

D 199

Post-breeding territoriality of *Saxicoloides fulicata leucoptera* (black robin) in Buttale; Intermediate zone of Sri Lanka

Eight black robin territories were demarcated within an area of about 17.5 ha in Buttala, just after their breeding season (July – October in 2000). Some birds were captured and banded using coloured plastic rings. All black robin sighting locations were mapped and their territories were demarcated using a territory mapping method.

A population of 29.2 ± 4.76 birds was estimated at a population density of 1.667 individuals per hectare. 30 birds were recorded to occupy 8 territories. Black robin territories had an average size of 1.18 ± 0.34 ha, with an activity centre of 22.57 3% of the total area in average. Territories were distributed in open or sparse woodlands and grass or scrub-land. The key features of distributed of the black robin territories were the density of the undergrowth (Mainly high *Panicum* grasses), and human maintenance of the habitat. It prefers habitats with less undergrowth density and with close proximity to human habitations.

The number of black robins occupying a post-breeding territory varied between two to six, and there was no correlation between the territory size and the number occupied.

The territories overlapped at their boundaries with an overlapping area of 8.96 4% of the total area in average. There was a very poor negative correlation between the territory size and size of the overlapping area.

Six territorial behaviour patterns were documented during the study. They are named as territorial song, Territorial display which is peculiar to this species, territorial attack, look out at the territory boundary, tail show and territory investigation.