Dieta de *Odocoileus virginianus* (Artiodactyla: Cervidae) en un bosque templado del norte de Oaxaca, México

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Abstract: *Odocoileus virginianus* **diet (Artiodactyla: Cervidae) in a temperate forest of Northern Oaxaca, Mexico.** The Sierra Madre de Oaxaca region, located in the Northern state of Oaxaca, Mexico, is an area of forest ecosystems subject to high exploitation rates, although in some areas its temperate forests are conserved by indigenous community initiatives that live there. We analyzed the diet of white tailed-deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) in the localities of Santa Catarina Lachatao and San Miguel Amatlán from June 1998 to August 1999. Sampling was done during both the wet and dry seasons, and included the observation of browsing traces (238 observations), microhistological analysis of deer feces (28 deer pellet-groups), and two stomach content analysis. The annual diet of white-tailed deer was composed of 42 species from 23 botanical families. The most represented families in the diet of this deer were Fagaceae, Asteraceae, Ericaceae and Fabaceae. There were significant differences in the alpha diversity of the diet during the wet and dry seasons (H'=2.957 and H'=1.832, respectively). The similarity percentage between seasons was 56%. Differences in plant species frequency were significantly higher during the wet season. Herbaceous plants made up the greatest percentage of all the species consumed. The preferred species throughout the year were *Senecio* sp. (shrub), *Sedum dendroideum* (herbaceous), *Arctostaphylos pungens* (shrub) and *Satureja macrostema* (shrub). Diet species richness was found to be lower than that observed in a tropical forest (Venezuela), tropical dry forest (Mexico) and temperate deciduous and mixed forest (Mexico), but similar to the diet species richness observed in a tropical dry forest (Costa Rica) and temperate coniferous and deciduous forests (USA). Rev. Biol. Trop. 60 (1): 447-457. Epub 2012 March 01..

Key words: White-tailed deer, diet, microhistological analysis, feces, Sierra Madre de Oaxaca.

El venado cola blanca (*Odocoileus virginianus*) se distribuye a lo largo de todo México, excepto en la península de Baja California y el norte de Sonora (Hall 1981). En el estado de Oaxaca al sur de México, habitan cuatro subespecies de venado cola blanca (*Odocoileus virginianus acapulcensis*, *O. v. oaxacensis*, *O. v. thomasi* y *O. v. toltecus)* en diferentes tipos de bosques templados y tropicales (Briones-Salas & Sánchez-Cordero 2004).

La región de la Sierra Madre de Oaxaca, al norte del estado, tiene una superficie aproximada de 943 796ha y cerca del 70% de sus bosques se encuentran en buen estado de conservación, sobre todo los templados y nublados (Ortega del Valle *et al*. 2010). En parte de estos bosques, específicamente en los Municipios de Santa Catarina Lachatao y San Miguel Amatlán, empresas forestales particulares realizaron aprovechamiento forestal y de fauna silvestre durante casi 20 años sin un manejo adecuado, particularmente de venado cola blanca. Es muy posible que por esta razón, la población de esta especie haya decrecido drásticamente, de acuerdo con la información proporcionada por pobladores indígenas zapotecos