

# The Flora and Mammals of the Moist Semi-Deciduous Forest Zone in the Sefwi-Wiawso District of the Western Region, Ghana

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## Abstract

The study presents results of a floristic and mammal survey undertaken in the Sefwi-Wiawso District within moist semi-deciduous vegetation zone of the Western Region of Ghana. The floral survey involved estimating the floral distribution, abundance and diversity using the standard indices, Shannon-Wiener, Simpson's, evenness, species richness, similarity, and  $\beta$ -diversity, while the mammal survey was conducted using direct opportunistic observation, live-trapping (small mammals), animal spoors/trophies, and interviews. There were 271 plant species recorded, out of which 174 species comprising 172 species and 67 families of angiosperms (Angiospermae) and two species of ferns (Pteridophyta) were scientifically-named. Forty species of mammals representing eight orders were recorded, with the dominant orders being Rodentia and Artiodactyla. The greatest faunal diversity occurred in the forest reserves, where suitable habitat niches still occur. There were 48 individuals of seven species of rodents and one individual of one insectivore species captured during live-trapping, with the commonest species being common mice (*Mus* spp.) and brush-furred mice (*Lophuromys flavopunctatus*). The greatest threat to the survival of the fauna is habitat destruction. Generally, the Sefwi-Wiawso District is very rich in forest tree species, the commonest being the *Celtis-Triplochiton* Associations, but bad agricultural practices, bush burning, intense logging, fuelwood harvesting and pollution have resulted in poor soil quality and land degradation in certain areas. Hunting of animals for meat, and destruction of habitats were the greatest threats to faunal diversity and abundance in the Sefwi-Wiawso District.