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www.researchtrend.net

Studies on the Mammalian Diversity of Kaziranga National Park, Assam, India with their conservation status

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| **Received:** 18 January 2018 | **Accepted:** 23 February 2018 |

ABSTRACT

The present study has been conducted to study mammalian diversity in Kaziranga National Park, Assam during 2014-16. About 40 species belonging to 19 families and 9 orders of Mammals recorded during present study and from earlier records including Eastern Swamp Deer, *Rucervus duvaucelii ranjitsinhi* (Groves, 1982).

Key words: Mammals, diversity, Kaziranga National Park, Assam, India.

INTRODUCTION

The park celebrated its centennial in 2005 after its establishment in 1905 as a reserve forest. In 1916, it was redesignated as the 'Kaziranga Game Sanctuary' and in 1950 the Kaziranga Game Sanctuary was renamed as the 'Kaziranga Wildlife Sanctuary'. In 1968, the state government passed the Assam National Park Act of 1968, declaring Kaziranga a designated national park. The 430 km² national park was given official status by the central government on 11 February, 1974. In 1985, Kaziranga was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO for its unique natural environment (Bhaumik 2005; Lahan & Sonowal 1972; Mathur et al. 2005; Talukdar 1996). The studies were conducted on different aspects earlier by different workers in the Kaziranga National Park and other habitats in India (Alfred et al. 2006; Anon 1995; Lahan & Sonowal 1972; Mathur et al. 2005; Prater 1971; Sharma et al. 2014; Sharma et al. 2015a&b; Sharma & Kamalakannan 2017; Sharma et al. 2017; Talukdar 1996). The present study was carried out to provide the diversity of mammalian species recorded during the present study, earlier recorded by Assam Forest Department and other workers

in the Kaziranga National Park, Assam.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The studies were conducted in Kaziranga National Park, Assam to explore the diversity of mammalian species during 2014-16. Kaziranga is located between latitudes 26°30' N and 26°45' N, and longitudes 93°08' E to 93°36' E within two districts of Assam, the Kaliabor subdivision of district Nagaon and the Bokakhat subdivision of district Golaghat. The park is approximately 40 km in length from east to west, and 13 km in breadth from north to south. Kaziranga covers an area of 378 km², with approximately 51.14 km² lost to erosion in recent years. A total addition of 429 km² along the present boundary of the park has been made and designated with separate national park status to provide extended habitat for increasing the population of wildlife or, as a corridor for safe movement of animals to Karbi Anglong Hills. Elevation ranges from 40 m to 80 m. The park area is circumscribed by the Brahmaputra River, which forms the northern and eastern boundaries, and the Mora Diphlu, which forms the southern boundary and



Fig.1. A Glimpse of habitats, methodology and mammalian species of Kaziranga National Park, Assam.

other notable rivers within the park are the Diphlu and Mora Dhansiri (Lahan and Sonowal, 1972; Mathure *et al.*, 2005; Talukdar, 1996). The mammalian species were recorded in and around by using hired vehicle Gypsy and Elephant to reach different localities of the study area (Fig. 1). The Nikon Binocular (10mm×25mm) and Nikon D7000 DSLR Camera with Telelens attachment 80-400mm were used to record the mammals species in the field. The presence of some mammals species is ascertained on the basis of interview with forest officials, guides and villagers residing around reported locality, from earlier literature and record of forest department. The identification of mammalian species were also done by studying

pugmark on the forest track and near water body.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

About 40 species belonging to 19 families and 9 orders of Mammals recorded from the study site during study period and as per record of Assam Forest Department including Eastern Swamp Deer, *Rucervus duvaucelii ranjitsinhi* (Groves 1982). The systematic accounts of mammals recorded during present study and earlier studies of 40 species of mammals with their Conservation status is given in Table 1.

Kaziranga has been the target of several natural and man-made calamities in recent decades. Floods

caused by the overflow of the river Brahmaputra, leading to significant losses of animal life. Encroachment by people along the periphery has also led to a diminished forest cover and a loss of habitat. The park has the distinction of being home

to the world's largest population of the Greater One-Horned Rhinoceros, Water Wild Buffalo, Eastern Swamp deer, Asiatic Elephants and Sambar (Lahan & Sonowal 1972; Mathur et al. 2005; Talukdar 1996).

Table 1: Mammals of Kaziranga National Park, Assam with their Conservation Status.

Sl. No.	Species/Sub-species (Scientific and Common Names)	Conservation Status		
		IUCN (Red list Category)	IW(P)A (Schedule)	CITES (Appendix)
I. Order: PROBOSCIDEA 1. Family: Elephantidae				
1.	<i>Elephas maximus</i> Linnaeus, 1758, Asiatic Elephant	EN	I	I
II. Order: PRIMATES 2. Family: Cercopithecidae				
2.	<i>Macaca mulatta</i> (Zimmermann, 1780), Rhesus Macaque	LC	II	II
3.	<i>Trachypithecus pileatus</i> (Blyth, 1843), Capped Langur	VU	I	I
3. Family: Lorisidae				
4.	<i>*Nycticebus bengalensis</i> (Lacepede, 1800), Bengal Slow Loris	VU	I	I
4. Family: Hylobatidae				
5.	<i>Hoolock hoolock</i> (Harlan, 1834), Western Hoolock Gibbon	EN	I	I
III. Order: RODENTIA 5. Family: Sciuridae				
6.	<i>Ratufa bicolor</i> (Sparrmann,1778), Black Giant Squirrel	NT	II	II
7.	<i>*Tamiops maccllellandii</i> (Horsfield, 1840), Himalayan Striped Squirrel	LC	-	-
8.	<i>*Callosciurus erythraeus</i> (Pallas,1779), Pallas’s Squirrel	LC	-	-
9.	<i>*Dremomys lokriah</i> (Hodgson, 1836), Orange-bellied Himalayan Squirrel	LC	-	-
6. Family: Hystriidae				
10.	<i>*Hystrix brachyura</i> Linnaeus,1758, Himalayan Crestless Porcupine	LC	II	-
11.	<i>Hystrix indica</i> Kerr, 1792, Indian Crested Porcupine	LC	IV	-
IV. Order: CHIROPTERA 7. Family: Pteropodidae				
12.	<i>Pteropus giganteus</i> (Brünnich, 1782), Indian Flying Fox	LC	V	-
V. Order: PHOLIDOTA 8. Family: Manidae				
13.	<i>*Manis crassicaudata</i> E. Geoffroy, 1803, Indian pangolin	EN	I	II
14.	<i>*Manis pentadactyla</i> Linnaeus, 1758, Chinese Pangolin	CR	I	I
VI. Order: CARNIVORA 9. Family: Felidae				
15.	<i>Felis chaus</i> Schreber, 1777, Jungle Cat	LC	II	II
16.	<i>Panthera pardus</i> (Linnaeus, 1758), Leopard	VU	I	I
17.	<i>Panthera tigris</i> (Linnaeus, 1758), Tiger	EN	I	I
18.	<i>*Prionailurus bengalensis</i> (Kerr, 1792), Leopard Cat	LC	I	I
19.	<i>*Prionailurus viverrinus</i> (Bennett, 1833), Fishing Cat	VU	I	II
10. Family: Viverridae				
20.	<i>Paradoxurusherma phroditus</i> (Pallas, 1777), Asian Palm Civet	LC	II	III
21.	<i>*Viverra zibetha</i> Linnaeus, 1958, Large Indian Civet	NT	II	III
22.	<i>*Viverricula indica</i> (E. Geoffroy Saint Hilaire, 1803), Small Indian Civet	LC	II	III
11. Family: Herpestidae				
23.	<i>Herpestes edwardsii</i> (É. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, 1818), Grey Mongoose	LC	II	III

24.	<i>*Herpestes auropunctatus</i> (Hodgson, 1836), Small Indian Mongoose	-	-	III
12. Family: Canidae				
25.	<i>Canis aureus</i> Linnaeus, 1758, Golden Jackal	LC	II	II
26.	<i>Vulpes bengalensis</i> (Shaw, 1800), Bengal Fox	LC	II	III
13. Family: Ursidae				
27.	<i>Melursus ursinus</i> (Shaw, 1791), Sloth Bear	VU	I	I
28.	<i>*Ursus thibetanus</i> G.[Baron] Cuvier, 1823, Asiatic Black Bear	VU	II	I
14. Family: Mustelidae				
29.	<i>Lutrogale persipicillata</i> (I. Geoffroy Saint Hilaire, 1826), Indian Smooth-coated Otter	VU	II	II
30.	<i>*Melogale moschata</i> (Gray, 1831), Chinese Ferret-badger	LC	II	-
31.	<i>*Arctonyx collaris</i> F.G. Cuvier, 1825, Hog-badger	VU	I	-
VII. Order: PERISSODACTYLA				
15. Family: Rhinocerotidae				
32.	<i>Rhinoceros unicornis</i> Linnaeus, 1758, Indian Rhinoceros	VU	I	I
VIII. Order: ARTIODACTYLA				
16. Family: Suidae				
33.	<i>Sus scrofa</i> Linnaeus, 1758, Wild Pig	LC	III	-
17. Family: Cervidae				
34.	<i>Rucervus duvaucelii ranjitsinhi</i> (Groves, 1982), Eastern Swamp Deer	VU	I	I
35.	<i>Rusa unicolor</i> (Kerr, 1792), Sambar	VU	III	-
36.	<i>Muntiacus muntjak</i> (Zimmermann, 1780), Indian Muntjac	LC	III	-
37.	<i>Axis porcinus</i> (Zimmermann, 1780), Hog Deer	EN	III	-
18. Family: Bovidae				
38.	<i>Bos gaurus</i> C.H. Smith, 1827, Gaur	VU	I	I
39.	<i>Bubalus arnee</i> (Kerr, 1792), Water Wild Buffalo	EN	I	-
IX. Order: CETACEA				
19. Family: Platanistidae				
40.	<i>*Platanista gangetica</i> (Roxburgh, 1801), Ganges River Dolphin	EN	I	I

Where * indicates species as per Kaziranga National Park, Assam Forest Department records & earlier studies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author sincerely thanks to the Director, Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata and to the Director, DFO and Forest Staff of Kaziranga National Park, Assam for providing necessary permission and support during study period. Special thanks to Dr. M. Kamalakannan, Mr. Subir Guha, Mr. Bidyut Chakraborty, Mr. Krishna Kumar Singh and Ms. Debashree Dam, Mammal and Osteology Section, Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata for their help during survey and in the laboratory.

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