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REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-50408

Date: 26-02-2025

Title: Exploring the Diversity and Habitat Preferences of Anuran Species in Sohagibarwa Wildlife Sanctuary

Recommendation:

- Accept as it is.....**YES**.....
- Accept after minor revision.....
- Accept after major revision
- Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality	√			
Techn. Quality		√		
Clarity		√		
Significance			√	

Reviewer's Name: Tahir Ahmad

Reviewer's Decision about Paper: **Recommended for Publication.**

Comments (*Use additional pages, if required*)

Reviewer's Comment / Report

The study, "Exploring the Diversity and Habitat Preferences of Anuran Species in Sohagibarwa Wildlife Sanctuary," provides an insightful and comprehensive analysis of anuran diversity in a relatively understudied region. The research contributes significantly to amphibian ecology by addressing species distribution, habitat preferences, and conservation concerns.

Strengths of the Paper

1. Scientific Relevance and Conservation Value:

The study highlights the importance of non-charismatic species in biodiversity conservation, an aspect often overlooked in mainstream conservation initiatives. By focusing on anurans, the research underscores the ecological role of amphibians as bioindicators and their sensitivity to environmental changes. The findings offer valuable

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baseline data that could support future conservation efforts in Sohagibarwa Wildlife Sanctuary.

2. Well-Defined Objectives and Justification:

The introduction effectively outlines the significance of studying anurans, emphasizing their ecological roles, vulnerability to habitat changes, and the limited data available on their diversity in the Terai region of Uttar Pradesh. The paper also justifies the need for such a study, providing a strong rationale for investigating habitat preferences and species composition.

3. Methodologically Sound Approach:

The study employs the **Visual Encounter Surveys (VES)** technique, a widely recognized and effective method for amphibian biodiversity assessment. The structured approach ensures systematic data collection, improving reliability and comparability. The temporal scope of the study (June–November across two years) is commendable, as it covers multiple seasonal variations, ensuring a holistic understanding of species diversity.

4. Comprehensive Study Area Description:

The detailed description of Sohagibarwa Wildlife Sanctuary, including its topography, climatic conditions, forest composition, and water bodies, provides essential context for the study. The identification of diverse microhabitats within the sanctuary enhances the ecological relevance of the findings.

5. Significant Findings on Anuran Diversity:

The study documents **21 anuran species across 9 genera and 4 families**, offering a foundational species checklist for the region. The identification of preferred habitats, including **temporary and permanent aquatic bodies, forested areas, termite nests, tree holes, and log voids**, provides crucial insights into species-specific ecological requirements. These findings could inform future habitat management strategies within the sanctuary.

6. Ecological and Conservation Implications:

The study draws attention to the threats posed by **agricultural expansion, habitat fragmentation, and anthropogenic activities**, reinforcing the need for habitat conservation measures. By establishing baseline data, the research paves the way for long-term monitoring of amphibian populations, which is critical for assessing ecosystem health and guiding conservation policies.

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7. Logical Structure and Clarity:

The paper follows a clear and coherent structure, with well-defined sections that enhance readability. The logical flow from the introduction to materials and methods, followed by results and discussions, ensures that the study is easily comprehensible to researchers, conservationists, and policymakers.

Conclusion

This research presents a valuable assessment of anuran diversity in Sohagibarwa Wildlife Sanctuary, offering essential ecological data for conservation planning. The study's rigorous methodology, extensive habitat coverage, and significant findings contribute meaningfully to amphibian ecology and biodiversity research. By documenting species diversity and habitat preferences, the research establishes a strong foundation for future studies on amphibian conservation in the region.