

Extension of the known distribution of the genus *Herdonia* Walker (Lepidoptera: Thyrididae) to the Yeoor Hills, Maharashtra, India

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The Thyridid genus *Herdonia* Walker occurs from Papua New Guinea (Watson & Whalley 1986) northwards to China (Hampson 1892) and westwards to the Kumaon Himalaya in the Indian state of Uttarakhand (Smetacek 2008). In India, three species belonging to the genus are known to inhabit a narrow belt along the Himalaya and in northeastern India.

On 19 June 2011, a single specimen of this moth was photographed in Yeoor Hills, Maharashtra (19.243197°N & 72.935463°E, elevation 100m) along a trail in a semievergreen forest in a part of the Sanjay Gandhi National Park. It was resting on the upper side of a leaf of a low growing plant during the daytime in the manner characteristic of the genus (Image 1). The moth settles with the wings outspread and the forelegs and midlegs extended, so that it rests at an angle of roughly 60° to the substrate, with the anal angle of the hind wing and the anal angle of the forewing resting against the substrate while the costae of the forewings are held at an angle of roughly 60° between the verso surfaces.

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Many of the members of this family are local species, suggesting that they require particular conditions in order to colonise an area. In the Himalaya, members of this genus are usually found in forested areas with heavy rainfall. They are on the wing very briefly during the year and are never found in large numbers.

The present record represents a major extension



Image 1. *Herdonia near thaiensis* at Yeoor Hills, Sanjay Gandhi National Park, Maharashtra.

of the known range of the genus, from the Himalayan foothills to the northern Western Ghats. The specimen photographed is placed near *Herdonia thaiensis* Inoue, although it is not possible to place it with certainty at the species level until at least one specimen is examined.

Since obtaining a specimen will entail special permissions from various protected areas authorities, which, as an individual it will be difficult for the author to obtain and by which time the flying season will certainly be over, the present report is intended to draw the attention of future workers to the presence of this elusive genus in the region.

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