

Bats (Mammalia: Chiroptera) Roost Diversity in Southern Tamil Nadu

K. Senthilkumar**, *T. Selvarathinam[§]* and *G. Marimuthu[#]

*Department of P.G Zoology, Aditanar College of Arts and Science,
Virapandianpatnam, Tiruchendur –628 216

[§]Department of Zoology, A.N.J.A. College, Sivakasi - 626 125

[#]INSA Senior Scientist, Department of Animal Behaviour and Physiology, School of Biological
Sciences, Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai –625 021
e-mail: atksenthilarun@gmail.com

Bats are the second largest mammals in the world, about 1300 species includes 15% megachiropterans (frugivores) and remaining are microchiropterans (insectivores, carnivores, etc.) are distributed throughout the world, except the polar region. Among them ~120 species are available in India (13 megachiropterans and the remaining microchiropterans). In the present study we made a bats roost survey that covered southern districts of Tamil Nadu. They roost in dark places like caves, temples, unused buildings and tunnels to open tree branches. We located variety of roosts such as tree foliage, caves, irrigation canal, agricultural pump houses, abandoned buildings, temples, rock cellars, crevices, tunnels, cloth screens and untouched pant, wooden electric circuit boxes, holes, bird nest and tree cavities. Most of the roosts were occupied by microchiropterans such as *Hipposideros speoris* and *Pipistrellus mimus*. In megachiropteran bats, most of the roosts were located in tree branches and foliages. The Indian flying fox (*Pteropus giganteus*) hanging from branches of trees belonging to 14 families and majority of them belong to Combretaceae. Microchiropterans live in a variety of habitats (Roost) compared to megachiropterans. In the study area human disturbance is a major factor for bats roost loss, most of the roosts under critical condition.

KEY WORDS

Bats, Chiroptera, Roost Diversity.