

USE OF THE GRID SYSTEM TO PLOT THE
DISTRIBUTION OF AVIFAUNA IN SRI LANKA

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The grid system based on the Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM), 10 km squares is widely used in preparing atleast of distribution for floral and faunal groups (Udvardy 1981).

Over 25 countries have used the method very successfully. Among these are countries of the northern hemisphere, Britain, Canada, USA, France, Russia, Japan, and also many nations from the Southern hemisphere - Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda and Burundi, Tanzania too. (Udvardy 1981). In addition to the distribution, work on birds have shown that population estimates too can be obtained from this system (Udvardy 1981, Svensson, 1977, 1979, Bogucki 1977). The system being a uniform method, helps comparison, and better interpretation of biogeography, effects of human activity and any other factor.

In Sri Lanka the grid system has not been used before for any floral and faunal work. The only instance this method has been used is in the preparation of Land Use Maps by the Land Use Policy Department.

With the initiation of the Avifaunal Survey under the auspices of the Zoological Survey of Sri Lanka, the authors have developed the grid system for Sri Lanka, based on the UTM grid available on the 1:63,360 survey maps of Sri Lanka. The paper presents the developed grid systems, which can now be identified by a place name, grid number, or by the UTM Co-ordinates.

The grid was used to plot the distribution of the 21 endemic birds, and 10 of the most common birds are discussed.

References

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