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TAXONOMIC AND FLORISTIC STUDIES

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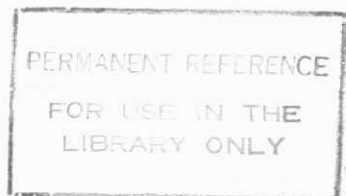
GAMOPETALOUS FLORA

IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE

POLONNARUWA DISTRICT

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A thesis submitted to the University of Peradeniya for the
Degree of Master of Philosophy.



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ABSTRACT

The Polonnaruwa district forms the lesser half of the north-central part of Sri Lanka. The southern part of this district, the focus of this thesis, lies between $80^{\circ} 40'$ and $81^{\circ} 20'$ east longitude and $7^{\circ} 41'$ and $8^{\circ} 06'$ north latitude, and covers an area of nearly 1567 km^2 of land.

Topographically the land is a more or less flat, undulating country which in places bears an isolated hill such as Gunners' Quoin (237 m). Much of the land is drained by two rivers, the Mahaweli Ganga and the Amban Ganga.

In the lack of previous exploration of this part of the district, an investigation was made into its Gamopetalous Flora as part of a project of the Natural Resources, Energy and Science Authority of Sri Lanka (1984-1987).

The material of the thesis was based on regular field observations, herbarium study of specimens collected.

The taxonomic part of the thesis records 192 different species distributed among 29 families. Of the number of species studied six are endemics - Canthium puberulum thwaites, Glossocarya scandens (L.f.) Triemen, Lindernia srilankana Cramer & Philcox, Stenosiphonium zeylanicum T. Anders., Veronia zeylanica (L.) Less., and Premna thwaitesii f. glabrescens apart from a variety - Leucas zeylanica var. walkeri (Benth.) Hook. f., one a new species Rhinacanthus sp. nov. and two are new records for Sri Lanka - Borreria distans (H.B. & K.) A.DC., Pseuderanthemum angustifolium Ridley.

This study, enlarged by some additional observations and studies, have made possible a fair evaluation of the intrinsic floristic composition of the main vegetation types in the study area.