

(175)

Ethnobotanical Survey in Pigeon Island National Park, Trincomalee

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Abstract

The Pigeon Island National Park is one of the three marine national parks of Sri Lanka. The national park is situated 1 km off the coast of Nilaveli, a coastal town in Eastern Province, encompassing a total area of 471.429 hectares. The island's name derives from the rock pigeon which has colonized it. Pigeon Island was designated as a sanctuary in 1963. In 2003 it was re-designated as a national park, making it the 17th such park in Sri Lanka. Physical features are, Pigeon Island consists of two islands; large pigeon island and small pigeon island. The large pigeon island is fringed by a coral reef, and is about 200 m long and 100 m wide. Its highest point is 44.8 m above mean sea level. The small pigeon island is surrounded by rocky islets. The national park is situated within the dry zone of Sri Lanka. The mean annual temperature is around 27.0 °C (80.6 °F). The annual rainfall ranges between 1,000–1,700 millimetres (39–67 in) while most of the rain is received during the North-eastern monsoon season from October to March. Identified flora as 67 plants and Euphorbiaceous family members were higher than other families. Shrubs had higher distributions than other plant's taxonomy. Some plants such as, Tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*), Banyan (*Ficus benghalensis*), Beriya (*Lumnitzera racemosa*), Screw pine (*Pandanus tectorius*), Mahakadal (*Rhizophora mucronata*), Kaduru (*Cerbera manghas*), Thelai (*Excoecaria agallocha*), Kohomba (*Azadirachta indica*), Geiger tree (*Cordia sebestena*) trees and shrubs, climbers, creepers and cactus. This survey concluded to preserve natural resources for the next generation.

Keywords: Pigeon Island National Park, Flora, Ethnobotany, Trincomalee.