

HERPETO-FAUNAL SURVEY OF THE DEENSTON-NAVANAGALA NATURE TRAIL, THE KNUCKLES RANGE

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A survey of amphibians and reptiles was carried out along the "Deenston-Navanagala Nature Trail" on the eastern slopes of the Knuckles Range (elevation: 915-1906 m) during the June-Oct. period of 2003. The objective was to identify the amphibians and reptiles species in their micro-habitats of the studies area. The survey is important as Sri Lanka is an amphibian biodiversity hot spot.

The survey was done both during day and night using the 'long transect method'. 'Visible range' (weather-dependent) determined the transect width. The species were caught for identification (using hand nets) and released.

12 amphibian species were recorded within three families. There were six endemic - all nationally threatened-including one in the endemic genus *Lankanectus*. Their distribution in the micro-habitat is:

Litter: 2 spp., Puddles: 2 spp., Stream banks: 3 spp., Tree holes: 1 sp., Trunks: 2 spp.
Litter and bushes: 1 sp., Litter and underneath logs: 1 sp.

As for the reptiles the number of tetrapod species is 12 within three families. Out of 8 endemic species 6 are nationally threatened.

There were 17 serpentoid species within 4 families. Six are endemic and nationally threatened. Their micro-habitat break down is:

Tetrapod reptiles:

Litter : 2 spp., Trunks: 3 spp.

Cardamom & trunks 1 sp., Litter & beneath rocks 1 sp., Trunk & beneath rocks 1 sp.,
Trunk and Bushes 2 sp., Trunk and Rocks 2 sp.

Serpentoid reptiles:

Grasslands: 4 spp., Litter : 5 spp., Log cavities; 1 sp., Puddles: 1 sp.,

Sub personal : 1 sp., Tree holes: 1 sp.

Grass and litter: 1 sp. Trunks and bushes: 3 spp.