GROSS, HISTOLOGICAL AND HISTOCHEMICAL CHARACTERIZATION OF SELECTED REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS OF COMMON PALM CIVET (Paradoxum harmachanthus)

THESIS

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(Paradoxurus hermaphroditus)

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ABSTRACT

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A study was conducted to determine the gross, histologic and histochemical characteristics of reproductive organs of common palm civet (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*) by morphometry and microscopic examination using various stains.

A male and female common palm civets accidentally caught were used in the study. Morphometric features were taken and reproductive organs were collected, identified, and measured. Tissue samples were harvested and processed using Hematoxylin and Eosin, Van Gieson, Alcian Blue at pH 2.5 and 1.0, and Periodic Acid-Schiff as stains. Microscopic examinations were done at different magnification and features were observed and noted.

The common palm civets have a long body covered with gray to light brown hair with three black stripes at the tail. The total length of the male common palm civet was 106.8 cm and 95.9 cm for female weighing 3.1 kg and 2.9 kg, respectively. The sample animals were identified as adult but lighter than the reported values.

The testis is a paired, white colored oval gland with firm consistency with epididymis on its dorsolateral border enclosed within the scrotum outside the abdominal cavity. On the other hand, a paired oval ovary of the female is located in the pelvic cavity caudal to the kidney which is bilaterally flattened, concealed in an ovarian bursa. A tubular organ that lies to the dorsal surface of the small intestine comprised of distinct regions: the uterus and vagina. Histologically, the testis, epididymis and the ovary of the

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INTRODUCTION

The common palm civet (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*), also known as toddy cat is a small member of the Viverridae that can be found as far west as Kashmir and as far east as the Philippines. Locally called as "musang", these nocturnal animals are primarily ground-dwelling as they mark their ranges by dragging their anal glands along the ground. Despite being predominately ground-dwelling, the common palm civet is known to climb up into the trees either in search of food or to hide from approaching predators (Duckworth, Widman, Gonzalez, Jennings & Veron, 2008).

The common palm civets are relatively voracious omnivores (Grassman Jr., 1998). They utilize fruits such as berries and pulpy fruits as a major food source and also feed on chiku, mango, rambutan and coffee with small mammals and insects and thus help to maintain tropical forest ecosystems via seed dispersal. In India, civets are bred to harvest musk, described as sweet, pleasant and acquired by scraping out from the civet's