

WILD ANIMAL PRODUCTS IN FOOD AND TRADITIONAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT IN OMO FOREST RESERVE OGUN STATE, NIGERIA.

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Wild animals used in household food and traditional medicines were investigated in Omo Forest Reserve to provide additional baseline data to justify biodiversity conservation, breeding and wildlife domestication efforts. Four hundred (400) pre-tested questionnaires were administered to exploiters of NTFPs (Non-Timber Forest Products) in Reserve Areas J1, J3, J4, and J6. The questionnaires were administered using the snow-ball non-probabilistic sampling techniques, complimented with random visits to respondents' homesteads, compound farms, and some local markets. Discussions were held with government and private forestry officials to collect information on exploitation and use of NTFPs. Twenty-four (24) wild animal species from 6 classes were exploited in the reserve for food and traditional health management practices. The collection and use of wild animal products (flesh, skin, skulls, bones and feathers) cut across different socio-economic groups in the study area. Exploitation of wild animal products provide more of part-time and off season employment to the respondents. Male exploiters were predominant (66.5%). The predominant age group was 31-40 years (87.5%) largely working age adults. The wild source remains the major sources of supply of desirable products. Omo Forest reserve offers other products beyond timber which are of socio-economic importance. Further ethno-forestry studies are needed to discover more of the faunal and floral resources in use in Ogun State, for the purposes of sustainable management of forest biodiversities in the state.