



THE NATIONAL TRUST – SRI LANKA

New Investigations into the Late Pleistocene and Early Holocene Rainforest Prehistory of Sri Lanka

By
Dr. Oshan Wedage

The Monthly Lecture Series No: 177 of the National Trust

Tuesday 24th February 2026 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://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pCCv9-2Tcgw>)

Sri Lanka is becoming increasingly renowned in the internationally as a region of great importance for studying late Pleistocene dispersals of *Homo sapiens* across Asia and, more specifically, the early adaptation of human populations to tropical rainforest environments in this part of the world. By the late 1980s and early 1990s Sri Lanka had already provided evidence for the earliest human skeletal material and microlithic artefacts anywhere in South Asia. This lecture presents the findings of research based on the datasets obtained from new excavation, zooarchaeological, archaeobotanical, lithic, bone tool, and symbolic material culture analyses at two cave sites in the tropical rainforest zone of Sri Lanka, Fa-Hien Lena and Beli-lena Kitulgala. In doing so, it provides the earliest dates for definitive human occupation of the island and detailed insights into the resources used by members of our species as they rapidly colonized the southern tip of South Asia.



Dr. Oshan Wedage; Senior lecturer of Department of History and Archaeology of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, obtained his B.A. (Honours) in Archaeology from the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, , and M.Sc. from the Deccan College Postgraduate and Research Institute of Archaeology, Pune in India and he obtained his PhD from Max Planck Institute for Science of Human History in Jena, Germany, in 2020. He joined the Oxford University excavation group for the ‘Green Arabia’ project, which focused on understanding human evolution and exploring the ‘Out-of-Africa theory’. Currently he serves as the Consultant Director for Archaeology, Uva Province Project, Central Culture Fund. He has published several nationally and internationally acclaimed research papers and has been awarded the 'President's Award' four times by the Government of Sri Lanka

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