

## Diversity and Abundance of Avifauna around “Tea and Experience Factory” Hotel, Mandaramnuwara, Sri Lanka

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Birds can be considered as indicative of the health and wellbeing of the environment. They are effective focal species for promoting conservation action for wider range of animal groups. The booming bird watching industry makes a significant contribution to the national economy in many aspects. Here, we present the bird diversity and sites with potential to promote eco-tourism within the premises of Tea & Experience factory hotel in Kabaragalla Tea Estate, Mandaramnuwara in Nuwara Eliya, Sri Lanka. Mandaramnuwara is a small village located at the foot of the Piduruthalagala forest reserve. The objective of the present study was to determine the existing avian species diversity and abundance around the hotel premises surrounded by tea estate and vegetable cultivations. The observations were carried out from January to September 2020 twice a month except April to June 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic situation. The survey was done by point transect method between 06.00 –08.00h and 16.00 - 18.00h. The study area was scanned using 8 × 40 binoculars to count birds. A total of 3128 individuals of 40 species were recorded representing 23 families inclusive of 3 species of migratory birds: Kashmir Flycatcher (*Ficedula subrubra*), Yellow Wagtail (*Motacilla flava*) and White-browed Wagtail (*Motacilla maderaspatensis*). The observation of 3 endemic species; Greater Flameback (*Chrysocolaptes (Lucidus) stricklandi*), Ceylon scimitar babbler (*Pomatorhinus (schisticeps) melanurus*) and Sri Lanka White-eye (*Zosterops ceylonensis*), is an important record. Shannon and Simpson's diversity indices depicted a diversity of 3.22 and 0.95, respectively, of this study. The most abundant (9.2%) species was the spotted dove (*Streptopelia chinensis*). Further studies must be directed along with long-term observations to declare the hotel area as an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area. It contributes noticeably to the local avian biodiversity and ecotourism in the region.

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