

Diversity and Population status of Bats in Pilikuttuwa ancient cave temple in the Gampaha District, Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Due to two unique specializations - echolocation and flight, bats have become one of the most successful groups of extant mammals in the world. Pilikuttuwa rajamaha viharaya, an ancient meditation monastery complex is a one of best places for bats which gives protection in Sri Lanka. In the present study, we evaluate the species diversity and population status of bats in Pilikuttuwa ancient meditation monastery complex with regard to their roosting ecology. Six species of bats including *Taphozous melanopogon*, *Rhinolophus beddomei*, *Rhinolophus rouxii*, *Hipposideros galeritus*, *Hipposideros speoris* and *Megaderma spasma* were recorded with the following conservation status, four in Vulnerable and two in Least Concerned. *Taphozous melanopogon* was the most abundant, and had the largest population with the widest distribution at the study site. A Natural predator of bats, *Paradoxurus hermaphoditus* was recorded in one roosting site.

Key words: Chiroptera, Insectivorous, Roosting, Ecology, Dead specimen, Threatened