

**A TAXONOMICAL SURVEY OF CLASS HIRUDINEA
AT BRGY. IGANG, LUCBAN, QUEZON**

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ABSTRACT

The Class Hirudinea in the phylum Annelida (segmented worms) comprises the leeches; the most highly specialized of the major annelid groups. The study determined the species diversity of Class Hirudinea in Brgy. Igang, Lucban, Quezon. The list includes the common name, order and family of each species. Frequency of collected leeches, ecological and economical benefits, as well as its physical characteristics were observed and noted. Leeches were collected by measuring two transect lines; 100 meters each. Samples were collected every 10 meters. The samples were collected by either submerging a foot and letting the leeches attach to it which is very effective or by using a long piece of wood with a piece of half cooked meat at the end for luring leeches into it. Preservation was done using 7% Magnesium Chloride (MgCl₂) for softening/relaxation purposes before subjecting the specimen into 10% Formalin solution. Specimen was identified and authenticated at the National Museum-Zoology Section.

Result revealed 2 species of leeches identified belonging to the same Order Arhynchobdellida but with different families, namely, (*Linta*) *Hirudinaria manillensis* from Family Hirudinidae, and *Alimatik* from Family Erpobdellidae. Survey shows that 26 respondents said that these species are only pest in the rice field. In the economic aspect, four of the respondents said that they gather these leeches and sell it to the local market to some foreigners and other people interested for other purposes. In addition to that, four respondents said that they use these leeches for medicinal purposes. They also make these *alimatik* species as a substitute for earthworms when fishing.

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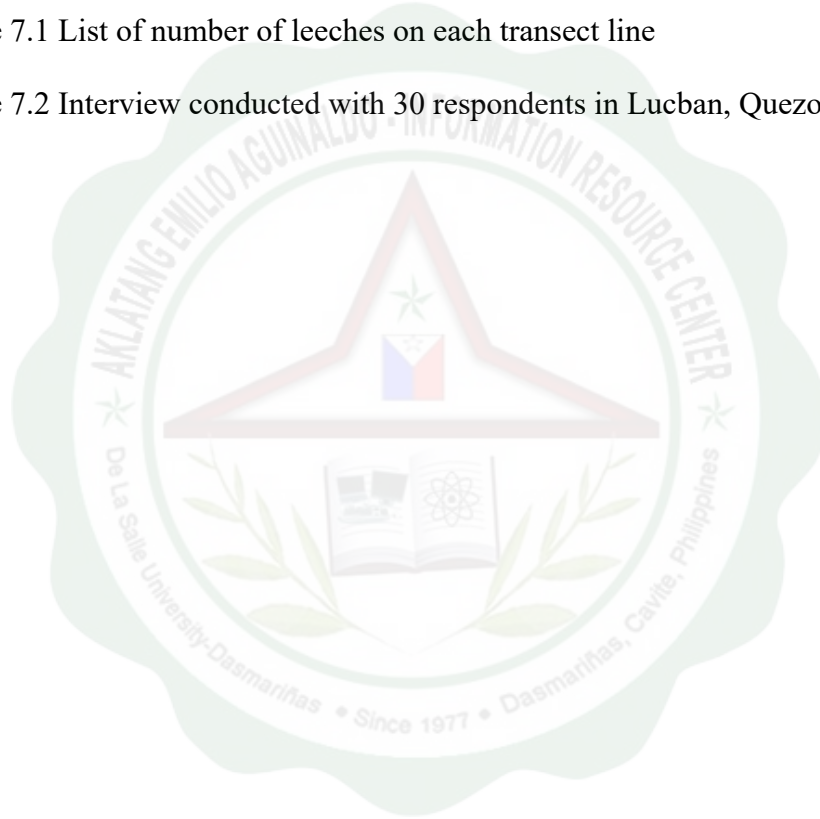
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