

FLORISTIC COMPOSITION OF THE UNDERGROWTH AT A
SELECTED SITE IN HURULU FOREST RESERVE (SIGIRIYA).

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The Hurulu Forest Reserve is a lowland monsoon forest. The study site situated in Matale district is approximately 35ha. A study of the species composition and a quantitative survey of the undergrowth (below 10cm diameter at Breast Height - dbh) were carried out for a period of six months.

The density and frequency of existing species were examined under two categories, viz., Plants below 10cm dbh and over 1m in height as category 1 and those below 1m in height as category 2.

A total of 82 species, 73 genera and 37 families were recorded (six of these species are endemic (7.31%)). Eleven percent of the species identified belong to the Rutaceae, 9% to Euphorbiaceae and 9% to Rubiaceae.

Glycosmis angustifolia (Rutaceae) attained the highest density of 162.5 and the highest frequency of 70.6% for category 1. For category 2 the same species reached the highest density of 33.1 and the highest frequency of 20.1%. This species also showed the highest Importance Value Index (IVI) of 107.55 and 38.48 for categories 1 and 2 respectively. The second highest IVI value was shown by Polvaithia korinti (Annonaceae) (18.03) attained for the category 1, while Scleria lithosperma (Cyperaceae) (29.71) for category 2.

The important dry zone timber tree species, Manilkara hexandra, Diospyros ebenum, Berriva cordifolia, Syzgium cumini, Chloroxylon swietenia, attained relatively low IVI values, suggesting their poor regeneration.