

Research Article

Local Community Perceptions of the Ecological and Socio-Economic Benefits of Spiders in Small-Scale Urban Green Spaces for Conservation Reinforcement

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ABSTRACT

Spiders are among the most ubiquitous arthropods that can dwell on diverse habitats, which include small-scale urban green spaces (UGS). To promote urban biodiversity, we assessed the awareness of a local community situated within UGS in Davao, Philippines about the ecological roles of spiders. Data were obtained by administering survey questionnaires to 80 households using convenience sampling. The survey revealed that the local community is knowledgeable on the occurrence of spiders in their area (97.5%), in which they are mostly acquainted with spiders of Pisauridae (25%) and Araneidae (20.3%). Also, the community has recognized the important ecological roles of spiders, in which they mostly acknowledged them as a significant source of food for other organisms (71.62%). However, a high proportion of respondents also recognized the socio-economic benefits of spiders through spider wrestling (60.81%). Henceforth, the ecological roles of spiders could be subjugated as spider wrestling is practiced in the local community, which could be a possible threat to the spider population. Thus, we highly suggest to involve concerned local communities in urban biodiversity management for the conservation of spiders in the Philippines, which is at risk due to its perceived socio-economic benefits.

Key words: Awareness, Arachnids, Arthropods, Local Knowledge, Biodiversity Management.

