

A SURVEY OF THE VERTEBRATE FAUNA OF THE MONTICELLO LIGNITE MINING AREA, TITUS COUNTY, TEXAS

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Purpose: The purpose of this study was to determine species composition, distribution and relative abundance of vertebrates on the Monticello Lignite Mining Area, Titus County, Texas, before mining operations destroyed the habitat.

Procedure: A variety of standardized techniques were used for the observation, identification and capture of vertebrates. In addition, several quantitative techniques were used to classify the plant communities of the area.

Findings: Six different plant communities were recognized. Natural, complex communities (two types of upland forests, riparian forests and old fields) had diverse vertebrate faunas. Simplistic agrarian communities were characterized by a scarcity in kind and number of vertebrates.

Conclusions: Land reclamation practices will probably favor simplistic, agrarian communities. Recommendations for reclamation were made that would favor ecological diversity.

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