
A PRELIMINARY STUDY OF ARTHROPOD DIVERSITY IN THE CANOPY OF *Camposperma zeylanica* Thw, AT PEAK WILDERNESS SANCTUARY

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In recent times, canopy studies have revealed a wealth of information about the arthropod diversity that can be seen in the forest canopy. For instance, Stork (1997) sampled 19 trees of *Luehea seemannii*, a tree found in semi-evergreen forests of Brasil, which yielded 955 species of beetles. Another canopy study done in venezuela yielded 972 species of beetles from six rain forest trees (Davies *et al.*, 1997). However, in Sri Lanka, no studies have been done so far regarding the canopy arthropods.

This study was done as a pilot project to assess the canopy arthropod diversity in Sri Lanka. The study was conducted in the Peak Wilderness Sanctuary from March to May 1999. A single tree of the common canopy species *Camposperma zeylanica* (Anacardiaceae), was selected and the knockdown pesticide *Cyfluthrin*, was applied to the canopy using 'Swin Fod SN50' fogger. Arthropods falling from the tree were collected on to plastic sheets suspended 1m above the ground level and preserved in 70% alcohol. Arthropods were assigned to taxonomic orders and approximate morphospecies.

A total of 228 individuals belonging to 18 orders were collected. These individuals were separated into 111 morphospecies. Of the morphospecies recorded, the highest number belongs to order Diptera (33) followed by order Hymenoptera (22), order Araneida (14), and order Coleoptera (12). Rest of the orders were represented by 5 or less morphospecies. These results are based on a single sample collected in March 1999. Yet a large number of species were recorded indicating that the canopy arthropod diversity in Sri Lanka is likely to be very high. Therefore, further investigations should be carried out to assess the actual diversity that exist in the forest canopy of Sri Lanka.