

SOME ASPECTS OF ECOLOGY AND BIOLOGY OF COPSYCHUS  
MALABARICUS (SRI LANKA SHAMA) IN THE  
WASGOMUWA NATIONAL PARK

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"The shama is widely distributed in the low country and lower hills up to about 1000m. but it is rare and local in the wet zone and much prefers the dry zone forests for its habitat. In these it is very common, though, owing to its retiring habits and the density of the undergrowth". (Henry 1955). This is the only forest bird on Copsychus genus.

Mist netting data were collected from four different habitat types i.e. Riverine forest, Riverine mixed forest, Dry Zone undisturbed forest, and scrub jungle. Line transects were done in above four forest types and grassland. Six thirty minutes line transects were done in mornings, noons, and evenings, two at a time. Time duration needed for the line transect was determined in advance experimentally using the point transects.

Size of the nest, its height from ground level, depth and radius and material used in building the nest were recorded. Breeding information such as clutch size, size of eggs, success rate of hatching, growth of young were also recorded.

Shama is more abundant in Riverine forest and is rarely seen in open areas like Grasslands. It has two breeding seasons during the year in this area. The success rate of nestlings was high in February - April season but low in September - October season. Shama is not a territorial bird. but in breeding season it was observed that this bird demarcate it's territory. The territorial behaviour was confirmed with net captures during the breeding season.

References: Birds of Sri Lanka - G.M. Henry