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**TITTAWELLA LAKE / MARSHLAND
AS AN OUT DOOR LABORATORY
FOR A BIODIVERSITY STUDY FOR G.C.E. A/L STUDENTS**

A PROJECT REPORT PRESENTED BY

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ABSTRACT

A study on the biodiversity of Tittawella lake/marsh was carried out in the Kurunegala district, during the period of August 2002 to early March 2003. The study concentrated mainly on the plant and animal kingdoms and was aimed at fulfilling the activities listed in the Biodiversity Unit (Unit 2) of the A/L Biology syllabus. The study area included the lake, which is completely filled with water during the rainy season and gradually drying up giving way to amphibious plants during the dry period together with a strip of 1.5m from the edge of the waters.

A special sampling method was not adopted, as the main aim of the study was enumeration of species. The study recorded 159 species of plants belonging to 54 families and 69 species of animals belonging to Invertebrate and Vertebrate categories. Out of the plants recorded, 2 species were endemic, 2 were listed under the 1999 List of Threatened Flora in Sri Lanka, and 54 species were reported to have medicinal uses. Further, 6 species listed under Alien Invasive flora and 3 species listed under Alien Invasive fauna have been recorded. One species, listed under the 1999 List of Threatened Fauna in Sri Lanka, was recorded. The aquatic birds are conspicuous; 31 species were observed during the period of study, while a total of 54 species from the animal world were recorded. Thus Tittawella can be a potential site for novice birdwatchers.

The study recorded many human interactions with the site. The villagers of Tittawella are more interested in the aspect of storing water for paddy cultivation, than the biodiversity of the site. Therefore, the need of educating the local people about the importance of conserving biodiversity has arisen.

The results of the study proves that the site serves very well in fulfilling the activities listed for the Biodiversity Unit on the current A/L Biology syllabus in Sri Lanka, in addition to many other benefits that are related to the methodology of teaching and learning.