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Assessment of damage inflicted by the small Kashmir flying squirrel (*Hylopetes fimbriatus*) (Gray, 1837) in district Bagh, Azad Jammu and Kashmir**Nausheen Irshad and Siyab Maroof Khan**
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In world, nearly every country is going through the vertebrate pest destruction specifically from rodents. It became sometime so drastic that results in scarcity of food. The small Kashmir flying squirrel (*Hylopetes fimbriatus*) is a frugivore rodent, hence causes substantial economic loss. The current study highlights the harmful effects of flying squirrel on fruit trees in district Bagh, Azad Kashmir during a period stretching from November 2016 to November 2017. The damage was assessed by counting of affected trees (wild and planted) in an area of 40000 meter square. The stomach content (n=16 dead individuals) and fecal pellets (n=100) were also analyzed to find the food habits of the species. The results revealed that the squirrel species feed upon 14 (N=14) plants. Among planted fruit trees the highest damage percentage was recorded for *Juglans regia* (walnut) 60.6%, followed by *Prunus armeniaca* (apricot) 59%, *Prunus persica* (peach) 46%, *Malus pumila* (apple) 32%, *Diospyros kaki* (Japanese fruit) 32%, *Punica granatum* (pomegranate) 31% and *Pyrus communis* (Pear) 27%. The *Pinus wallichiana* (88.79%), *Pinus roxburghii* (82.70%) and *Quercus incana* (74.60%) were wild tree species feed by squirrel species. There was a significant difference (p=0.000) found among the occurrence of different fruits components in the feces in different seasons. The small Kashmir flying squirrel has been designated "Vulnerable" in Pakistan. Despite of having protected status it is being killed by humans whenever encountered. During current studies a total of 45 individuals were found killed by orchard owners due to its feeding habits. Although squirrels not only use the forest to live and eat, but also play a vital role in sustaining and expanding plant communities and ecosystems. Therefore it is requisite to check the efficacy of different strategies (netting, fencing and use of repellents) to save both humans' assets and squirrel populations in the study area.

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