PHENOLOGY OF *Ficus* SPECIES IN THE SANDY REGOSOLS AT VANTHARUMOOLAI CAMPUS

by

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Abstract

Phenology of *Ficus* sp. in the sandy regosols at Vantharumoolai

Ficus sp. are common in the Batticaloa district, mostly beginning as an epiphyte on Palmyrah tree. The fig strangles the tree and ultimately the Fig is the winner. Most of the large trees noted here have the same path of survival. the study was planned to study the phenological patterns of the *Ficus* trees in the Eastern University Campus.

Totally 98 trees were recorded in the campus. The area was divided into 5 geographical units (plots) for convenience. For each tree the height, diameter, number and order of branches were recorded. The beginning of leaf fall, leaf formation, inflorescence and fruit formation information were recorded periodically between February and June,1994. The birds visiting these trees were recorded at three times a day, every other day.

The mean height and diameter of the tree per plot ranged from 5.05 m to 10.60 m and 0.26 m to 0.82 m respectively. The mean period for leaf- fall and leaf formation was found to be 10 days. The flowering of the trees showed distinct periodicity. The number of flowering branches per tree varied from 13 to 100%. The mean period from flowering to fruit maturity was 58±1.496 days. In total 10 species of birds were recorded in association with the *Ficus* sp. trees. The number of species and density were found to increase during fruiting periods. The fruits did not germinate under laboratory conditions.

More detail studies are needed on the synchrony of the flowering *Ficus,* which is one of the most abundant tree species in the Batticaloa district at present.

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