

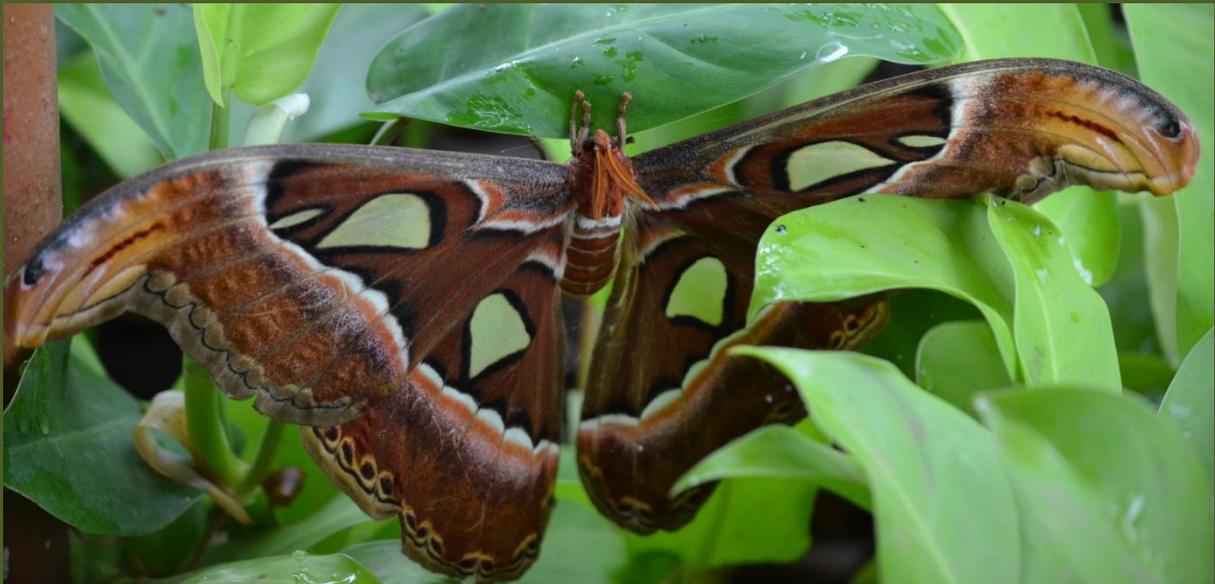
Winged Visitor

A special visitor was in front of doors of Site Director's Office, Kaiga Site 17th June 2014 at around 08.30 AM. A female **Atlas Moth** – considered as largest moth in the world, was chased by two birds - Red vented Bulbuls and these hunters flew away seeing the presence of humans in the area. Atlas Moth with a wingspan of around 25 cms rested on the ornamental plant. On careful examination, it was found that it had eggs on its belly. Moth rested for two days on the same plant and attached eggs on upper and lower parts (in 2 batches – 10 eggs on upper part, 6 in lower) leaves.

On 20th June, moth disappeared from the area. After 9 days, the eggs on the lower part of the leaf hatched on 26th June – tiny 6 caterpillars of 3-5mm length.

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Photographs: V.A.Gowda



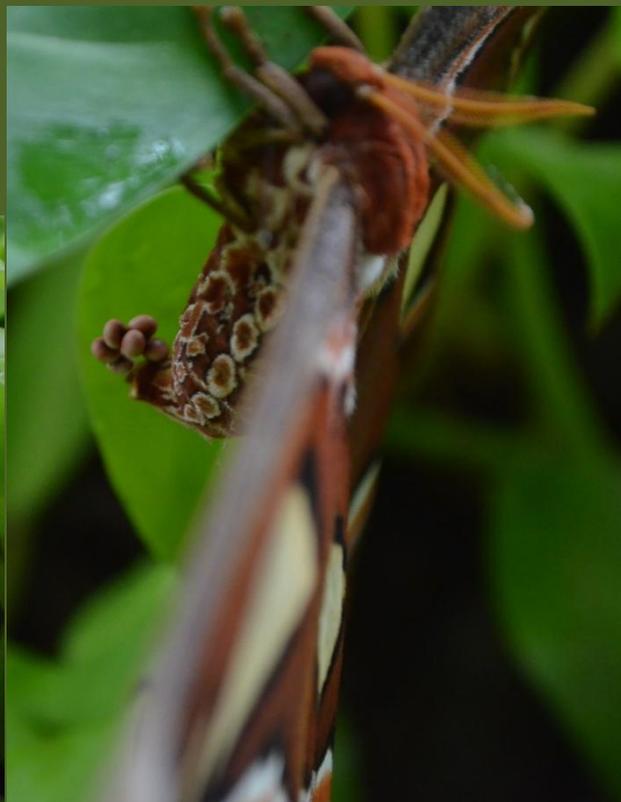
Full view of Atlas Moth



ESP, Kaiga



Back side view of the Moth – transparent 4 triangles can be seen its wings – 2 on each side



Views of eggs attached to its body





Eggs laid on the leaf



Caterpillar on the move



View of caterpillars and un-hatched eggs





Photograph for estimating size of the moth – around 25 cms



Another view of eggs and caterpillars



Details about Atlas Moth from Wikipedia :

Attacus atlas (Atlas Moth)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **Atlas moth** (*Attacus atlas*) is a large saturniid moth found in the tropical and subtropical forests of Southeast Asia, and is common across the Malay archipelago. Atlas moths are considered the largest moths in the world in terms of total wing surface area, reaching upwards of c. 400 cm² (62 sq in). Their wingspans are also amongst the largest, reaching over 25 cm (10 in). Females are appreciably larger and heavier. Atlas moths are said to be named after either the Titan of Greek mythology, or their map-like wing patterns. In Hong Kong the Cantonese name translates as "snake's head moth", referring to the apical extension of the forewing, which bears a more than passing resemblance to a snake's head.

The largest lepidopteran in terms of wingspan is thought to be the White Witch, *Thysania agrippina*. A record specimen of *Attacus atlas* from Java measured 262 mm, while *Thysania* are claimed to be about 270–280 mm (11 in). Based on some spread specimens and angle of wing, actual measurements of around 289 mm have been estimated.

In India, Atlas moths are cultivated for their silk in a non-commercial capacity; unlike that produced by the related Silkworm moth (*Bombyx mori*), Atlas moth silk is secreted as broken strands. This brown, wool-like silk is thought to have greater durability and is known as *fagara*. Atlas moth cocoons have been employed as purses in Taiwan.

<i>Atlas Moth</i>	
	
Female	
Scientific classification	
Kingdom:	<i>Animalia</i>
Phylum:	<i>Arthropoda</i>
Class:	<i>Insecta</i>
Order:	<i>Lepidoptera</i>
Family:	<i>Saturniidae</i>
Genus:	<i>Attacus</i>
Species:	<i>A. atlas</i>
Binomial name	
<i>Attacus atlas</i> <small>(Linnaeus, 1758)</small>	

Life cycle

				
Eggs	Caterpillar	Pupa	emerging from Pupa	Fully Grown

Attraction

Females are sexually passive, releasing powerful pheromones which males detect and home in on with the help of chemoreceptors located on their large feathery antennae. Males may thus be attracted from several kilometres downwind. Atlas moths are unsteady fliers, and the female does not stray far from the location of her discarded chrysalis: she seeks a perch where the air currents will best carry her pheromones.

Larva

Once mated, the female lays a number of spherical eggs 2.5 mm in diameter on the undersides of leaves. Dusty-green caterpillars hatch after about two weeks and feed voraciously on the foliage of certain citrus and other evergreen trees. The caterpillars are adorned with fleshy spines along their



backs which are covered in a waxy white substance.

Pupa

After reaching a length of about 115 millimetres (4.5 in), the caterpillars pupate within papery cocoon interwoven into desiccated leaves. The adult moths emerge after about four weeks.

