

Sri Lanka - A Butterfly Tour

Naturetrek Tour Report

5 - 13 October 2014



Gladeye Bushbrown



Peacock Pansy



Black Rajah



Plumbeous Silverline

Report compiled by Chamara Nuwan Munasinghe & Chaminda Dilruk

Images courtesy of Duncan Rowe



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Participants:	Tony Mundell Pat Mundell Janet Heppenstall Duncan Rowe	

Day 0

Saturday 4th October

Travel from the UK

Day 1

Sunday 5th October

The group arrived at Colombo Airport and we left for Singharaja at 2pm via the Katunayake Colombo highway and used the Kottawa expressway to Matugama, planning to stop en route to see some butterflies in Kalawana. Heavy rain hampered our hopes of stopping at Kalawana so we proceeded to Singharaja trying to catch a few sightings before sundown. The rains which are not common during this period are due to the depression in the Bay of Bengal which directly affects Sri Lanka. We reached Blue Magpie Lodge at 5pm and were welcomed with a hot cup of tea and got a chance to find some birds from the restaurant including Changeable Hawk Eagle, White Breasted Kingfisher, and we heard many other species. We were lucky with one butterfly - the Evening Brown. As night approached we started planning for the next day and looked forward to an early start.

Day 2

Monday 6th October

The day started with heavy rains and delayed our departure to 7am. Although it was raining we decided to proceed to Singharaja forest. From the ticket counter we went to the entrance by foot as on that route we encountered the Red Helen, Sri Lanka Blue Oak Leaf (E), and Gladeye Bushbrown. By 8am the rain had ceased and we were able to see Sri Lanka Tree Nymph (E), Tailed Jay, the large Blue Mormon, Common Mormon, White Four Ring, Common Rose, One Spot Grass Yellow (E), Blue Glassy Tiger, Commander, Clipper, Common Evening Brown, Medus Brown, Plum Judy, Grass Demon, Blank Swift, Grey Pansy, Danaid Eggfly, Gaudy Baron, Dark-Brand Bushbrown, Chestnut Bob, Common Grass Darts and Dark Palm Dart.

We also encountered birds such as the White-throated Kingfisher, Crimson backed Woodpecker, Flame Minivet, Black-hooded Oriole, Sri Lanka Drongo, Sri Lanka Crested Drongo, Yellow Wagtail, Black-naped Monarch, Brown-capped Babbler, Dark-fronted Babbler, Ashy-headed Laughing Thrush, Spot-winged Thrush, Oriental Magpie Robin, Legge's Flowerpecker, White-throated Flowerpecker, Red Face Malkoha, Sri Lanka Blue Magpie (E), and Chestnut Backed Owlet.

Other species seen were Kangaroo Lizard, Common Garden Green Lizard, Giant Millipede, Green Vine Snake, and a Green Pit Viper. We also found a very rare and endemic Tree Climbing Crab (*Ceylonthelphusa scansor*). We returned back to the hotel at 5pm. After a good dinner we went to our rooms for a good night's sleep.

Day 3

Tuesday 7th October

Once again the day started with rain so we were unable to do a bit of butterfly watching around the hotel, therefore we left Singharaja at 8am and proceeded to Kandy. We stopped en-route at a restaurant for a hot cup of tea where we encountered the Crimson Rose in the restaurant garden.

We reached Kandy by 2.30pm and had a quick lunch and visited the Royal Botanical Gardens in Peradeniya. We enjoyed the orchids, bamboos and other plant varieties along with common butterflies Blue Bottle, Blue Admiral, and Nawab.

Bird species were Purple Heron, Little Grebe, Little Cormorant, Alexandrine Parakeet, Rose-ringed Parakeet, Crimson-fronted Barbet, Black-rumped Flameback, Black-hooded Oriole, Sri Lanka Swallow, White-bellied Drongo, Yellow Wagtail, Yellow-billed Babbler, Lesser Hill Myna, Tickell's Blue Flycatcher, and Purple-rumped Sunbird. Later on, after a buffet dinner, we retired to our hotel rooms.

Day 4

Wednesday 8th October

We had an early breakfast and left for the Knuckles Range by 7am with picnic lunch for a full day excursion. We enjoyed a 4km walk where we encountered Sri Lanka Tree Brown (E), Sri Lanka Forester, Great Eggfly, Common Silverline, Slate Flash, and Restricted Demon.

A number of birds were also on our list, starting with Sri Lanka Spurfowl (E), Slaty breasted Rail, Rock Pigeon, Spotted Dove, Yellow-fronted Barbet (E), Black-hooded Oriole, Sri Lanka Blue Magpie (E), White-bellied Drongo, Yellow-billed Babbler, Sri Lanka Hill Myna (E), Oriental Magpie Robin, Indian Blue Robin, Sri Lanka White Eye (E), and Velvet-fronted Nuthatch.

On our drive back from the Knuckles Range we managed to spot an odd shape of wings in a nearby tree which turned out to be an Indian Moon Moth or Indian Luna Moth (*Actiassele*) which is not a very common sighting! We also saw the purple faced tree monkey, Toque Macaque, Grey Langur, and Grizzled Giant Squirrel. We came back to the hotel by 4.30pm as the rains had increased.

At 6.30pm we went to the Temple of The Tooth and did a history tour of the temple and the Kings Palace. We returned to the hotel at 8.30 pm for dinner and called it a night.

Day 5

Thursday 9th October

After breakfast we left at 7am and went to Wasgamuwa via Riverstone (a cloud forest) where we had a fantastic view of so many important butterflies including Sri Lanka Bird Wing (E), Five bar Swordtail, *Leptosianina*, *Psyche*, Jezebel, Common Albatross, Lemon Emigrant, Dark Blue Tiger, Plain Tiger, Common Tiger, Common Crow, Common Castor, Leopard, Chocolate Soldier, Common Sailor and Common Line Blue.

We arrived at the hotel at 1.30 for lunch and set off at 2.00pm to Wasgamuwa for a jeep safari where we saw scores of butterflies on the Kara tree at the entrance of the park, including Common Crow, Jezebel and Blue Glassy Tiger.

A herd of elephants with a tusker came up close to the vehicle – an exciting part of the day! We also encountered Indian Grey Mongoose, Ruddy Mongoose, Muntjac, Sambar, Indian Pangolin, Indian Porcupine, and Indian Hare.

We saw many birds as well - Jungle Bush Quail, Indian Peafowl, Painted Stork, Woolly-necked Stork, Lesser Adjutant, Black-headed Ibis, Purple Heron, Great Egret, Little Egret, Little Grebe, Indian Cormorant, Black Kite, Grey-headed Fish Eagle, Crested Serpent Eagle, Black Eagle, Changeable Hawk Eagle, Stay-legged Crake, Slaty-breasted Rail, Purple Swamphen, Common Coot, Red-wattled Lapwing, Whiskered Tern, Emerald Dove, Yellow-footed Green Pigeon, Greater Coucal, Green Bee-eater, Blue-tailed Bee-eater, Malabar Pied Hornbill, Brown Shrike, Common Lora, Large-billed Crow, Greater Racket-tailed Drongo, Richard's Pipit, Blyth's Pipit, Yellow-eared Bulbul (E), White-browed Bulbul, and Zitting Cisticola.

We returned to the hotel at 6pm and met up for the checklist. After a good dinner we headed back to our rooms for the night.

Day 6

Friday 10th October

The next day we proceeded to Sigiriya and stopped in many paddy fields and places including Naula where we found many new species; Common Jay, Spot Swordtail, Pioneer, Common Gull, Yellow Orange Tip, Mottled Emigrants, Common Grass Yellow, Glassy Tiger, Lemon Pansy, Blue Pansy, Peacock Pansy and Common Banded Awl. In the evening we had a trek at the Kandalama tank bund where we had our picnic lunch and had many more common butterflies. We got back to the hotel by 2.30pm. At 4.00 pm we had a walk near the hotel and once again saw many common butterflies.

The other species for the day were Cotton-pygmy Goose, Northern Pintail, Asian Openbill, Indian Pond Heron, Spot-billed Pelican, Darter, Black-winged Kite, Brahminy Kite, Pheasant-tailed Jacana, Sri Lanka Green Pigeon, Common Kingfisher, Pied Kingfisher, Brown-headed Barbet, Jerdon's Leafbird, Common Lora, Ashy Prinia, Plain Prinia, Common Myna, Pale-billed Flowerpecker, House Sparrow, Scaly-breasted Munia, Water Monitor, and Common Garden Lizard.

Day 7

Saturday 11th October

After breakfast we left with a picnic lunch to Ritigala for a full day excursion and trekked for 4-5 km to the Ritigala archaeological site. Here we had very interesting new species; Banded Peacock, Lime Butterfly, Great Orange Tip, Dark Wanderer, Red-spot Duke, Centaur Oak-blue, Plumbeous Silver-line, Malayan, and Lime Blue. We returned back by foot on the same path. We were back in the hotel by 2.30pm and then at 4pm we went back to the Sigiriya tanks and visited the foot of the Sigiriya rock and had a good view of some of the common species.

Birds we encountered on the way were Common Teal, White-breasted Water-hen, Stork-billed Kingfisher, Sand Martin, and Sri Lanka Scimitar Babbler (E).

Day 8

Sunday 12th October

After breakfast we visited Kaludiya Pokuna where we had new butterfly species such as Black Rajah, Common Bush-brown, Indian Sunbeam, Large Oak Blue, and Bright Babul Blue and we also encountered Green Imperial Pigeon, Blue-faced Malkoha, Giant Squirrel, and Land Monitor. After lunch we drove back to the last hotel Airport Garden where we met Perry and Mukesh to greet us upon arrival. Perry had a good chat with all the participants and we had a very good buffet dinner before we said goodbye to all...

Day 9

Monday 13th October

After breakfast the clients were dropped at the airport for departure and Mr & Mrs Mundell proceeded on a 6 day private tour with Chaminda.

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Species List

Butterflies

PAPILIONIDAE

1	<i>Troidesdarsius</i>	Sri Lanka Birdwing (E)
2	<i>Pachliopta hector</i>	Crimson Rose
3	<i>Pachlioptajophon</i>	Ceylon Rose (E)
4	<i>Pachlioptaaristolocheiae</i>	Common Rose
5	<i>Papiliocrino</i>	Banded Peacock
6	<i>Papiliodemoleus</i>	Lime Butterfly
7	<i>Papiliohelennus</i>	Red Helen
8	<i>Papiliopolytes</i>	Common Mormon
9	<i>Papiliopolymnestor</i>	Blue Mormon
10	<i>Graphiumsarpedon</i>	Bluebottle
11	<i>Graphiumdoron</i>	Common Jay
12	<i>Graphiumagamemnon</i>	Tailed Jay
13	<i>Graphiumnomius</i>	Spot Swordtail
14	<i>Graphiumantiphates</i>	Five bar Swordtail

PIERIDAE

15	<i>Leptosianina Psyche</i>	
16	<i>Delias eucharis</i>	Jezebel
17	<i>Ceporanerissa</i>	Common Gull
18	<i>Appias albino</i>	Common Albatross
19	<i>Appiasgalene</i>	Lesser Albatross (E)
20	<i>Ixias marianae</i>	White Orange Tip
21	<i>Ixias pyrene</i>	Yellow Orange Tip
22	<i>Hebomoia glaucippe</i>	Great Orange Tip
23	<i>Catopsilia pyranthe</i>	Mottled Emigrant
24	<i>Catopsilia pomona</i>	Lemon Emigrant
25	<i>Pareronia ceylanica</i>	Dark Wanderer
26	<i>Eurema hecabe</i>	Common Grass Yellow
27	<i>Eurema ormistoni</i>	One-Spot Grass Yellow (E)

NYMPHALIDAE

28	<i>Idea iasonia</i>	Sri Lanka Tree Nymph (E)
29	<i>Ideopsis similis</i>	Blue Glassy Tiger
30	<i>Tirumalaseptentrionis</i>	Dark Blue Tiger
31	<i>Parantica aglea</i>	Glassy Tiger
32	<i>Parantica probana</i>	Sri Lanka Tiger (E)
33	<i>Danaus chrysippus</i>	Plain Tiger
34	<i>Danaus genutia</i>	Common Tiger
35	<i>Euploea core</i>	Common Crow
36	<i>Ariadne merione</i>	Common Castor
37	<i>Cuphaerymanthis</i>	Rustic
38	<i>Phalanta phalantha</i>	Leopard
39	<i>Kaniskacanace</i>	Blue Admiral
40	<i>Junonia lemonias</i>	Lemon Pansy
41	<i>Junonia orithya</i>	Blue Pansy
42	<i>Junonia atlites</i>	Grey Pansy
43	<i>Junonia iphita</i>	Chocolate Soldier
44	<i>Junonia almana</i>	Peacock Pansy
45	<i>Hypolimnias bolina</i>	Great Eggfly
46	<i>Hypolimnias misippus</i>	Danaid Eggfly

47	<i>Kallimaphilarchus</i>	Sri Lanka Blue Oak Leaf (E)
48	<i>Neptisbhylas</i>	Common Sailor
49	<i>Moduzaprocris</i>	Commander
50	<i>Partbenosylvia</i>	Clipper
51	<i>Dophlaevelina</i>	Red spot Duke
52	<i>Euthaliaalubentina</i>	Gaudy Baron
53	<i>Polyuraathamas</i>	Nawab
54	<i>Charaxes solon</i>	Black Rajah
55	<i>Melanitisleda</i>	Common Evening Brown
56	<i>Lethe daretis</i>	Sri Lanka Treebrown (E)
57	<i>Lethe dynsate</i>	Sri Lanka Forester (E)
58	<i>Orsotriaenamemedus</i>	Nigger
59	<i>Mycalasismineus</i>	Dark-Brand Bushbrown
60	<i>Mycalasisperseus</i>	Common Bushbrown
61	<i>Mycalasispatnia</i>	GladeyeBushbrown
62	<i>Ypthimaceytonica</i>	White Four-ring

LYCAENIDAE

63	<i>Curetisthetis</i>	Indian Sunbeam
64	<i>Arhopalaamantes</i>	Large Oakblue
65	<i>Arhopalapseudocentaurus</i>	Centaur Oakblue
66	<i>Spindasisvulcanus</i>	Common Silverline
67	<i>Spindasischistacea</i>	PlumbeousSilverline
68	<i>Rapalamanea</i>	Slate Flash
69	<i>Prosotasnora</i>	Common Lineblue
70	<i>Zizulabylax</i>	Tiny Grass Blue
71	<i>Azaniusubaldus</i>	Bright Babul Blue
72	<i>Megisbamalaya</i>	Malayan
73	<i>Chiladeslajus</i>	Lime Blue

RIODINIDAE

74	<i>Abisaraecheirus</i>	Plum Judy
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HESPERIIDAE

75	<i>Hasorachromus</i>	Common Banded Awl
76	<i>Lambrixsalsala</i>	Chestnut Bob
77	<i>Udaspesfolus</i>	Grass Demon
78	<i>Notocryptacurvifascia</i>	Restricted Demon
79	<i>Taractroceramaevius</i>	Common Grass Dart
80	<i>Telicotaancilla</i>	Dark Palm Dart
81	<i>Caltoris kumara</i>	Blank Swift