

BIRD DIVERSITY OF THE CROCKER RANGE NATIONAL PARK, SABAH, MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

A study of bird fauna was conducted at Park Headquarters of Crocker Range Park and its vicinity from 16-22 October 1999. Crocker Range Park Headquarters is located about 8 km from Keningau town. Mist-net and transect study were conducted in secondary and primary forest. A total of 840 net/hr were deployed with total capture of 32 birds of 17 species from seven families. Of 17 species, seven species were caught in secondary forest and 13 species in primary forest. Three species were caught in both secondary and primary forests. A total of 51 species were recorded from 24 families in the transect study. Thirty species were recorded in secondary forest, 33 species in primary forest and 13 species in both secondary and primary forests. There was no marked difference in species composition and diversity between secondary and primary forests. Some endangered and vulnerable species categorised under international conservation status were present in the study area. It is, therefore, pertinent that protection and conservation programmes for the park should be based on the presence of these species.

INTRODUCTION

Crocker Range Park is located in the west-central side of Sabah (5^o24'N, 116^o05'E). To the north of the park is Mount Kinabalu, the highest peak in Southeast Asia. It consists of a mixture of both primary and secondary (disturbed) lowland and hill dipterocarp forests. Approximately, 290 species of birds have been documented within 712km² Kinabalu National Park (Davison 1992), which is more than half of the bird species in Sabah (514) and roughly half of the entire number of bird species present in the island of Borneo. Of the 290 species, 255 are residents and the rest are passage migrants (Davison 1992). In contrast to the comprehensive information about bird community of Kinabalu National Park, little is known about the avifauna of the Crocker Range Park area. The objectives of this study were to compile an inventory of bird species diversity found at Crocker Range National Park headquarters area based on brief mist-netting work, visual and vocal records. This information will be used to identify any species or group of birds which should be given priority in future research and management.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Sites

Two study sites were selected for this study. The first site was categorised as secondary forest and the second site was primary forest. The first site was located east of the park headquarters. Mist-nets were erected along a stream flowing from north to south. The habitat was made up of riparian forest species, such as *Baringtonia* spp., *Dipterocarpus* spp.,