

**A STUDY ON FORAGING WORKER ANTS AT THE  
EASTERN UNIVERSITY PREMISES**



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## ABSTRACT

Ants (Order: Hymenoptera; Family: Formicidae) are the ecologically important insects and distributed almost all over the places in the globe. Many researches were carried out worldwide whilst a little is known about the systematic of Sri Lankan ants and especially in north and east region. This study attempts to provide more information on the species and morphometric studies of ants at the Eastern University premises, the eastern region of Sri Lanka. As preliminary study species identification, diversity, morphometric studies, ant farm and damage estimation on food by ants were carried out. Collected worker ants were identified and these belong to three subfamilies and eight species. *Solenopsis geminata*, *Crematogaster* species, *Meronomphus bicolor* and *Monomorium* species were found in sub family Myrmecinae. In sub family Formicini *Paratrechina longicornis*, *Camponotus* species and *Oecophylla smaragdina* and only one species *Tapinoma melanocephalum* were observed in sub family Dolichoderinae. Shannon diversity (H) was used to study the diversity of ants. Ant diversity in Zoology lab reached high diversity index (H= 1.46) than grasses (H= 1.41) and animal farm has low diversity index (H= 1.05) than the agro farm (H= 1.22). In ANOVA statistical test there are no significant differences between micro habitats and distribution of ants (F= 1.24, P= 0.215) and among habitats (F= 0.93, P= 0.4487) and distribution of ants. But significant differences are found among species (F= 6.96, P<0.0001). In the damage estimation, the species *Solenopsis geminata* ate cashew nuts in large amount when compared with biscuits, ground pea and cow pea.

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