

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF LARVA OF
POLYDORUS ARISTOLOCHIAE

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Polydorus aristolochiae (Fabricius) is the commonest large-tailed, black butterfly of the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent. At Tandojam (25°26'N; 68°32'E), West Pakistan, larvae were found feeding on *Aristolochia bracteata*. The present work was undertaken during the year 1962-63.

Ghosh (1914), Talbot (1939) and Wynter Blyth (1957) have briefly described the larva of *P. aristolochiae*. The descriptions below should make the knowledge of this species larva more complete.

The body of the larva is covered with a series of pointed, fleshy outgrowths. Their position and number present important diagnostic characters. These outgrowths are present in all instars with slight modifications, including suppression of some in certain instars.

The position and structure of outgrowth is given below:

Sub-median Tubercles: Present dorsally on either side of median line.

Dorso-lateral Tubercles: Present on either side of sub-median tubercles in dorso-lateral position.

Lateral Tubercles: Present on lateral position below dorso-lateral tubercles on either side.

Sub-lateral Tubercles: Situated on either side below series of lateral tubercles.

Ventro-lateral Tubercles: Present on either side below line of sub-lateral tubercles at the base of legs.

Ventral Tubercles: Situated on ventral side, present only on second abdominal segment in contrast to preceding ones have rounded apices.

Following is the occurrence and appearance of these tubercles, as described separately for each instar.

FIRST INSTAR.

Sub-median Tubercles: Present on the mesothoracic, metathoracic, and 1st to 9th abdominal segments, covered with six to seven black hairs. Tubercles of mesothoracic, metathoracic, and 7th and 8th abdominal segments yellowish brown; those of 3rd abdominal segment cream colored, remainder chocolate brown, those of 4th abdominal segment tinged slight yellowish.

Dorso-lateral Tubercles: Present only on mesothoracic and metathoracic segments. Each tubercle covered with five to six black hairs. Tubercles of the mesothoracic segment of chocolate color, those of metathoracic yellowish brown.

Lateral Tubercles: Present only on prothoracic segment, chocolate brown, covered over with seven to eight black hairs larger than hairs on dorso-lateral tubercles of metathoracic segments.

Sub-lateral Tubercles: Present on mesothoracic and metathoracic and 1st to 8th abdominal segments, covered with six to seven black hairs, smaller than those present on dorso-lateral tubercles. Tubercles of thoracic segments yellowish brown, those of 4th to 8th abdominal segments brown.

Ventro-lateral Tubercles: Present on three thoracic and 1st to 7th abdominal segments, covered with 4 to 5 black hairs. Tubercles as well as hairs smaller than

preceding series. Color of tubercles yellowish brown except prothoracic and last three abdominal segments, yellowish.

Shield present on prothorax, dark brown, laterally on either side with a whorl of hairs, in line with sub-median tubercles.

Ventral side of first three and 8th abdominal segments with a number of short, paired hairs; 1st abdominal segment with one to two hairs on each side, 2nd abdominal segment with five to six hairs on either side, 8th abdominal segment with only one pair of tiny black hairs.

Towards end of 1st instar pairs of whitish spots appear in front and behind prothoracic shield; yellowish white spots appear near bases of sub-median and lateral tubercles and at the tip of sub-lateral tubercles.

SECOND INSTAR LARVA.

Resemblance to full-grown larva becomes practically complete except yellowish band which becomes gradually broader in successive stages. Location and number of tubercles same as in 1st instar larva; yellowish white spots present, representing beginning of a band on 3rd abdominal segment; pair of prominent yellowish dots dorsally in 4th abdominal segment. Tubercles change from yellowish to scarlet with slight orange tinge; tips of tubercles specially sub-median series have a yellowish tinge.

THIRD INSTAR LARVA.

No morphological or color difference between 2nd and 3rd instar except larger size and disappearance of all hairs from tubercles. Larva thus looks smooth. Yellowish dots behind band, prominent in second instar, become pinkish and elongated in size, giving appearance of tubercles.

FOURTH INSTAR LARVA.

No morphological or color difference between 3rd and 4th instar except larger in size, appearance of ventral tubercles, and tubercles present on band attain pale yellowish to scarlet color with pale orange tinge. Ventral tubercles appear on 2nd abdominal segment in line with prolegs, smaller than all other tubercles; color varies from light orange to scarlet with orange tinge; ventral tubercles possess rounded ends and are covered with minute black hairs.

FIFTH INSTAR LARVA.

Color same as in preceding; larger, measuring 39 to 42 mm in length, 9 to 10 mm in breadth. Position and appearance of tubercles as in 4th instar; two pairs of sub-median tubercles appear on prothorax and 10th abdominal segment. Band, prominent, creamy colored, extends to ventro-lateral region on either side. A pair of white dots on 4th abdominal segment touching sub-median tubercles.

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