

**AVIAN SPECIES DIVERSITY AND ITS DISTRIBUTION IN
SOUTH EASTERN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA, OLUVIL,
SRI LANKA**

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Abstract

Sri Lanka has been listed under the birding hotspots of the world and acts as a winter destination for its own avifauna and migratory birds. Most of the birds are diurnal, sleep at night and are hungry in the morning, so they have to get out and eat during light time of a day. The more the floral abundance is, the more the avifaunal diversity, including many endemics, it supports. Many of the birds prefer tall trees, shrubs, some prefer to nest along streams, while others can be found in open fields. Areas with human foot printing and buildings can also be amazing places to birds because they act like an oasis in a sea of concrete. The main objective of the study was to assess the existing avifauna diversity and to analyse its distribution in different niches in South Eastern University, Oluvil, Sri Lanka and to get familiar with residential as well as migratory birds in particular habitat which is notable for its bird diversity. South Eastern University of Sri Lanka, Oluvil (7° 18' 3.50" N, 81° 51' 19.10" E) covers an area of 225 acres (91.06 Ha) and is located in the eastern coast of Sri Lanka in Ampara district, Eastern Sri Lanka. It contains various kinds of habitats within such as big trees, grassland, pond, gardens and river bank. The habitats have varying ranges of vegetation. Data collection was done from December, 2021 to February, 2022 by using Line transect method integrated with point counts to count birds at twenty sampling points. The points were marked using Global Positioning System (GPS). In the current study an overall 53 avian species belonging to 15 orders and 33 families were recorded. Residential status revealed that out of the total (N=53) birds species, 44 species are residents as they live year round, 05 are endemic and 05 are migrants. Investigation on the feeding habit of birds revealed that 32.1 % (n=17) were omnivorous, 26.4 % (n=14) were carnivorous, 24.5 % (n=13) insectivorous, 7.5% (n=04) granivorous, 5.7 % (n=03) nectarivore and 3.8 % (n=02) was found to be frugivorous. The study site is found to be rich in biodiversity and is safe for avifauna.

Keywords: *bird migration, avifauna, Oluvil, bird diversity*