



Predation of an orb-web spider (*Argiope* sp) on the baron (*Euthalia* sp)

The giant cross spider (*Argiope anasuja* Thorell, 1887) is a carnivore that uses its orb-webs to trap insects and other invertebrates (Tikader 1961, Kulkarni & Deshpande 2011) and is widely distributed throughout Seychelles, the Maldives, Iran, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Australia (Cocos Is.) (Rain *et al.* 2016). Scant information is available on the diet of these spiders in Bangladesh. On 1 April 2021 at 12:17 h, we observed a giant cross spider predate on a butterfly at Kendua (23°04'38.4"N, 91°19'12.3"E), Cumilla, Bangladesh. It was a sunny day while we were passing by a home garden and encountered this phenomenon. The spider was moving on its web, approximately 3 m above the ground. At the same time, a common baron (*Euthalia aconthea*) was flying around it. After a while, the baron flew into the web and got trapped. As soon as the baron got trapped, the spider wrapped it in silk (Fig. 1).



Figure 1. The giant cross spider is wrapping the baron butterfly in silk.

The spider first wrapped the butterfly completely to immobilize it, carried it into the hub, and then started to suck the predigested tissues from the butterfly's thorax. The whole sucking process took ~10 minutes, during which it sucked up the tissues from the thorax and then the abdomen of the prey, leaving the head and wings. After completion, the spider moved to the

other side of the web, leaving the prey remnants there. Previously, Timm & Losilla (2007) reported the predation of a proboscis bat (*Rhynchoycteris naso*) by an *Argiope* spider in northeastern Costa Rica. Talukder & Majumder (2008) reported another *Argiope* preying on beetles and moths in West Bengal, India. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first report of *Argiope anasuja* predated a nymphalid butterfly in Bangladesh.

Acknowledgements

I thank M.A. Al Anowar for the support during the observation.

Literature cited

- Kulkarni, S.S. & V.Y. Deshpande (2011). Ecology and behavioral changes in spider *Argiope anasuja* (female). *Advances in Applied Science Research*, 2(3): 380–383.
- Rain, F.F., A.J. Howlader & K. Bashar (2016). Diversity and abundance of spider fauna at different habitats of Jahangirnagar University Campus, Bangladesh. *Journal of Entomology and Zoology studies*, 4(5): 87–93.
- Talukdar, S. & S.C. Majumder (2008). Diversified feeding behavior of a true weaving Araneid spider from Tindharia, Darjeeling District, West Bengal. *Records of the Zoological Survey of India*, 108(3): 27–31.
- Tikader, B.K. (1961). Protective devices of some web-weaving spider from India. *Journal of the Bombay Natural History Society*, 58(3): 827–830.
- Timm, R.M. & M. Losilla (2007). Orb-weaving spider, *Argiope savignyi* (Araneidae), predation on the proboscis bat *Rhynchoycteris naso* (Emballonuridae). *Caribbean Journal of Science*, 43(2): 282–284.

Submitted: 28 Aug 2023, Accepted: 30 Apr 2024

Section Editor: Matjaž Gregorič

M.S. Ahammed¹

¹ Department of Zoology, Jagannath University, Dhaka, Bangladesh
E-mail: md.sabbirahammedshawon@gmail.com