ISSN 2319 - 5975

Volume 13, No.1, December 2023 – January 2024

International Journal of Networks and Systems

Available Online at http://www.warse.org/IJNS/static/pdf/file/ijns011312024.pdf

https://doi.org/10.30534/ijns/2024/011312024

R-CNN Based Deep Learning Approach for Counting Animals in the Forest: A Survey

Gagandeep M D, Jagath S K, Kartik Tomar, Senthil Kumar R

CSE, Alva's Institute of Engineering and Technology, Mangalore, India, gm901996@gmail.com

CSE, Alva's Institute of Engineering and Technology, Mangalore, India, jagathskarunakara@gmail.com

CSE, Alva's Institute of Engineering and Technology, Mangalore, India, kstomar945@gmail.com

CSE, Alva's Institute of Engineering and Technology, Mangalore, India, senthil@aiet.org.in

Received Date : November 18, 2023 Accepted Date : December 12, 2023 Published Date : January 07, 2024

ABSTRACT

This review paper delves into the pivotal realm of animal classification using images obtained through diverse techniques in forest environments. A robust framework is introduced, employing Transfer Learning (TL) within a Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) and leveraging the power of the Region-based Convolutional Neural Network (R-CNN) model for the construction of an automated animal identification system. This innovative framework is adeptly applied to analyze and identify focal species within captured images, contributing to the advancement of wildlife monitoring technologies.

The dataset under scrutiny comprises 6,203 camera trap images featuring 11 distinct species, including Wild pig, Barking deer, Chital, Elephant, Gaur, Hare, Jackal, Junglecat, Porcupine, Sambhar, and Sloth bear. The inclusion of this diverse set of species ensures the robustness and applicability of the proposed methodology across a broad spectrum of wildlife scenarios.

The integration of Transfer Learning withinthe Region-based Convolutional Neural Network (R-CNN) emerges as a crucial element, showcasing outstanding performance in species classification. Notably, the proposed model achieves a remarkable accuracy rate of 96% on the test dataset after a mere 18 epochs, employing a batch size of 32. This breakthrough holds the potential to expedite research outcomes, foster the evolution of more efficient and dependable animal monitoring systems, and consequently, alleviate the time and effort invested by researchers.In line with ethical considerations, the authors maintain anonymity in their contribution, focusing on the significant strides made in the classification andanalysis of camera trap images within the observed site. This paper positions itself as a noteworthy and impactful contribution to the broader field of wildlife research and technology.

Key words: R-CNN, Deep Learning, Neural Network, Transfer Learning, Recognition

1. INTRODUCTION

In the dynamic field of wildlife conservation and ecological research, there is an escalating demand for sophisticated methodologies to monitor and comprehend animal populations within the intricate ecosystems of forests. This review paper explores cutting-edge technology, placing a focal point on an avant-garde and deliberately anonymous deep learning approach—specifically, the Region-based Convolutional Neural Network (R-CNN) [3]. Positioned as a transformative force, this approach has the potential to revolutionize the landscape of animal counting, providing a nuanced and efficient solution to the multifaceted challenges presented by the dynamic and diverse nature of forest environments.

Forests, with their intricate and ever- changing ecosystems, host an extraordinary diversity of species intricately woven into the fabric of their environment. Monitoring and understanding these populations present formidable challenges that necessitate sophisticated and adaptive methodologies. Traditional approaches to animal counting, reliant on manual observation and enumeration, are often laborious, time-intensive, and susceptible to errors. Herein lies the promise of the R- CNN—a model renowned for its precision in localizing and classifying objects withinimages. Its adaptability to diverse habitats and species [4], coupled with its capacity for nuanced analysis, positions it as a transformative tool for wildlife population assessment in ecosystems where biodiversity is not only extensive but also intricately interwoven.

This paper embarks on a thorough exploration of the application of R-CNN in the domain of animal counting within forest environments. Through a discerning lens, we delve into the model's strengths and capabilities, scrutinize potential limitations, and chart pathways for future enhancements. The deliberate choice to maintain anonymity in authorship underscores the dedication to highlighting the collaborative and collective nature of scientific progress. By accentuating the transformative potential of the proposed methodology over individual recognition, the aim is to cultivate a culture of inclusivity and shared advancement.

The overarching ambition is to contribute substantively to the shared knowledge base, propelling advancements in wildlife monitoring methodologies that extend beyond individual contributions. Through this exploration, the aspiration is not only to advance the scientific frontier but also to create a collaborative and inclusive environment that empowers the broader scientific community. This, it is believed, is pivotal for the enhancement of wildlife conservation efforts and the deepening of ecological understanding in the face of an ever-changing and interconnected world.

Forest ecosystems, renowned for theirintricate biodiversity, intricate dynamics, and complexity, pose distinctive challenges for researchers and conservationists engaged in wildlife studies. The imperative to comprehend and monitor animal populations within these environments is paramount for the formulation and implementation of effective conservationstrategies [5]. Conventional methods of animal enumeration, including direct observation and manual counting, often prove inadequate in capturing the nuanced intricacies of the diverse and elusive species inhabiting forest ecosystems. In response to these challenges, the integration of cutting-edge technologies has emerged as a promising pathway.

Deep learning, a subset within the realm of artificial intelligence, has garnered substantial attention across various domains, and its application in wildlife monitoring is no exception. Amidst the diverse array of deep learning methodologies, the Region-based Convolutional Neural Network (R-CNN) stands out for its prowess in localizing and categorizing objects within images.Originally designed to tackle object detection tasks, the R-CNN has demonstrated its efficacy in a range of applications, spanning from facial recognition to medical image analysis. In the context of wildlife research, the potential of the R-CNN becomes notably intriguing.

2. THE R-CNN MODEL IN WILDLIFE MONITORING

We provide a thorough overview of the different Deep learning (DL) algorithms used in the identification of animals in the forest. Both supervised and unsupervised learning strategies are covered by these algorithms [2].

2.1 Object Localization and Classification

The foundational strength of the R-CNN model lies in its exceptional ability to precisely localize and classify objects within images. In the context of wildlife monitoring, this translates to accurately identifying and delineating animal species. By leveraging the hierarchical architecture of the R-CNN, researchers can gain insights into the spatial distribution of species within a given habitat. The meticulous analysis of both spatial and contextual information contributes to a nuanced understanding of the ecosystem's biodiversity.

2.2 Adaptability to Diverse Habitats and Species

The R-CNN's adaptability to diverse habitats and species is a key feature that setsit apart in wildlife monitoring. Its capacity to be trained on a varied dataset, encompassing different animals and environmental conditions, allows the model to generalize effectively. In the intricate ecosystems of forests, characterized by a myriad of species and varying environmental factors, this adaptabilityproves invaluable. The R-CNN's versatilityensures its applicability across a spectrum of wildlife scenarios, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of population dynamics.

2.3 Robustness in Handling Occlusions and Overlapping Instances

The Dense forest environments often present challenges of occlusions and overlapping instances, where traditional counting methods may fall short. The R-CNN's robustness in handling such complexities is a critical aspect of its effectiveness in wildlife monitoring [6]. The model's ability to discern and delineate objects, even in scenarios with overlapping instances, contributes to more accurate and reliable counts, providing researchers with a clearer picture of population sizes.

2.4 Transfer Learning for Species Recognition

A pivotal aspect of the R-CNN's success in wildlife monitoring is its application of transfer learning [7]. Pre-training the model on a large dataset for a general task, such as image classification, and fine-tuning it on a smaller, domain-specific dataset enhances its ability to recognize and count specific species within the forest environment. This transfer of knowledge allows the model to leverage features learned from a broad range of data, contributing to its adaptability and effectiveness in species recognition.

3. R-CNN WORKING MODEL FOR COUNTING

The Region-based Convolutional Neural Network (R-CNN) serves as a powerful working model for counting animals in the forest [1], providing a sophisticated solution to the challenges associated with traditional counting methods. This section outlines the key components and processes involved in the R-CNN working model for wildlife population assessment as shown in figure 1.

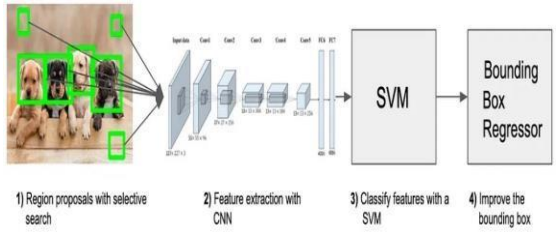

Figure 1: R-CNN Model Architecture

3.1 Image Input and Region Proposal

The R-CNN begins by taking high-resolution images of the forest environments input [10]. To manage computational complexity, these images are then dividedinto a set of region proposals. These proposals are potential bounding boxes that could contain objects of interest, such as animals. The selective search algorithm is commonly employed for generating these region proposals, efficiently narrowing down the areas of interest within the vast image.

3.2 Image Input and Region Proposal

Once the region proposals are generated, each region is independently processed through a convolutional neural network (CNN). This step involves extracting high- level features from the proposed regions [8]. The CNN acts as a feature extractor, transforming the raw pixel values of each region into a compact and representativefeature vector. This process captures important visual information that will be crucial for subsequent classification.

3.3 Region Classification

The extracted features are then fed into a set of support vector machines (SVMs), one for each class of object that the model aims to detect and count. In the context of wildlife monitoring, each class represents a different species of animal. The SVMs are responsible for classifying whether the proposed region contains an animal or not (figure 2). Simultaneously, bounding box regression is applied to refine the proposed region, improving the precision of the localization.

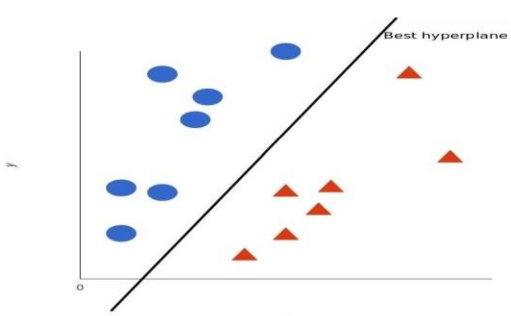

Figure 2: Depiction of Best Hyperplane for SVM

3.4 Counting and Post-Processing

Following classification, the model aggregates the results across all proposed regions and assigns a count to each detected animal class. The final step involves post-processing to eliminate duplicate detections and refine to the count. Non-maximumsuppression (NMS) is commonly used to filter out redundant bounding boxes, ensuring that each animal instance iscounted only once.

3.5 Model Training and Fine-Tuning

The efficacy of the R-CNN model forcounting animals in the forest is contingenton robust training and fine-tuning. Transfer learning is a key strategy, where the model is initially trained on a large dataset for a general task, such as image classification,and then fine-tuned on a smaller datasetspecific to the forest environment. Thistransfer of knowledge enhances the model's ability to recognize and count diverse species within the intricate forestlandscape.

4. CONCLUSION

In summation, the in-depth exploration of the Region-based Convolutional Neural Network (R-CNN)based deep learning approach for counting animals in forest environments serves as a significant milestone in the landscape of wildlife monitoring [11]. This comprehensive survey has not only shed light on the intricacies of R-CNN but has alsodelineated its profound impact, strengths, and broader implications within thecomplex ecosystems of forests.

The R-CNN's effectiveness in precisely localizing and categorizing animals across diverse habitats emerges as a pivotal asset in the intricate task of wildlife population assessment. Its adaptive capabilities to navigate varying environmental conditions, robust handling of occlusions and overlapping instances, and the strategic application of transfer learning underscore its versatility and relevance across a broad spectrum of wildlife scenarios.

This survey accentuates the imperative of harnessing advanced technologies to transcend the limitations inherent in traditional animal counting methods, particularly when confronted with the dynamic and multifaceted nature of forest ecosystems. By automating the process of animal counting, the R-CNN not only amplifies the accuracy of assessments but also significantly streamlines the time and effort invested in comprehensive wildlife monitoring initiatives.

Furthermore, the survey places emphasis on the collaborative and collective ethos underpinning scientific progress. The deliberate decision to anonymize authorship underscores a commitment to emphasizing the transformative potential ofthe R-CNN model over individual recognition. In recognizing the interconnectedness of research efforts, the survey advocates for a culture of shared knowledge and collaborative endeavors in the pursuit of advancements in wildlife monitoring methodologies.

Looking forward, the R-CNN based deep learning approach stands at the forefront of potential breakthroughs in wildlife research and conservation. Future avenues of research may delve into further refining the model's adaptability to dynamic environmental conditions, optimizing its computational efficiency, and enhancing interpretability to instill trust in its applications. As the scientific community continues to push the boundaries of innovation, the pivotal role played by the R-CNN in counting animals within forest environments serves as a testament to the transformative potential of deep learning inreshaping our understanding and conservation efforts within intricate and dynamic ecosystems.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors would like to express their gratitude for the support and contributions that have enriched this research endeavor. F. A. Author acknowledges the insightful work of colleagues and the valuable resources provided by Mr. Senthil Kumar R, as outlined in the unnumbered footnote on the first page [9]. This research was made possible through the financial support received from Alvas Institute of Engineering and Technology, Mijar. The authors extend their appreciation to all those who have played a role in advancing this work.

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