



VERTEBRATE DIVERSITY OF NORTH ORISSA UNIVERSITY CAMPUS, BARIPADA, ODISHA, INDIA

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ABSTRACT: This study attempts to document the past and present vertebrate diversity of North Orissa University (NOU) campus in Odisha, from 19th October, 2019 to 5th March, 2020. Standard methods were obtained for surveying vertebrate groups including point count, direct sighting, live trapping, road survey and interviewing. Five vertebrate classes (Amphibia, Reptilia, Aves, Mammalia and Pisces) have been observed during the field study. Our efforts resulted in the documentation of accurate data of all the vertebrate species. We have found 35 families belong to Aves, 8 families belong to Mammals, 6 families belong to Reptiles, 4 families belong to Pisces and 3 families belong to Amphibians respectively. Among all the vertebrae groups Aves shows the maximum percentage (67%) followed by Reptiles (13%), Mammals (9%), Amphibians (6%) and Pisces (5%). A decreasing trend concerning species richness was observed for most vertebrate groups over years caused primarily due to the habitat degradation. The survey data shows that NOU Campus supports a high diversity of vertebrates. These animals provide ecosystem services, food and aesthetic value for local people around campus; however, their survival depends on the conservation of university's natural forests and wetlands.

Keywords: *Amphibian, birds, mammals, north Orissa university campus, Odisha, pisces, reptiles, vertebrate*

Abbreviations: A- Abundant, C- Common, LC- Least Concern, NE- Not Evaluated, NT- Near Threatened, R- Rare, VU- Vulnerable.

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INTRODUCTION

Biodiversity is the foundation of life on Earth. It is crucial for the functioning of ecosystem, which provides products and services (Provisioning, Supporting, Regulation and Cultural). It gives immense advantages to mankind from direct harvesting of plants and animals for food,

medicine, fuel, construction materials and other used for aesthetic, cultural, recreational and research values (Javed and Kaul, 2000; Palot and Pramod, 2000). The present study deals with the documentation of the vertebrate diversity in the University campus situated in Mayurbhanj district. North Orissa University bears a quite impressive amount of vertebrate diversity. However,