

**STUDIES ON THE ZOOPLANKTON IN AN IRRIGATION SYSTEM
UNDER THE MAHAWELI DIVERSION SCHEME**

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The studies were conducted at Kalawewa which is part of Mahaweli diversion system. The objective of the study was to record data which would serve as a baseline to monitor future conditions in the irrigation system. Monthly samples were collected at stations in the main reservoir, the main distributing canal, feed canals, paddy fields and drainage canals, using 66/88/1 plankton net. The study was begun in January 1979 and is proceeding.

It has been observed that Zooplankton density is highest in the main reservoir and lowest in the drainage canals. Rotifers were the dominant group in all parts of the system. The majority of rotifers belong to 8 genera, the dominant ones being *Brachionus*, *Keratella*, *Hexarthra* and *Fillinia*. Cladoceran genera included *Diphanosoma*, *Moina*, *Ceriodaphnia* and *Daphnia*. Copepods were represented mainly by Calanoids and Cyclopoids, Harpacticoids being rare. A certain seasonal pattern of variation has been observed in the zooplankton.

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