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## **Abundance and diversity of avifauna in different riparian habitats associated with Nilwala River**

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Conservation and management of riparian habitats for wild life and sustainable human use has become a challenging task in the midst of present day development activities and other human influences. In Sri Lanka there are diverse riparian habitats providing shelter and food for various plant and animal species including birds. Riparian ecosystems and associated avifauna in Sri Lanka have not been widely studied. We have investigated the avifauna of different habitats namely a garbage dumping site, a bush land, a paddy field and a freshwater marshland associated with Nilwala River for a period of six months. The total number of species recorded at garbage dumping site, bush land, freshwater marshland and paddy field were 52, 48, 61 and 41 respectively. The spatial distribution patterns of birds in the different riparian were evident. Highest and lowest diverse bird community was recorded in the freshwater marshland and the garbage dumping sites respectively. This information will provide a great insight not only to further understanding of bird distribution patterns in riparian systems associated with Nilwala River in relation to the human influence but also to implement conservation measures.

**Keywords:** Nilwala River, Riparian Habitats, Avian Fauna