

28. *FICUS PUMILA* L.: A NEW HOST PLANT OF COMMON CROW  
(*EUPLOEA CORE* CRAMER, LEPIDOPTERA: NYMPHALIDAE)

Common Crow *Euploea core* Cramer (Family Nymphalidae) is one of the commonest butterflies of the Indian region, virtually found in all kinds of habitats up to 2000 m above msl (Kunte 2000). The adult butterfly is a generalist species and feeds on nectar of a wide variety of plants. The larval food plants belong to families Moraceae, Asclepiadaceae and Apocynaceae; the commonly used food plants are *Ficus racemosa*, *Nerium odorum*, *N. oleander* and *Cryptolepis buchanani*.

Here I report a new host plant for the Common Crow. I found a Common Crow caterpillar feeding on Climbing Ficus (or Creeping Rubber plant *Ficus pumila*, Family Moraceae). The caterpillar was feeding on young as well as mature leaves of the

ficus, showing no preference. The caterpillar successfully pupated on a nearby fern. Unfortunately, the pupa was destroyed after 10 days of pupation due to heavy rain. Climbing Ficus was introduced into India, and is now a common garden plant. It is a vine that attaches itself with its roots to walls or trees. The species is distributed in East Asia from Japan to North Vietnam.

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