

Sonneratia apetala Buch. Ham. (Fam : Sonneratiaceae),
A New Larval Food Plant for Tasar Silk Moth
Antheraea paphia Linn.

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In September 2000 while working on faunal diversity of mangrove habitat in Thane creek (Maharashtra), 7 caterpillars of Tasar Silk Moth were seen feeding on a mangrove plant which was later identified as *Sonneratia apetala*. Tasar Silk Moth (TSM) belongs to family Saturniidae and are commercially exploited by the silk industry. *Sonneratia apetala* is a moderate sized tree found in the tidal forests of the coastal region

and is one of the main constituents of the mangrove habitat. It grows gregariously in patches. A few caterpillars, collected during the present study were reared in captivity. TSM was known to inhabit moist forests and plains, often at low elevations and its occurrence in mangrove area provides a new marshy habitat for the species.

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