

A RAPID BIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF NORTH LORMA, GOLA AND GREBO NATIONAL FORESTS, LIBERIA

Expedition Dates

13 November – 11 December 2005

Area Description

North Lorma National Forest consists of seasonal moist evergreen and semi-deciduous forest and some open riverine forest habitat. It is situated in northwestern Liberia near the border with Guinea and lies between the Wologizi and the Wonegizi Mountains. Many smaller streams were present within a slightly hilly landscape. Further from the river but at a higher elevation the vegetation quickly changed to lower forest with large scattered trees. This site had the least amount of disturbance with the presence of an old overgrown logging road the only noticeable sign.

Gola National Forest is also seasonal moist evergreen and semi-deciduous forest and is situated between the Gola Strict Nature Reserve in Sierra Leone and Kpelle National Forest in Liberia. The terrain has steep slopes with small, rocky streams and the vegetation was dense in most areas although large lianas were present. Illegal small-scale diamond mining was observed just inside the forest.

Grebo National Forest is a wet evergreen forest situated in the southeast of the country and is contiguous with the Forêt Classée du Cavally in Côte d'Ivoire. It consists of mature secondary forest that is open with isolated huge trees. Aquatic sites within the area were medium sandy streams with a few stones and rocks as well as large ponds. Logging occurred in this area roughly twenty years ago.

Reason for the Expedition

This survey was part of the larger Liberia Forest Initiative (LFI), an initiative supporting efforts to rehabilitate and reform the forest sector in Liberia and harmonize activities associated with these efforts. In addition to collecting data on the sites to strengthen and expand conservation efforts in Liberia, the RAP survey worked to build scientific capacity within the FDA, University of Liberia and local NGOs. Efforts were also made to increase the Liberian public's awareness of their rich flora and fauna.