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FIELD NOTE

First Report of Tropical Sod-Webworm Moth, *Herpetogramma phaeopteralis* (Guenée) (Lepidoptera: Pyraloidea: Crambidae: Spilomelinae) from Rajasthan, India

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Abstract

The tropical sod-webworm moth (*Herpetogramma phaeopteralis*) distribution has been previously reported in different parts of the country, including Meghalaya, Karnataka, Delhi, and Uttarakhand. The present study documented the occurrence of Tropical Sod-webworm moth species from Rajasthan. It is characterized by a wing span of approximately 20 mm, with a medium-brown head, thorax, abdomen, and forewings. Forewing markings are subdued compared with other *Herpetogramma* species. At rest, adults hold their wings flat, unlike other North American webworms that fold their wings around their bodies.

Keywords: Tropical Sod-webworm, moth, Rajasthan

Moths and butterflies belong to the order Lepidoptera and the phylum Arthropoda, respectively. According to van Nieukerken *et al.* (2011), approximately 1,57,424 lepidopteran species have been identified globally. In India, almost 13,500 moth species occur in different parts of the country (Chandra, 2011). Various studies have been conducted in Rajasthan state to assess moth diversity, and Koli and Prajapati (2021) documented 154 moth species belonging to 18 families from different districts of southern Rajasthan. Additionally Savita and Trigunayat (2023) observed 65 moth species belonging to 13 families from the city area of the Jaipur district, Rajasthan and Jain and Verma (2023) observed 43 species from 9 families in the Jhalawar district of Rajasthan.

Herpetogramma phaeopteralis is found in the United States, America, Oriental region, and the Ethiopian region. The 'Moths of India' and 'iNaturalist' websites were referred to verify reports of this moth species from various states across the country, and found that it has been observed in a few states of the country, including Meghalaya, Karnataka, Delhi, and Uttarakhand (Sondhi *et al.,* 2025). It is a small moth with a wing length of less than 11 mm and a wingspan of approximately 20 mm, with a medium-brown head, thorax, abdomen, and forewings. Forewing markings are subdued compared with other *Herpetogramma* species. At rest, adults hold their wings flat, unlike other North American webworms that fold their wings around their bodies.

On 21.09.2024, we first observed *Herpetogramma phaeopteralis* in Rajasthan, India (Tilak Nagar, Bhilwara) (Figure 1). The Nikon

P500 camera was used to take photos. Various turf-grasses are common host plants for this moth species. This moth species feeds on grass leaves. The species has been previously reported in different states of the country, including Meghalaya, Karnataka, Delhi, and Uttarakhand (Sondhi *et al.,* 2025). Therefore, the present study provides the first record of *Herpetogramma phaeopteralis* from Rajasthan.

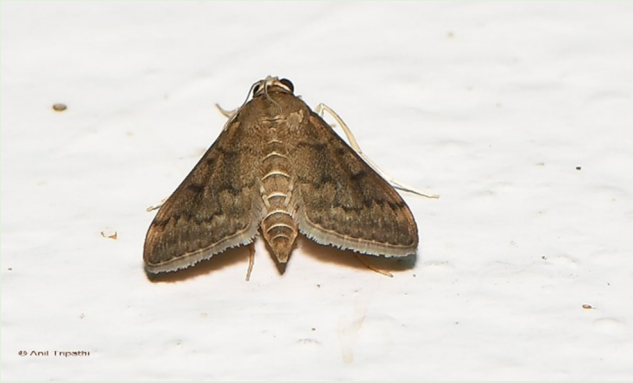

Figure 1: Tropical sod-webworm moth, *Herpetogramma phaeopteralis* reported from Bhilwara, Rajasthan, India

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