

## **Floristic richness and its spatial distribution in Salgala forest reserve**

***C.M.K.N.K. Chandrasekara***

Department of Geography, University of Colombo, Colombo

### **Abstract**

The floristic richness of isolated forests in wet zone of Sri Lanka is of great ecological importance. Exploration of Salgala forest, an isolated forest patch in the wet zone, helped to disclose the phytosociological information and phytogeographical distribution of the reserve. The reserve encompassing an area of 127.8 ha is located in Galapotamada, Kegalle district. The main objective of the investigation was to explore the floristic richness and its spatial distribution of Salgala forest reserve. Vegetation sampling was carried out in three transects and nineteen plots, each having an area of 10 X 10 m. Trees with girth of over 10 cm at breast height were enumerated. All data collected on species, endemic species, and families were analyzed using principal component method and the results were interpreted with the help of Geographical Information System. Results revealed that 886 individuals belong to 53 species (out of which 23 were endemic species) and 29 families could be identified. Two main zones could also be identified in the forest. The zone identified towards the north of the forest (named zone-I) has 48 species where as in the zone towards the south (named zone-II) has 38 species. The number of endemic species confined only to zone-I were 6 and that of zone-II was only 1. Therefore the zone-I stood higher in a position when it comes to floristic richness compared to that of zone-II.

**Keywords:** Endemic Species, Phytogeographical Distribution, Geographical Information System, Vegetation