAL PARK, GUJARAT

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Shull (1963) documented the butterflies of southern Gujarat. He recorded 145 species from the region. Since none of the records were from Vansda National Park, a study was initiated on inventorying the butterflies in the Park.

The National Park is spread over 23.99km² in Valsad Taluka of Valsad District and located between 20°51'16" & 21°21'22"N and 73°20'30" & 73°31'20"E. The area of Vansda National Park is hilly with altitude ranging from 110-360m. These hills are extensions of Sahyadri Range. The Park represents the northern zone of the Western Ghats in Gujarat State along with Purna Wildlife Sanctuary.

The average annual rainfall at the Park is 1850mm, which is the highest for Gujarat. May is the hottest month. Minimum and maximum temperature recorded is 8.8°C and 43.8°C respectively.

Vegetation of the Park is tropical moist deciduous type. Singh *et al.* (2000) have recorded 440 species of plants, which include 110 species of trees, 43 species of shrubs, 63 species of climbers, 199 species of herbs and 25 species of grasses.

Butterflies were collected during 5-12 March and 15-22 August 2000 from each habitat of the National Park using specimen nets. The collected specimens were narcotized adding menthol crystals in the bottle and then air dried for identification. All the specimens were examined carefully and identified using various references such as Talbot (1939, 1947), Wynter-Blyth (1957) and Gay *et al.* (1992). All the scientific names follow Varshney (1979, 1985, 1990) and classification and common English names are after Wynter-Blyth (1957). Based on the sightings, butterfly species were categorized into abundant (more than 65 sightings), common (15-65 sightings), uncommon (5-14 sightings) and rare (1-4 sightings).

Sixty-two species belonging to nine families were recorded (Table 1). Of the total, six species (9.68%) were abundant, 30 species (48.39%) were common, 19 species (30.64%) were uncommon and seven (11.29%) were rare in occurrence in the Park.

The largest family represented by Nymphalidae with 17 species, followed by Lycaenidae with 11 species. Families Acraeidae and Erycinidae were represented by one species each.

The most common species recorded belonged to family Nymphalidae (12 species out of 17), while the uncommon species belonged to family Hesperidae (6 species out of 8).

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Table 1. Checklist of butterflies of Vansda National Park

Common name	Scientific name	Status	Common name	Scientific name	Status				
<u>Danaidae</u>			<u>Papilionidae</u>						
Blue Tiger	<i>Danaus limniace leopardus</i> (Butler)	C	Common Rose	<i>Atrophaneura aristolochiae</i> (Fabricius)	C				
Plan Tiger	<i>Danaus chrysippus</i> (Linnaeus)	A	Common Mormon	<i>Papilio polytes romulus</i> Cramer	C				
Striped or Common Tiger	<i>Danaus genutia</i> (Cramer)	C	Lime Butterfly	<i>Papilio demoleus</i> (Linnaeus)	C				
Common Indian Crow	<i>Euploea core</i> (Cramer)	A	Tailed Jay	<i>Graphium agamemnon</i>	C				
			Spot Swordtail	<i>Graphium nomius</i> (Esper)	U				
<u>Satyridae</u>			<u>Pieridae</u>						
Bamboo Treebrown	<i>Lethe europa</i> (Fabricius)	R	Psyche	<i>Leptosia nina</i> (Fabricius)	U				
Common Treebrown	<i>Lethe rohria</i>	U	Common Jezebel	<i>Delias eucharis</i> (Drury)	C				
Common Threering	<i>Ypthima asterope mahratta</i> Moore	C	Common Gull	<i>Cepora nerissa</i> (Fabricius)	C				
Common Fivering	<i>Ypthima baldus</i>	U	Common Wanderer	<i>Valeria valeria anais</i> (Lesson)	U				
Common Evening Brown	<i>Melanitis leda ismene</i> (Cramer)	C	Common Emigrant	<i>Catopsilia crocale</i> (Cramer)	A				
Dark-brand Bush Brown	<i>Mycalesis mineus</i> (Linnaeus)	R	Lemon Emigrant	<i>Catopsilia pomona</i> (Fabricius)	C				
			Mottled Emigrant	<i>Catopsilia pyranthe</i> (Linnaeus)	C				
<u>Nymphalidae</u>			Spotless Grass Yellow	<i>Eurema laeta</i> Boisduval	C				
Common Nawab	<i>Polyura athamas</i> (Drury)	U	Common Grass Yellow	<i>Eurema hecabe</i> (Linnaeus)	A				
Baronet	<i>Symphaedra nais</i> (Forster)	C							
Baron	<i>Euthalia aconthea</i> (Moore)	C	<u>Hesperiidae</u>						
Gaudy Baron	<i>Euthalia lubentina</i> (Cramer)	R	Indian Skipper	<i>Spialia galba</i> (Fabricius)	U				
Commander	<i>Moduza procris</i> (Cramer)	R	Common Banded Awl	<i>Hasora chromus chromus</i> (Cramer)	C				
Common Sailer	<i>Neptis hylas</i> (Linnaeus)	A	Brown Awl	<i>Badamia exclamationis</i> (Cramer)	U				
Blue Oakleaf	<i>Kallima horsfieldi philarchus</i> (Westwood)	C	Malabar Flat	<i>Celaenorrhinus ambareesa</i> (Moore)	R				
Great Eggfly	<i>Hypolimnas bolina</i> (Linnaeus)	C	Dark Palm Dart	<i>Telicota ohara jix</i> Evans	U				
Danaid Eggfly	<i>Hypolimnas misippus</i> (Linnaeus)	C	Indian Dart	<i>Potanthus pseudomaesa</i>	U				
Yellow Pansy	<i>Precis hierta</i> (Fabricius)	C	Grass Demon	<i>Udaspes folus</i> (Cramer)	U				
Blue Pansy	<i>Precis orithya</i> (Linnaeus)	C	Common Redeye	<i>Matapa aria</i> (Moore)	U				
Lemon Pansy	<i>Precis lemonias</i> (Linnaeus)	C							
Peacock Pansy	<i>Precis almanac</i> (Linnaeus)	C							
Chocolate Pansy	<i>Precis iphita</i> (Cramer)	C							
Grey Pansy	<i>Precis altites</i> (Linnaeus)	C							
Common Leopard	<i>Phalanta phalantha</i> (Drury)	A							
Painted Lady	<i>Cynthia cardui</i> (Linnaeus)	C							
<u>Acraeidae</u>			Table 2. Composition and status of butterflies in the Park.						
Tawny Coster	<i>Acraea violae</i> (Fabricius)	R	Family	No. of genus	No. of Species	Status			
						A	C	U	R
<u>Erycinidae</u>			Danaidae	2	4	2	2	-	-
Plum Judy	<i>Abisara echerius</i> (Stoll)	U	Satyridae	4	6	-	2	2	2
			Nymphalidae	10	17	2	12	1	2
<u>Lycaenidae</u>			Acraeids	1	1	-	-	-	1
Common Pierrot	<i>Castalius rosimon</i> (Fabricius)	U	Erycinidae	1	1	-	-	1	-
Angled Pierrot	<i>Castalius caleta</i> (Hewitson)	U	Lycaenidae	10	11	-	4	6	1
Rounded Pierrot	<i>Tarucus nara</i> (Kollar)	C	Papilionidae	3	5	-	4	1	-
Grass Jewel	<i>Freyeria trochilus putli</i> (Kollar)	R	Pieridae	6	9	2	5	2	-
Tiny Grass Blue	<i>Zizula gaika hylax</i> (Timen)	U	Hesperiidae	8	8	-	1	6	1
Plains Cupid	<i>Euchrysops parrhasius minuta</i> Evans	C	Total	45	62	6	30	19	7
Common Silverline	<i>Spindasis vulcanus</i>	U							
Common Cerulean	<i>Jamides celeno aelianus</i> (Fabricius)	C							
Angled Sunbeam	<i>Curetis acuta</i>	U							
Large Oakblue	<i>Narathura (Eumolphus) amantes</i>	U							
	(Hewitson)								
Indian Red Flash	<i>Rapala airbus sorya</i> (Kollar)	C							