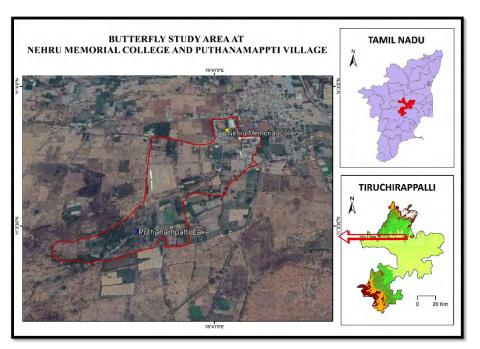
Checklist of butterflies of Nehru Memorial College and Puthanampatti Village, Tiruchirappalli District, Tamil Nadu

The butterflies are notable insects, playing important ecological roles such as bioindicators, pollinators, prey, defoliators, and herbivores to provide economic and ecological benefits to human society. Pollination is a key ecological process in natural sustainability throughout the world (Bhuyan et al 1999; Gupta et al 2012). The butterflies can indirectly change the plant diversity in our environment, especially herbs and shrubs diversity are changed due to the pollination process aided by the butterflies (Sheela et al., 2015). Butterflies are good indicators of environmental changes, the larvae and adult butterflies depend on various host plants for foliage, nectar and pollen for their food. Butterflies are a visual treat and are thus considered as the "fluttering jewels of nature" (Jose and Senthilkumar 2016). They play a major key role in the food chain, being prey for birds, reptiles, spiders and predatory insects (Thangapandian et al 2014).

Butterflies are classified into two superfamilies Papilionoidea and Hesperioidae. Papilionoidea is composed of five families: Lycaenidae (Blues), Nymphalidae (Brush-footed Butterflies), Papilionidae (Swallowtails), Pieridae (White and Yellows), and Riodinidae (Judies and Punches), all are found in the Indian Subcontinent (Kehimkar 2016). There are more than 18,000 species of butterflies in the world. There are 334 species of butterflies reported from the Western Ghats (Tiple 2009) and 150 from the Eastern Ghats (Gunathilagaraj et al 1998). Butterfly diversity in India varies from place to place (Table 1 and Table 2), According to Gaonkar (1996) the butterfly diversity decreases from south to north along the Western Ghats and the butterfly species reported from the southern states are Kerala (314 species), Karnataka (316 species), Tamil Nadu (316 species), Goa (249 species), Maharashtra (208 species) and Gujarat (158 species). The objective of the present study was to conduct preliminary observations to identify the butterflies in the study area.

Materials and Methods

Study area: The present study was carried out in 50 acres of the Nehru Memorial College campus and 69 acres of *Puthanampatti* village of Tiruchirappalli District, Tamil Nadu (Lat 11°3′50.87″N, Long 78°41′2.93″E). The Elevation ranges from 106 to 116 meters above the mean sea level. Tiruchirappalli District receives the northeast monsoon and some showers during the southwest monsoon. The study area is open with dry habitat comprising of



Study area

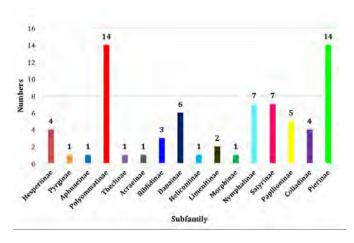
shrub (Cassia auriculata, Flueggea leucopyrus, Lantana camara, Dodonaea viscosa, Tecoma stans), herb (Tridax procumbens, Tephrosia purpurea, Sida cordata, Boerhavia diffusa, Tribulus terrestris, Parthenium hysterophorus) and trees (Azhardiracta indica, Prosopis juliflora, Millettia pinnata) in and around the college

campus. During the study period, paddy was in cultivation and lemon plantations were present.

Methods: Butterflies were observed opportunistically throughout the year from January to December 2017. The species of butterflies were identified with the help of the field guide by Kehimkar (2016). Photographs were taken using DSLR camera D3300 Nikon attached with 18-55mm and 70-300mm lens. No specimen was collected during the study period.

Results and Discussion

In the study area, 72 species of butterflies were recorded belonging to 5 families and 16 sub families. The family Nymphalidae and Pieridae were found dominant with 28



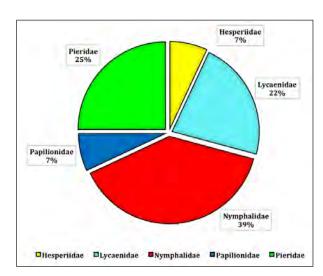
Number of Butterfly species recorded under different subfamilies

and 18 species respectively, followed by Lycaenidae (16 species), Papilionidae and Hesperiidae (5 species). The subfamilies comprised of 14 species each of Polyommatinae and Pierinae, followed by 7 species each of Nymphalinae and Satyrinae, 6 species of Danainae, 5 species of Papilioninae, 4 species each of Hesperiinae and Coliadinae, followed by 3 species of Biblidinae, 2 species of Limenitinae, and 1 species each

belonging to Aphnaeinae, Acraeinae, Heliconiinae, Limenitinae, Morphinae, Pyrginae and Theclinae. The butterflies were categorized as Common and Uncommon based on the field guide for butterflies by Kehimkar (2016). Among the 72 butterflies recorded, 9 species come under Indian Wildlife (protection) Act 1972, Among the nine species Pachliopta hector, Hypolimnas bolina, Castalius rosimon come under Schedule I *Euchrysops cnejus*, *Hypolimnas missipus*, *Lampides boeticus*, *Cepora nerissa*, *Charaxes solon* come under Schedule II while *Euploea core* comes under the Schedule IV of the Wildlife protection act 1972 (Kunte 2000; Gupta and Mondal 2005; Sharma et al 2017). Species belonging to the family Nymphalidae were the most dominant (38.88%) followed by Pieridae (25%),

Lycaenidae (22.22%), Papilionidae and Hesperiidae (6.94%).

In Tamil Nadu, butterfly diversity is studied in many places and mostly from the Western Ghats in the Nilgiri Mountains. Cyril and Sabarinathan (2007) listed 85 butterfly species from Thengumarahada in the Nilgiris. Gunathilagaraj et al (1997) reported 174 species of butterflies from Palani Hills, Maruthamalai Hills of Southern Western Ghats 27 species were recorded by Jothimani et al (2014). Gideon et al (2016) reported 71 species



Number of Butterfly species recorded under different subfamilies

Table 1. Literatures on Butterfly diversity studies from India

	Place	Number of Species	Author
1	Pune	103	Kunte (1997)
2	Delhi (Metropolitan)	86	Larsen (2002)
3	Visakhapatnam	68	Solman Raju (2004)
4	Nagarjunasagar Tiger Reserve	89	Rao et al. (2004)
5	Tamhini (Northern Western Ghats)	69	Padhye et al (2006)
6	Amaravati	52	Tiple (2007)
7	Maharashtra Nature Park	53	Raut and Pendharkar (2010)
8	Bagalkot (Karnataka)	56	Jyoti et al. (2011)
9	Western Ghats	334	Padhye et al. (2012)
10	Mumbai	153	Rodrigues (2012)
11	Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve	50	Guptha et al. (2012)
12	Sanjay Gandhi National Park	172	Kasambe (2012)
13	Kerwa Reservoir (Bhopal)	18	Mishra et al. (2014)
14	Idukki (Kerala)	52	Jose & Senthilkumar (2016)
15	Dakshina Kannada	86	Naik & Mustak (2016)
16	Gir Protected Area (Gujarat)	67	Sharma et al. (2017)
17	Tatapani (Chhattisgarh)	22	Ekkal et al. (2017)

Table 2. Literature on Butterfly studies from Tamil Nadu

	Place	Number of Species	Author
1	Palani Hills	174	Gunathilagaraj et al (1997)
2	Siruvani	75	Arun (2003)
3	Thengumarahada (The Nilgiris)	85	Cyril and Sabarinathan (2007)
4	Kalpakkam	55	Ramesh et al (2010)
5	Maruthamalai Hills	27	Jothimani et al (2014)
6	Chennai	47	Thangapandian et al (2014)
7	Tiruvallur	97	Prabakaran et al (2014)
8	SACON (Anaikatty)	106	Ramesh Kumar and Arun (2014)
9	Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve	141	Sathis Narayanan (2015)
10	Pachamalai Hills	71	Gideon et al (2016)
11	Kanchipuram	56	Pavithra and Ananthi Rachel (2017)

for Pachamalai hills of the Eastern Ghats in Tamil Nadu. From the other parts of Tamil Nadu, Pavithra and Ananthi Rachel (2017) recorded 56 species for Kanchipuram District while Prabakaran et al (2014) listed 97 species for Tiruvallur District. The present study adds to the butterfly documentation for the Tiruchirappalli District.

Table 3. List of Butterflies observed in during the study period

	Family	Sub Family	Common Name	Scientific Name	Status	Wildlife Protection Act Schedule
1	Hesperiidae	Hesperiinae	Rice Swift	Borbo cinnara	Common	-
2			Plain Palm Dart	Cephrenes acalle	Common	-
3			Indian Dart	Potanthus pseudomaesa	Common	-
4			Indian Palm Bob	Suastus gremius	Common	-
5		Pyrginae	Indian Skipper	Spialia galba	Common	-
6	Lycaenidae	Aphnaeinae	Common Silverline	Spindasis vulcanus	Common	-
7		Polyommatinae	Common Cerulean	Jamides celeno	Common	-
8			Forget-Me-Not	Catochrysops strabo	Common	-
9			Pea Blue	Lampides boeticus	Common	II
10			Zebra Blue	Leptotes plinius	Common	-
11			Common Pierrot	Castalius rosimon	Common	I
12			Rounded Pierrot	Tarucus nara	Common	-
13			Dark Grass Blue	Zizeeria karsandra	Common	-
14			Lesser Grass Blue	Zizina otis	Common	-
15			Pale Grass Blue	Pseudozizeeria maha	Common	-
16			Gram Blue	Euchrysops cnejus	Common	II
17			Indian Cupid	Everes lacturnus	Common	-
18			Small Grass Jewel	Freyeria putli	Common	-
19			Grass Jewel	Freyeria trochylus	Common	-
20			Lime Blue	Chilades lajus	Common	-
21		Theclinae	Guava Blue	Virachola isocrates	Common	-
22	Nymphalidae	Acraeinae	Tawny Coster	Acraea violae	Common	-
23		Biblidinae	Angled Castor	Ariadne ariadne	Uncommon	-
24			Common Castor	Ariadne merione	Common	-
25			Joker	Byblia ilithyia	Common	-
26		Danainae	Blue Tiger	Tirumala limniace	Common	-
27			Plain Tiger	Danaus chrysippus	Common	-
28			Striped Tiger	Danaus genutia	Common	-
29			Double-Branded Crow	Euploea sylvester coreta	Common	-
30			Common Crow	Euploea core	Common	IV
31			Common Nawab	Polyura athamas	Common	-
32		Heliconiinae	Common Leopard	Phalanta phalantha	Common	-
33		Limenitinae	Common Baron	Euthalia aconthea	Common	-
34			Common Sailer	Neptis hylas	Common	-
35		Morphinae	Black Rajah	Charaxes solon	Uncommon	II
36		Nymphalinae	Great Eggfly	Hypolimnas bolina	Common	I

	Family	Sub Family	Common Name	Scientific Name	Status	Wildlife Protection Act Schedule
37			Danaid Eggfly	Hypolimnas misippus	Common	II
38			Blue Pansy	Junonia orithiya	Common	-
39			Chocolate Pansy	Junonia iphita	Common	-
40			Lemon Pansy	Junonia lemonias	Common	-
41			Peacock Pansy	Junonia almana	Common	-
42			Yellow Pansy	Junonia hierta	Common	-
43		Satyrinae	Southern Palmfly	Elymnias caudata	Common	-
44			Common Evening Brown	Melanitis leda	Common	-
45			Dark Evening Brown	Melanitis phedima	Uncommon	-
46			Common Bushbrown	Mycalesis perseus	Common	-
47			Dark-Brand Bushbrown	Mycalesis mineus	Common	-
48			Common Three-Ring	Ypthima asterope	Common	-
49			White Four-Ring	Ypthima ceylonica	Common	-
50	Papilionidae	Papilioninae	Common Rose	Pachliopta aristolochiae	Common	-
51			Crimson Rose	Pachliopta hector	Common	I
52			Lime Butterfly	Papilio demoleus	Common	-
53			Common Mormon	Papilio polytes	Common	-
54			Blue Mormon	Papilio polymnestor	Uncommon	-
55	Pieridae	Coliadinae	Common Emigrant	Catopsilia pomona	Common	-
56			Mottled Emigrant	Catopsilia pyranthe	Common	-
57			Small Grass Yellow	Eurema brigitta	Common	-
58			Common Grass Yellow	Eurema hecabe	Common	-
59		Pierinae	Common Gull	Cepora nerissa	Common	II
60			Small Salmon Arab	Colotis amata	Common	-
61			Crimson Tip	Colotis danae	Uncommon	-
62			Plain Orange Tip	Colotis aurora	Common	-
63			Small Orange Tip	Colotis etrida	Common	-
64			White Orange Tip	Ixias marianne	Common	-
65			Yellow Orange Tip	Ixias pyrene	Common	-
66			Great Orange Tip	Hebomoia glaucippe	Common	-
67			Common Wanderer	Pareronia hippia	Common	-
68			Indian Cabbage White	Pieris canidia	Common	-
69			Small Cabbage White	Pieris rapae	Common	-
70			Common Jezebel	Delias eucharis	Common	-
71			Psyche	Leptosia nina	Common	-
72			Pioneer	Belenois aurota	Common	-



Some of the Butterfly species recorded during the study: A - Ariadne ariadne, B - Junonia orithiya, C - Jamides celeno, D - Melanitis leda, E - Spindasis vulcanus, F - Colotis danae, G - Hypolimnas misippus, H - Catochrysops Strabo, I - Potanthus pseudomaesa, J - Junonia lemonias, K - Pseudozizeeria maha, L - Catopsilia pyranthe, M - Colotis aurora, N - Belenois aurota, O - Acraea violae, P - Junonia hierta

Conclusion

The presence of butterflies is an indication of habitat suitability and any disturbance or change to the landscape would result in the loss of species that play a significant role in ecosystem services.

72 species including WPA 1972 Schedule species were recorded through opportunistic surveys during the study, which forms the baseline data for future studies. The dominance of Nymphalidae and Pieridae indicates the presence of open vegetated areas, which can change with urbanization. The landscape around the study area is continuously undergoing changes that are impacting the biodiversity.

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Acknowledgements: I am thankful to Dr. Goldin Quadros, Principal Scientist, Wetland Ecology Division, Sálim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History (SACON), for his advice in improving this manuscript and constant encouragement. We thank Mr. G. Lakshmanan UG student of Zoology department of Nehru Memorial College for their help during many of our field visits.

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Citation: Siva, T. & P. Neelanarayanan (2018). Checklist of Butterflies of Nehru Memorial College and Puthanampatti Village, Tiruchirappalli District, Tamil Nadu. Bugs R All #169. In: *Zoo's Print* 34(1): 21-29

Newsletter of the Invertebrate Conservation and Information Network of South Asia (ICINSA) and Invertebrate Specialist Group (ISIG) of Conservation Planning Specialist Group, South Asia. ICINSA and ISIG are coordinated by Dr. B.A. Daniel, Scientist, Zoo Outreach Organization Editor: B.A. Daniel

Editorial Advisor: Sally Walker and Sanjay Molur

Bugs 'R' All is published by ZOO and CPSG South Asia as a service to invertebrate Conservation community.

This issue is published with the financial support of Zoological Society of London

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