

Research Article

Wildlife casualties from the road-stretches adjacent to two national parks of Assam, North-East India

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ABSTRACT

Wildlife road-kill studies in India have mainly focused on herpetofauna and mammals with a very few reports on birds and other invertebrates whereas, the wildlife road-kill studies in Assam are meagre. In this study, we report road-kill individuals of different select taxa from select road-stretches of Dehing-Patkai National Park (DPNP) and Kaziranga National Park (KNP), Assam, which were surveyed, adapting visual encounter method by using bike (speed limit 20±5 km/h) for a duration of 300 hours spread over 30 days (15 days in each national park) during the rainy season (July-September) in the year 2019. A total 187 road-kill individuals, representing 41 species of eight different classes were recorded from DPNP, whereas 33 road-kill individuals representing 20 different species of the six different classes were recorded from KNP. There was also a significant difference in road casualties from both the national parks, Mann-Whitney U test supported the null hypothesis ($p \leq 0.05$) wherein the different types of habitats contributed viz. forest, paddy fields, human settlements, tree plantation and tea gardens to the road kill. This study is an important attempt in terms of conservation to reduce the dearth of road-kill information from the studied protected areas of Assam.

Key words: Dehing-Patkai National Park, highways, Kaziranga National Park, road casualties, road-kill, protected area

