17. *ADENIUM OBESUM* (FORSK.) (APOCYNACEAE) – A NEW LARVAL HOST PLANT OF THE COMMON INDIAN CROW *EUPLOEA CORE* (CRAMER) (LEPIDOPTERA: NYMPHALIDAE)

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The Common Indian Crow *Euploea core* (Cramer), belonging to the sub-family Danainae and family Nymphalidae, is the commonest among the tigers and crows (Kunte 2000) and is widely distributed in India below 2,438 m (Wynter-Blyth 1957). It is a polyphagous insect known to lay it eggs on several species of plants of different families: Apocynaceae (dogbanes and oleanders), Asclepiadaceae (milkweeds), Moraceae (figs), Rubiaceae, Sapotaceae, and Ulmaceae (nettles) (Kehimkar 2008; Kunte 2000; Palot and Radhakrishnan 2001; Palot *et al.* 2005; Robinson *et al.* 2001; Wynter-Blyth 1957).

On the morning of September 27, 2010, a Common Indian Crow was observed laying eggs on the leaves and flowers of *Adenium obesum* (Forssk.) Roem. & Schult. (family: Apocynaceae) near Contai (21° 46' 40" N; 87° 44' 50" E; 6 m above msl), East Midnapore district, West Bengal, India. After close observation, a few larvae of different instars were also seen feeding on the leaves of the plant. *Adenium obesum*, commonly known as Mock Azalea or Desert Rose, is native to East Africa, Arabia and Socotra. It is also found in the wild in West Africa, especially in Senegal and Nigeria (Bose *et al.* 1991). This succulent shrub has wide adaptability and can grow well from very dry tropics to hot and humid climate. This species is now a naturalised garden plant in India. Our observations on the Common Indian Crow feeding on the exotic *Adenium obesum* is a new addition to the existing list of known larval food plants of the species.

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18. A REPORT ON WEED ASSOCIATED MITES OF SOUTH BENGAL AND THEIR POSSIBLE ROLE IN WEED CONTROL

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Introduction

Weeds are serious pests in agro-ecosystems because they extract and deprive soil nutrients meant for agricultural crops, and thus, adversely affect the growth and yield of crop plants. Hence, weed control is becoming an important agricultural practice through chemical control, and to a certain extent, biological control. Among the biocontrol agents, insects have been found to be quite promising in suppressing weeds. Information on mites in weed control is scarce, with the exception of some work (Kumar *et al.* 1979; Dagar and