

Bird Species Diversity and Abundance in the Abiriw Sacred Grove in the Eastern Region of Ghana

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Abstract

The sacred grove concept is one of the strategies developed by many human societies to conserve biological resources using a traditional approach. Sacred groves are currently under threat from anthropogenic activities due to lack of enforcement of traditional edicts to check encroachment. The birds inhabiting the Abiriw Sacred Grove in the Akwapim North District in the Eastern Region of Ghana were surveyed between February and April 2005 to determine the current ecological status of the grove, and to establish a bird species list. The transect count method was used to sample the birds in the grove. A total of 411 individual birds belonging to 22 families and 66 species was recorded, out of which 211 individuals of 41 species occurred in the forest-cultivated land boundary, 111 (36 species) in pristine forest, and 89 (40 species) in secondary forest. A significant proportion of species in the grove were savanna specialists. Similarity indices indicated different levels of degradation of the various blocks. The current situation needs immediate attention to stem the tide of fragmentation and degradation.