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Avifaunal species richness and diversity at the premises of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Nugegoda, Sri Lanka

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Diurnal Avifaunal species richness and the species diversity at the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Nugegoda, Sri Lanka was recorded using fixed radius point count method from August 2004 to March 2005. Seven circular plots with a 50m radius and their centers at least 150m apart were selected to represent all the habitat types available at the University. Avifaunal populations in these seven plots were recorded from 6:00 hrs to 9:00 hrs, four times each month. Thirty two bird species belonging to eight orders and twenty three families were recorded during the study period. These included three migratory bird species, Forest wagtail (*Dendronanthus indicus*), Asian paradise-flycatcher (*Terpsiphone paradisi*), Grey wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*) and one endemic species Crimson-fronted barbet (*Megalaima rubricapilla rubricapilla*). Three bird species, Rose ringed parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*), Red vented bulbul (*Pycnonotus cafer cafer*) and Yellow billed babbler (*Turdoides affinis taprobanus*) were recorded in all seven sites. Endemic Crimson fronted barbet was recorded only in the site, which had large trees. Seventeen avian species were recorded in all the months from August 2004 to March 2005. There was no significant difference of the species richness among months. Site with *Casuarina equisetifolis* had the highest species richness of 25 and site covered with grass had the lowest species richness of 11. Relative abundance indicated that Common myna was the most common bird followed by the Red-vented bulbul. Long-billed sunbird and Indian pond heron were the least common birds followed by Oriental white-eye and Crimson-fronted barbet. Although the University is situated 2 km away from the well known aquatic bird sanctuary, Bellanwila – Attidiya marsh, no aquatic birds were recorded. The University provides habitats for thirty two avian species despite the fact that it is situated in a highly urbanized area, and thus warrants step to protect them.