

Ecology in Backyard: METU Erdemli Ecological Campus Project

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Middle East Technical University Erdemli Campus is located on the South East Mediterranean Coasts of Anatolia within Mersin city center. It covers 660000 m² area with c. 1.5 Km of coastline. It is one of the last less-intensive human settlements on Mersin coastline and serves as an important natural area. In spite of its small size, the campus hosts native coastal sand dunes as well as a great diversity of habitats. Ecological Campus Project started in spring of 2016 to understand the biodiversity and ecology of METU Erdemli Campus and provide strategies for better management of the campus to enhance its ecological functions. The first phase of the project aims at understanding the diversity and spatiotemporal patterns of organism groups in the campus area: plants, arthropods, fish, reptiles and amphibians, birds and mammals. All surveys have been conducted by using standardized ecological field methods that enables inter-group and inter-annual comparisons. The abundance and occupancy patterns in species and diversity is used to understand their interaction with their habitats and the extent of the anthropogenic effects. In this poster, we will present the first results of the field surveys and the project.