

Wildlife Utilization of Some Browse Species and Association Through Indicator Parameters in an Area of the Kainji Lake Basin, Nigeria.

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Abstract

Forty-five plant species common to Guinea Savanna zone were identified as useful browse following the survey of the study site. Ten species of wildlife were associated with browsing activities and twenty one browse species were utilized. Apart from the foliage portions, flowers, fruits, and bark of some species were also utilized. *Azelia Africana* shoots were the most frequency browsed while *Vitellaria paradoxa* fruits were most extensively utilized. The bovid antelopes were largely associated with leaves or shoot browsing while primates, rodents, and bats were mostly associated with fruit browsing. Ranked frequently and intensity of browsing differ with browse species and from location to location. Leave samples of the browse collected in the peak period of the dry season showed high nutritive values with crude protein above 14 percent and ranging between 5.00%-21.255 for *Gardenia aquanus*, *Terminalia avicenoides* and *Parkia biglobosa* respectively. In-vitro dry matter digestibility (IVDMD) ranged from 42.9%-69% in *Fichus trichopoda* and *Azelia Africana* respectively. The need for a policy on browse conservation, utilization, regeneration and management to enhance wildlife conservation and animal protein production by range and wildlife managers was stressed.