

Report

National Butterfly Week



National Butterfly Week



Biodiversity Information Management Division
National Biodiversity Centre
Serbithang, Thimphu
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National Butterfly Week

Butterflies are the most well-known and studied group of insects. Owing to their striking patterns and vibrant colors, butterflies are the most acquainted insect to humans. Unlike moths, whose antennae comes in diverse shapes, butterfly's antenna are slender and clubbed shaped at the end. They are widely distributed with more than 19,000 species of butterflies around the world (Natural Resources Conservation Service [NRCS], 2000), 750 species found in Bhutan (Gyeltshen et al., 2019). However, approximately 3 % of the butterfly species are at the risk of extinction due to urbanization and agriculture (Mulkerrin et al., 2011). One cannot be complacent just because there is high butterfly population census around the world. The population keeps on declining. It is imperative that the monitoring of its population is kept in loop.

Currently, there is no designated international date for National Butterfly Week. National Biodiversity Centre in collaboration with nature guides hosted Bhutan's first National Butterfly Week from 17th to 31st August 2022.



NATIONAL BUTTERFLY WEEK
17th-31st August 2022

National Biodiversity Centre invites all the interested individuals to participate in National Butterfly Week and stand a chance to win monetary reward along with certificate of participation.

National Butterfly of Bhutan *Bhutanitis ludlowi*

Photo courtesy: Tandin Jamtsho, Karma Jamtsho, Tshulthrim Drukpa Wangyel

Register at www.biodiversity.bt (Bhutan Biodiversity portal)
Take butterfly pictures and upload in portal during National Butterfly Week (17th-31st August)
Prizes will be awarded to the highest number of butterfly pictures uploaded from 17th-31st August 2022

All the butterfly pictures taken from any devices will be accepted. No identification required!

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Figure 1. National Butterfly Week Poster

National Butterfly Week is a citizen science initiative where participants may range from diverse backgrounds and age groups, which meant that not all the participants may own high spec devices. Taking such aspect into consideration and to make the event inclusive, participants were encouraged to upload their observations regardless of the pictures taken from any devices. A quick pictorial guide on how to participate in National Butterfly Week was formulated and shared to the public via official website and Facebook page of National Biodiversity Centre and Bhutan Biodiversity Portal.

Results

Forty-three participants contributed an estimated total of 9,476 observations of butterfly during National Butterfly Week held from 17th of August to 31st August 2022. The highest number of observations contributed by an individual was 4,949. Majority of the butterfly observations were contributed by Department of Forest and Park Services (83.4%) followed by individuals working under Government sector (5.7%) and students (3%) (Figure 2). It was also observed that students from various college contributed butterfly observations as a team.

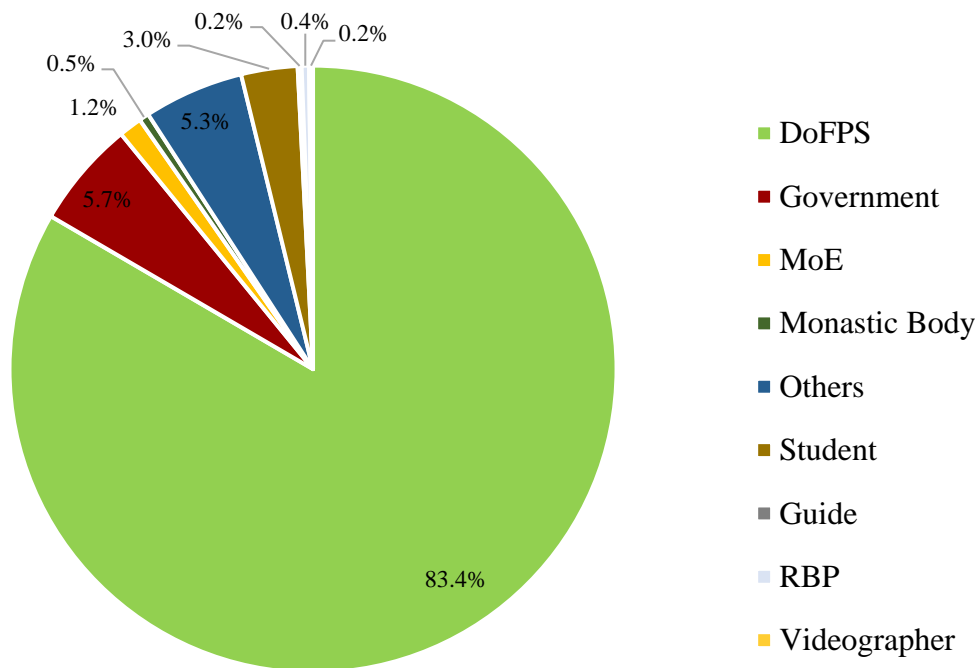


Figure 2. Percentage of butterfly observations uploaded by different departments or sector

While the highest number of participants worked under Department of Forest and Park Services (DoFPS), the Bhutan Biodiversity Portal observed participants from film industry, monastic body and even from Royal Bhutan Police (Figure 3). Looking into the past record of participants, this comes as huge achievement to the Centre. However, there still exists a lack of minority participation and the Centre should thrive in engaging diverse communities in citizen science initiatives.

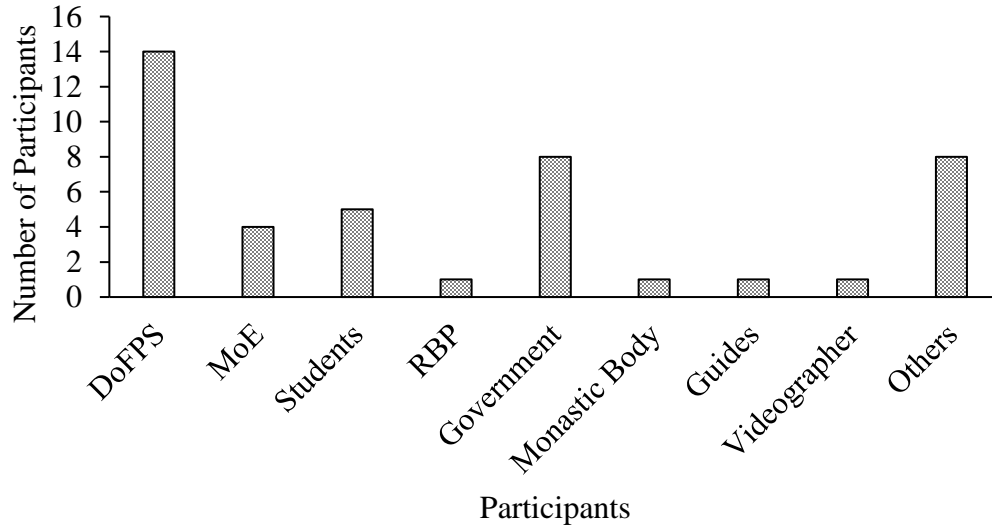


Figure 3. Number of participants from different departments or sectors



Figure 4. Butterfly observations uploaded by participants

In addition, a new record of butterfly *Salanoemia noemi*, commonly known as Spotted Yellow Lancer was uploaded in portal by one of the participants (Figure 5). This species is a new addition to the butterflies of Bhutan, hence a new record for Bhutan.



Figure 5. Salanoemia noemi



Picture courtesy: Bhutan Biodiversity Portal

References

- Gyeltshen, C., Dema, S., Northey, D., & Prasad, K. (2019). *Biodiversity Statistics of Bhutan 2017 (A preliminary baseline)*. National Biodiversity Centre.
- Mulkerrin, E., Anderson, J., Brown, E., Woodland, L., Howard, L., & Cattle, R. (2011). *Butterfly Taking Science to the Moon*.
- NRCS. (2000). Butterflies (Order : Lepidoptera). *Fish and Wildlife Management Leaflet, 15*, 1–12.