



THE NATIONAL TRUST – SRI LANKA

“endemism & extinction: The Hallmark of Island Biodiversity”

by

Prof. Sampath Seneviratne

The Monthly Lecture Series No: 164 of the National Trust

Wednesday 25th September 2024 at 6.00 pm

at the Auditorium of the College of Surgeons of Sri Lanka,

No. 6, Independence Avenue, Colombo 7.

(For those who join online: <https://youtube.com/live/sdHRJSkv568?feature=share>)

Islands like Sri Lanka are hotspots of biodiversity largely due to their isolation which over time leads to the evolution of animals and plants distinct from their mainland relatives, adapting to the unique environmental conditions of islands. In isolation, life on islands could with time undergo radiations leading to a myriad array of endemic species. Due to limited land area, island species often have small populations, making them more vulnerable to genetic bottlenecks, diseases, and environmental changes. They are particularly vulnerable to human activity including habitat destruction, hunting and introduced invasive species. Increased frequency of extreme weather conditions and changing temperatures due to climate change disproportionately impact islands, threatening their already vulnerable species. Some of the modern studies have shed more light on the hallmark and curse of island biodiversity from a Sri Lankan standpoint. Together we can explore how these new studies armed with modern scientific tools and analysis could lead us towards the preservation of Sri Lankan’s unique island heritage.



Prof. Sampath Seneviratne is a Professor in Zoology, research scientist, university professor, forester, conservationist, writer, and a public communicator based at the University of Colombo. He is an expert on the evolutionary ecology of island biota. His current research focuses on the evolution and movement ecology of birds.

The National Trust – Sri Lanka conducts monthly lectures generally on the last working Thursday of each month. The lectures are open to the members and the general public.

Further information can be obtained from the Trust Office Tel.0112682730/ 0719566929