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To Whom It May Concern

This is to certify that Dr. Utpal Singha Roy, Assistant Professor of Zoology, Department of Zoology, P. R. Thakur Government College, Thakurnagar is my research collaborator. We have been working together on various projects since 2014 and the collaboration is continuing till date. Recently, we are working on biodiversity and conservation. Some of the research outputs are available at this links (<https://doi.org/10.11609/JotT.o3947.7029-33>).

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ON THE DIVERSITY OF THE VERTEBRATE FAUNA (EXCLUDING FISHES) OF PANCHET HILL (GARH PANCHKOT), PURULIA, WEST BENGAL, INDIA

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Abstract: The present study was conducted at Panchet Hill (Garh Panchkot), Purulia, West Bengal between June 2013 and May 2015. Multiple methods were used for making a consolidated checklist and comments on the relative abundance of vertebrate diversity, excluding fishes. The methods included hand capturing, extensive searches in micro habitats, opportunistic spotting and information collection from the local people. A total of 106 different vertebrate species were recorded during the study span of two years. Aves was recorded as the Class with the highest diversity (63 species) while Amphibia was recorded as the Class with the lowest diversity (9 species). Most of the species recorded during the present study belong to 'Least Concern' category as designated by IUCN. The Black-headed Ibis *Threskiornis melanocephalus* and Striped Hyena *Hyaena hyaena* belong to 'Near Threatened' category while the White-rumped Vulture *Gyps bengalensis* belongs to 'Critically Endangered' category. The present study location is facing pressures from the usual anthropogenic interventions and needs attention from the concerned authorities.

Keywords: Amphibia, aves, biodiversity, Garh Panchkot, mammalia, Panchet Hill, Purulia, reptilia, vertebrates.

Over geological time scale biodiversity has followed the trend towards net increase; however, a marked decline in global biodiversity occurred during the late Quaternary period as a consequence of both direct and indirect human activities (Gaston & Spicer 2004). Hughes et al. (1997) reported that in tropical forests on an average 1,800 populations are being destroyed per hour while 16 million annually. An ever-increasing human population with huge demands on the natural resources have imposed a worldwide burden and consequently have depleted biological diversity. India with a burgeoning human population is no exception in this regard (Marcot & Nyberg 2005). Despite the tremendous pressure over the natural resources, India which covers about 2.4% of the world's land area, harbours about 8% of the world's total species (UNEP 2001). The rich tradition and culture of India since ancient times have set high values to protect its sacred

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