

DIVERSITY OF FIGS (GENUS *FICUS*, FAMILY MORACEAE) IN KALINZU FOREST IN UGANDA. IMPLICATIONS FOR PRIMATE CONSERVATION

P. Ipuleŧ, H. Muhanguzi

Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda

Presenter's Email: ipuleŧ@yahoo.com; ipuleŧ@isae.mak.ac.ug

The work aimed to establish the stability of *Ficus* populations as a reliable fruit source for primates, to replace the 'dying out' *Musanga leo-errerae*. Kalinzu forest holds a high percentage of the country's primate population. It has been logged since the 1950's, and *Musanga* dominates in heavily logged areas. The hypothesis was 'logging has greatly influenced the distribution of *Ficus* species'. The objectives were: to identify all *Ficus* species; establish their abundance, growth characteristics and distribution in the four forest types in Kalinzu forest Research zone. The forest types were: Mixed Mature forest (MM), *Parinari* Dominated Mature (PDM), *Parinari* Dominated Secondary (PDS), and *Musanga* Dominated Secondary (MDS). In each forest type, at least 30 plots measuring 25 x 20 m were established. *Ficus* species were identified, enumerated; and, growth habit, host species and diameter at breast height (dbh) were noted. The study was conducted from 2007 to 2008. A total of 19 *Ficus* species was recorded, five terrestrial and 14 epiphytic species. Forest type had little effect on diversity, disturbance (logging) resulted in high densities of certain species in specific forest types. MDS had the highest densities (109/ha) and MM had the lowest (49/ha), *F. sur* which is a favourite chimpanzee food and *F. asperifolia* showed the highest densities. *Musanga* was not recorded as a host of any of the *Ficus* species. There was absence of large *Ficus* trees from 21cm dbh. Generally a certain degree of disturbance seems to increase *Ficus* diversity and density.

Keywords: *Ficus*, *Musanga*, primates, fruits