



## Research paper

### Record of Tawny Coster *Acraea terpsicore* (Linnaeus, 1758) (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae) from Godavari Academy of Science and Technology Campus, Chhatarpur, Madhya Pradesh (India), with taxonomic status and distribution

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**Abstract:** Present communication deals with the record of *Acraea terpsicore* (Linnaeus, 1758), the Tawny Coster belonging to family Nymphalidae under order Lepidoptera, from Godavari Academy of Science and Technology Campus, Chhatarpur, Madhya Pradesh (India), with taxonomic status, distribution, life cycle and host plants. This record is based on exact locality in Chhatarpur, Madhya Pradesh (India).

**Keywords:** *Acraea terpsicore* (Linnaeus, 1758), Butterfly, Chhatarpur, Madhya Pradesh

#### Introduction:

Butterfly fauna of Madhya Pradesh (India) has attracted the attention of various workers during the past (Chandra et al., 2000a, b,

2002, 2007; Siddiqui and Singh, 2004; Singh and Koshta, 2005; Tiple, 2012; Shukla and Maini, 2015; Srivastava et al., 2022 etc.) but not much is known from Chhatarpur district. Chandra et al. (2007) mentioned the distribution of *Acraea terpsicore* (Linnaeus, 1758), the Tawny Coster, in general, from some districts of Madhya Pradesh including Chhatarpur without the exact locations. During present study while surveying the butterfly diversity, a good example of the same was sighted and photographed in Godavari Academy of Science and Technology Campus, Chhatarpur city (Madhya Pradesh, India) which has been recorded here with precise location in the city/district, description, distribution, life-cycle, larval host plants and taxonomic status.

**STUDY SITE: Godavari Academy of Science and Technology Campus, Chhatarpur, Madhya Pradesh (India):**

**Location:** Chhatarpur is located between Latitude 24° 06' and 25 ° 20' N, Longitude 79 ° 59' and 80 ° 26' E and having an average elevation of 305 m. It is lies on far north-east border of Madhya Pradesh, surrounded by Mahoba district of Uttar Pradesh state in north, Panna district in east, Damoh and Sagar districts in south and Tikamgarh district in west, covering an area of about 8617<sup>2</sup>km.

Godavari Academy of Science & Technology Campus falls in Bhawani Singh JuDeo Ward No. 17 under Chhatarpur city.

**Climate:** Humid sub-tropical with hot summers and cool winters; moderate to heavy rainfall during monsoon season (July-September).

**Flora at GAST Campus:** Nerium or *Kaner* (*Nerium oleander*, Apocynaceae), *Karonda* (*Carissa carandas*, Apocynaceae), White Frangipani (*Plumeria alba*, Apocynaceae), Mango (*Mangifera indica*, Anacardiaceae), *Genda* or Marigold (*Tagetes erecta*, Asteraceae or Daisy Family), Papaya (*Carica papaya*, Caricaceae), *Kalanchoe* (*Kalanchoe blossfeldiana*, Crassulaceae), Forest Fire (*Butea monosperma*, Fabaceae), Holy Basil or *Tulsi* (*Ocimum basilicum*, Lamiaceae), *Gurhal* (*Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*, Malvaceae), *Neem* (*Azadirachta indica*, Meliaceae), *Peepal* (*Ficus religiosa*, Moraceae), *Kela* or Banana (*Musa*, Musaceae), Bottle Brush (*Callistemon viminalis*, Myrtaceae), *Amrood* or Guava (*Psidium guajava*, Myrtaceae), *Bougainvillea* (*Bougainvillea glabra*, Nyctaginaceae), *Chameli*, Jasmine (*Jasminum*, Oleaceae), Arabian Jasmine, *Bela*, *Juhi* or *Mogra* (*Jasminum sambac*, Oleaceae), Passion flower, possibly (*Passiflora*, Passifloraceae), Doob Grass

(*Cynodon dactylon*, Poaceae), *Gulab* or Rose (*Rosa*, Rosaceae), Lemon (*Citrus*, Rutaceae), Curry *Patta* or *Meetha Neem* (*Murraya koenigii*, Rutaceae) and some seasonal vegetables.

**SYNONYMY, DIAGNOSIS, DISTRIBUTION AND LIFE-CYCLE**

***Acraea terpsicore* (Linnaeus, 1758)**

*Papilio terpsicore* Linnaeus, 1758. *Syst. nat.* (Edn.10) 1: 466 (type-locality: Asia); Linnaeus, 1767. *Syst. nat.* (Edn.12) 1 (2): 755; Honey & Scoble, 2001. *Zool. J. Linn. Soc.*, 132: 383.

*Papilio terpsichore* [sic. *terpsicore*], Linnaeus, 1764. *Mus. Lud. Ulr.*:222.

*Papilio violae* Fabricius, 1775. *Syst. Ent.*: 460 (type-locality: Tranquebar, S. India); Fabricius, 1793. *Ent. Syst.*, 3 (1): 164, no. 505.

*Papilio tersichore*, Cramer, 1780. *Uitl. Kapellen*, 4 (25-26a): 17, pl. 298, figs. A-B=*Acraea vesta* (*tersichore*).

*Papilio cephea* Cramer, 1782. *Pap. Exot.*, 3: pl. 298, figs. D, E (type-locality: Cote de Coromandel).

*Telchinia cephea*, Huebner, 1816. *Verz. bek. Schmett.*: 27.

*Acraea violae*, Godart, 1819. *Encyc. Meth.*, 9: 231, no. 4; Doubleday, 1844. *List Lep. Brit. Mus.*, part 1: 62; Eltringham, 1912. *Trans. Ent. Soc. Lond.*, 1912 (1): 348; Peile, 1937. *A Guide to Collecting Butterflies of India*: 157, pl. 15, fig. 123 (male); Talbot, 1947. *Faun. Brit. India, Butterflies*, 2: 466-469, fig 104 (male); Chandra et al., 2002. *Zoos' Print Journal*, 17 (10): 909; Kehimkar, 2008. *The Book of Indian Butterflies*: 335-336, fig.; Das et al., 2010. *J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.*, 107 (91): 63; Khot & Gaikwad, 2011. *J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.*, 108 (2): 140; Tiple, 2012. *Journal of Threatened Taxa*, 4 (7): 2715; Shukla & Maini, 2015. *International Journal of*

*Current Advanced Research*, 4 (9): 369; Varshney & Smetacek, 2015. *A synoptic catalogue of the butterflies of India*: 222; Kehimkar, 2016. *Butterflies of India*; Inayoshi, 2018. *Butterflies in Indo-China*.  
*Telchinia violae*, Moore, 1857. In: Horsfield & Moore, *Catal. Lep. Ins. In: Mus. Hon. East-India*. Company, 1 (Rhopelocera): 135-136, pl. 5, fig. 1, 1a; Moore, 1865. *Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond.*, 1865: 760 (Bengal); Moore, 1880. *The Lepidoptera of Ceylon*, 1 (2): 66-67, pl. 33, figs. 1 (male), 1a (female), 1b (larva, pupa); Marshall & de Niceville, 1883. *Butterflies of India, Burma and Ceylon*: 320, fig (male); Taylor & de Niceville, 1888. *List of the butterflies of Khorda of Orissa*. No. 26 (Orissa); Hampson, 1889. *J. Asiat. Soc. Bengal*, 57 (2), no. 4: 352 (Nilgiri Hills); Davidson & Atkinson, 1890. *J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.*, 5: 268; Moore, 1901. *Lepidoptera Indica*: 38, pl. 388, figs. 1, 1a (larva, pupa), 1b, c, d (male), 1e, f, g (female); de Rhe-Philipe, 1902. *J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.*, 14: 484 (Lucknow); Bingham, 1907. *Faun. Brit. India*, Butterflies Vol. 2: 471-472, fig. 85 (male); Bell, 1910. *J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.*, 20: 321, pl. figs. 31, 31a (male, female); Hannington, 1910. *J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.*, 20 (1):141 (Bhimtal, Kumaon, 3,000 ft); Fruhstrofer, 1914. *Faun. Indo-Austral.*, 9: 742, t. 138a; Ormiston, 1918. *Spolia Zeylanica*: 35 (Ceylon, to 6,000 ft); Evans, 1932. *The Identification of Indian Butterflies* (ed. ii): 192, pl. 25, fig. 52 (male); Woodhouse & Henry, 1942. *The Butterfly Fauna of Ceylon*: 68, pl. 15, fig. 13 (female), pl. 37, fig. 3, pl. 39, fig. 2 (larva, pupa), pl. 49, fig. 4 (egg).  
*Papilio maindroni* Le Cerf, 1927. *Encycli. Ent.* (B3), 2: 57.  
*Acraea (Telechina) violae*, Doubleday & Westwood, 1946-50. *Diurnal Lepidoptera*. 1: 142.

*Acraea terpsicore*, Varshney, 1994. *Oriental Ins.*, 28: 191; Singh & Koshta, 2005. *Rec. zool. Surv. India*, 104 (1-2): 43; Chandra et al., 2007. *Zoos' Print Journal*, 22 (8):2795; Singh, 2011. *Butterflies of India*: 134, 2 figs.; Field, 2017. *North Queensland Naturalist*, 47: 28-31 (Australia); Sondhi & Kunte, 2018. *Butterflies of Uttarakhand: A field guide*: 152, 2 figs.; Das et al., 2018. *Insecta: Lepidoptera (Butterflies)*. In: *Faunal diversity of Indian Himalaya*: 636; Flora et al., 2020. *Journal of Threatened Taxa*, 12 (11): 16610; Srivastava et al., 2022. Development and establishment of butterfly conservatory at Van Vihar National Park and Zoo. *Technical Report*: 37, fig. (page 48); Mallick & Ghorai, 2024. *Ambient Science*, 11 (1): 7-8.

*Acraea (Acraea) (subgroup horta) terpsicore*, Pierre & Bernaud, 2013. *Butterflies of the World*, 39: 6, pl. 19, figs. 1-2.

**Common Name:** Tawny Coster

**Classification:** Class Insecta, order Lepidoptera, superfamily Papilionodea, family Nymphalidae, subfamily Heliconiinae (Das et al., 2018; Saji et al., 2024)/Acraeinae (Singh and Koshta, 2005; Varshney and Smetacek, 2015), tribe Acraeini, genus *Acraea* Fabricius, 1897.

**Material Examined:** 1 example; Godavari Academy of Science & Technology Campus, Bhawani Singh JuDeo Ward No. 17, Chhatarpur city, Chhatarpur district, Madhya Pradesh, India; 2.iv.2023; by 2<sup>nd</sup> author (AKD).

**Description:** Antennae black, head and thorax black spotted with ochraceous and white; abdomen anteriorly black, posteriorly ochraceous yellow with narrow transverse black lines above; palpi, thorax and abdomen ochraceous below; thorax spotted with ochraceous and abdomen with a black longitudinal line at base.

Male: Red, brick-red or tawny above; both wings spotted with black and having black margin; fore-wing with thinner margin and having a transverse black spot in cell; hind-wing margin broader and enclosing small white spots; underside lighter (ochraceous-yellow, ochraceous-red or paler tawny-yellow); hind-wing black margin enclosing larger white spots.

Female: almost like that of male but duller above, black spots on both wings comparatively larger, underside much paler and with duller markings.

Wing-span: 53-64 mm (Moore, 1880; Bingham, 1907 Bhimtal, ; [en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org)); 50-65 mm (Talbot, 1947; Kehimkar, 2008; Singh, 2011; Sondhi and Kunte, 2018); 57 mm (present specimen, fig. 2).

**Altitudinal Range:** plains and up to about 4,000 ft. (Moore, 1880); Ceylon/now Sri Lanka, to 6,000 ft. (Ormiston, 1918); Himalaya up to 1,500 m (Kehimkar, 2008, 2016; Singh, 2011); Kumaon, 3,000 ft. (Hannington, 1910); foot hills up to 2,000 m, being more common at lower altitudes (Sondhi and Kunte, 2018).

**Distribution:**

India:

Madhya Pradesh:

Chhatarpur district: Chhatarpur district (no specific locality mentioned) (Chandra et al., 2007); Godavari Academy of Science and Technology Campus, Bhawani Singh JuDeo Ward No. 17, Chhatarpur city (present record with location).

Rest of Madhya Pradesh: Balaghat, Bhopal (Van Vihar National Park & Zoo), Chhatarpur, Chhindwara, Hoshangabad, Indore, Jabalpur, Mandla, Panna (Panna National Park), Raisen, Sirohi, Tikamgarh, Ujjain and Umari districts (Chandra et al., 2000b, 2002, 2007; Siddiqui and Singh, 2004; Singh and Koshta, 2005; Tiple, 2012; Mallick and Ghorai, 2024; Shukla and

Maini, 2015; Flora et al., 2020; Srivastava et al., 2022; Saji et al., 2024; [www.ifoundbutterflies.org](http://www.ifoundbutterflies.org)).

Rest of India: Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Dadra Nagar Haveli UT, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Himalaya (North-western, Western, Central and Eastern), Jammu & Kashmir UT, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Maharashtra, Odisha, Puducherry UT, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Tripura, Uttarakhand (Bhimtal), Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow) and West Bengal (24 Parganas district).

Elsewhere: Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Laos, Maldives, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

**Habitat:** Agriculture fields, forest edges, gardens, grasslands, open land and scrub, residential flower beds and pots, roadside secondary forests at low to moderate elevations and wastelands.

**Food & Feeding:** Adults feed on flower nectar; larvae feeds on host plants.

**Life Cycle:**

Eggs: About 15-100 yellowish and slightly elongate or dome-shaped eggs laid in batches on a young shoot or tendril of host plants.

Caterpillar/Larva: Head small, round, set with erect hairs and reddish or brownish-orange; body reddish-brown and reddish-yellow above and yellowish-white or greenish-yellow below; legs shiny black; body cylindrical, segments armed with a number of branched spines; Passiflora host plants containing toxins, sequestered by them.

Measure about 21 mm in length, breadth 10 mm (including that of 3 mm of spines) (Talbot, 1947).

Pupa: Elongated; head with two blunt points and anal end bluntly rounded; surface dull, slightly wrinkled and set with minute erect hairs; reddish-white, marked with thick black lines and red and orange spots and markings.

Measure about 17 mm in length 6 mm in maximum breadth (Talbot, 1947).

**Larval Host Plants:** Cucumbers (Cucurbitaceae), *Aporosa lindleyana* (Euphorbiaceae), some flowering plants (Loganiaceae), *Adenia hondala* (syn. *Modecca palmata*), *Passiflora edulis*, *Passiflora foetida*, *Passiflora incarnata*, *Passifolia suberosa*, *Passiflora subpeltata*, *Turnera subulata* and *Turnera ulmifolia* (Passifloraceae) and *Hybanthus enneaspermus* (Violaceae) (Bingham, 1907; Talbot, 1947; Kunte, 2000; Kehimkar, 2008, 2016; Das et al., 2010; Robinson et al., 2010; Khot and Gaikwad, 2011; Singh, 2011; Gideon et al., 2016; Karmakar et al., 2018; Nitin et al., 2018; Sondhi and Kunte, 2018; Saji et al., 2024; [www.funet.fi](http://www.funet.fi)).

**Taxonomic Status:** The taxonomic status of the species has been in great confusion during the past as being known both as *Acraea terpsicore* and *A. violae* in literature. Some authors have pointed out that they failed in locating the type material of *Papilio terpsicore* Linnaeus, 1758 and hence name has been erroneously used for several species as *terpsicore* Linnaeus, 1758 which was not well defined and hence concluded that *Papilio violae* Fabricius, 1775 was probably the valid name and used it which appear followed by Godart (1819), Doubleday (1844), Eltringham, (1912), Peile (1937), Doubleday and Westwood (1946-50), Talbot (1947), Kehimkar (2008, 2016), Shukla and Maini (2015), Chandra et al. (2002); Das et al. (2010), Khot and Gaikwad (2011), Tiple (2012), Varshney and Smetacek (2015) etc.

However, several other workers sorted this issue and shown that the type of *terpsicore* Linnaeus, 1758, collected from Chennai (Tamil Nadu, India), existed in the collections of the Linnean Society of London and identified as such, *A. terpsicore* (Le Doux 1922, 1928; Pierre and Bernaud 1997, 2013). Varshney (1994), Singh and Koshta (2005), Chandra et al., (2007), Singh (2011), Das et al. (2018), Sondhi and Kunte (2018), Flora et al. (2020), Srivastava et al. (2022), Mallick and Ghorai (2024) and Saji et al. (2024) etc., considering it valid, followed this treatment and so also the present authors.

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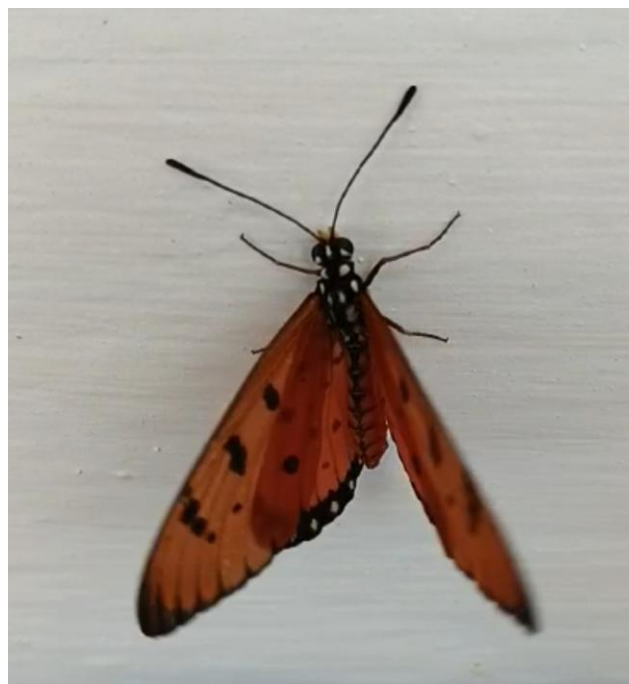
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**Figure 1.** *Acraea terpsicore*, dorsal aspect



**Figure 3.** *Acraea terpsicore*, folded wings



**Figure 2.** *Acraea terpsicore*, wing-span