



## **Diversity and composition of Avifauna in a rapidly changing Suburban environment: A case study in Maharagama Divisional Secretariat Division, Sri Lanka**

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### **Abstract**

Land use and land cover changes are unprecedented in the present world. This caused a modification of the habitats of Avifauna in those environments. Studying Avifauna is important as they reflect the impact of the rapid changes of the ecosystems on bird species. The present study aims to identify the diversity of avifauna in the Maharagama Divisional Secretariat Division (DSD), Sri Lanka. A field survey was carried out during the South-west Monsoon period in 2019 using “Point Counts with distance estimation method”. Observations of birds were performed in 20 sample sites in different land uses within a 50m radius for 15 minutes in the morning and evening in three consecutive days. A total number of 3195 individuals (Morning - 1643, Evening - 1552) belong to 29 bird species, 09 genera and 21 families were observed during the study period. Among them, 26 breeding residents, 02 migratory and 01 endemic species. Considering the habitats, Yellow-billed Common Babbler (*Turdoides affinis*), Common Tailorbird (*Orthotomus sutorius*) and Red-vented Bulbul (*Pycnonotus cafer*) common in home gardens. House Crow (*Corvus splendens*) and Rock Pigeon (*Columba livia*) were common in built-up areas while Intermediate Egret (*Mesophoyx intermedia*) was common in paddy areas. Wetland areas; namely Diyawanna Lake, Borelasgamuwa Wewa, Marshes and Woodlands of the DSD were identified as the main breeding zones of the avian fauna community. The study revealed that, although the study area is near densely populated residential areas and commercial areas; it still has a considerable number of bird species.

*Keywords: Avifauna, species richness and land uses*