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A study was conducted to investigate the ecology of Nimalawa Sanctuary during February 1995. Study sites were selected using aerial photographs of the area and field verification. 10 x 10 m plots were marked in forest areas along straight lines. The data collected were: list of species, forest height and species abundance. In grasslands 50 x 50 cm quadrats were randomly placed and the standing vegetation was harvested for botanical composition and dry matter determinations.

75% of the 1065 ha sanctuary was occupied by scrubs. The rest of the area consisted of tanks (7%), forests (6%), grasslands (5%), beach (5%) and paddy (2%). A total of 137 species of flowering plants was recorded. The scrub forest tree community was an association of *Strychnos potatorum*, *Sapindus trifoliatus*, *Diospyros ferrea* and *Drypetes sepiaria*. In these areas the common shrub species include *Dichrostachis cineria*, *Lantana camara*, *Croton lacifer*, *Carmona microphylla*, *Derris benthamii*, *Canthium coromandelicum*, *Memecylon umbellatum* and *Breynia retusa*. The tree community of the forest was a *Drypetes sepiaria* dominant *Manilkara hexandra*, and *Diospyros ferrea* association with shrub species such as *Lantana camara*, *Croton lacifer*, *Carmona microphylla*, *Memecylon umbellatum* and *Breynia retusa*. While species such as *Cyrtococcum trigonum* and *Stenotaphrum dimidiatum* dominated under the shade, *Ischaemum rugosum*, *Cynodon barberi*, and *Eragrostis* spp., were found commonly in Pelessa grasslands.