

Woody vegetation of Orupeella rain forest in Kegalle district

The foothills of the Adam's Peak range, comprising floristic region 9 in Sri Lanka is by far the richest floristic zone in the whole of South East Asia. Yet, it is one of the least studied areas in the country. This paper presents the results of a preliminary investigation carried out to understand woody vegetation of this zone.

The woody vegetation at Orupeella rain forest was sampled in three plots, each 100 m x 10 m. each plot was divided into four sub plots of size 100 m x 25 cm. all woody trees which exceed 2.5 cm dbh (diameter of breast height) at 1.3 m above ground were counted. A total of 825 individuals were endemic to Sri Lanka. Among the 84 species identified, 13 had food value, 25 had timber value, 16 were medicinally important and 12 had other economic uses. Based on Importance Value Index (IVI) the dominant species were *Hopea jucunda*, *Cullenica zeylanica*, *Syzygium makul* and *Shorea stipularis*. Dipterocarpaceae (IVI = 56.23) and Myrtaceae (IVI = 19.69) were the two most dominant families in this forest. Population size distribution of each plot showed that nearly one third of the total species represented by few sampled was 3.728. Orupeella forest is a floristically rich area with 59% of endemic in the tree component which should be preserved for the future generation.