

Research Notes

DIVERSITY OF EARTHWORMS IN AN ORCHARD AT BARASAT, W. BENGAL (ANNELIDA: OLIGOCHAETA)

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Earthworms belong to Megadrili Oligochaetes and correspond to the orders Moniligastrida and Haplotaxida, excluding suborder Tubificina. Perrier (1872) was first to report of an earthworm species *Perichaeta houlleti* from West Bengal. Stephenson (1923), Gates (1937-1938), Julka (1988), Halder (1998) and Chowdhury et al. (2011) have contributed to the taxonomic studies of earthworms from West Bengal. The present study is to know the diversity of earthworm fauna in a particular habitat of West Bengal.

The study area is situated at Barasat, which is nearly 50 km north-east of Kolkata, in the district of North 24 Parganas of West Bengal. The flora here mainly consists of *Mangifera indica*, *Cocos nucifera*, and *Musa paradisiaca*. Other notable vegetations are *Bombax ceiba*, *Terminalia arjuna*, *Albizia lebbek*, *Bambusa tulda*, *Colocasia esculenta*, *Cynodon dactylon*, *Solanum nigrum*, *Centella asiatica*, *Coccinia cordifolia*, *Marsilea minuta* etc. Soil of this site is alluvium in nature, brown in colour and clay silt loam in texture. Collection, narcotisation and preservation of the earthworm samples were carried out following Julka (1988).

In the present study, 14 species of earthworms belonging to 4 families were recorded (Table 1). Out of 14 species, 6 species belong to family Megascolicidae, 5 species belong to family Octochaetidae, two species belong to family Moniligastridae and family Almididae is represented by single species. Among the earthworm populations, *Metaphire posthuma* showed maximum in numbers, whereas *Drawida papillifer papillifer* showed minimum. Population peak was observed during the monsoon and post-monsoon seasons.

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Table 1. List of earthworm species observed at Barasat.

Family	Earthworm species
1. Moniligastridae	<i>Drawida nepalensis</i> Michaelsen
2.	<i>Drawida papillifer papillifer</i> Stephenson
3. Octochaetidae	<i>Eutyphoeus incommodus</i> (Beddard)
4.	<i>Eutyphoeus nicholsoni</i> (Beddard)
5.	<i>Eutyphoeus orientalis</i> (Beddard)
6.	<i>Octochaetona beatrix</i> (Beddard)
7.	<i>Octochaetona surensis</i> (Michaelsen)
8. Megascolicidae	<i>Lampito mauritii</i> Kinberg
9.	<i>Metaphire posthuma</i> (Vallant)
10.	<i>Metaphire houlleti</i> (Perrier)
11.	<i>Perionyx excavatus</i> Perrier
12.	<i>Polypheretima elongata</i> (Perrier)
13.	<i>Amyntas corticis</i> (Kinberg)
14. Almididae	<i>Glyphidrilus tuberosus</i> Stephenson

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Most Mammals Pee in 21 secs

All mammals larger than rats take roughly the same amount of time to urinate — 21 seconds — regardless of their size, scientists say. An elephant takes the same amount of time to empty its huge bladder as a cat — despite holding 18 litres of urine. This is because their urethras are appropriately scaled to be a “flow-enhancing device.” To compare peeing rates across the animal kingdom. David Hu, of Mechanical Engineering Deptt. at Atlanta's Georgia Institute of Technology, turned to the zoo and the internet.