

## Taxonomy, Species Richness, and Distribution of Mosses in Selected Mountains in Mindanao Philippines

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The main objective of the study was to determine the species richness and distribution of mosses in the three selected mountains in Mindanao.

Field collections of mosses were conducted in Mt. Kalatungan, Bukidnon Province, Mt. Malambo, Salumay Davao City Province and Mt. Matutum, South Cotabato Province at 10 meters on each side of the trails. The study sites were labeled Southeastern, Northeastern and Western Slopes.

The moss specimens were collected, classified and described. Using the key of Bartram (1939) and other related literatures and books, the specimens were identified. The study revealed 137 species, 87 genera and 33 families of mosses. Of the 137 species, 109 were found in Mt. Kalatungan, 59 in Mt. Matutum and 20 in Mt. Malambo. Assessment of conservation status revealed 7 species new to the Philippines, 39 new to Mindanao, 1 collected only twice, 33 widespread, 4 rare species and 4 endemic species.

Based on the findings, the annihilation of the mountains is basically caused by human activities such as land clearing, slash and burn method for expanding crop plantation, urbanization, firewood consumption, over collection of moss plant materials of horticulture, landscaping and other commercial purposes. Some species are epiphytes on tree trunks or branches of live trees while others are on rotten logs, rock surfaces, moist stones along the stream banks and some grow well on soil. Hence, the identified habitats of rare, endemic, and endangered species of mosses should be protected through a strict implementation of the forest laws by concerned authorities.

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