D – 01

Bird communities inhabiting slash and burn agriculture (chena) and vegetable cultivation were studied, over six months, in 1997. Altogether, 16 plots, including a subset of eight replicates for each agroecosystem, were surveyed in Sooriyawewa (chena lands) and Welipitiya and Weligama (vegetable cultivations) DS Divisions. Bird censuses were obtained from eight replicate plots of each agroecosystem during 1600 5 min observation over 80 field visits, according to the point scan line transect technique.

A total of 8075 birds of 60 species or 5.05 birds per observation at chena lands and 3637 bids of 47 species or 2.27 birds per observation at vegetable lands were recorded. Mean community dominance was higher at vegetable lands (33.59%) than that of chena lands (23.88%). Contribution of individuals by dominant species to the total abundance was higher at vegetable lands (*Psttacula Kramerii, Corvus macrorhynchos*, Acridotheres tristis, Streptopelia chinensis & Turdoides affinis & *Acridotheres tristis* - 45.92%). Species richness, their abundance and diversity were significantly higher at chena lands. Both the agroecosystems had many frugivores (chena: 13 sp.-41.68%; veg.: 12 sp.-42.56%) and insectivores (chena: 22sp .- 20.22%; veg.: 14 sp .- 17.02%).
Many forest birds were recorded at chena (25 sp.- 40.66%). Vegetable lands were dominated by birds that associated with human habitats (7 sp.-51.395). An integrated view of the abundance, diversity , species composition and characteristics integrated view of the abundance, diversity, species composition and characteristics of bird communities highlighted that slash and burn agriculture (chena lands) have higher conservation values for bird diversity and abundance than vegetable lands.