Abstract No: 713 (Poster) ***Natural Sciences***

FORAGING AND FEEDING ACTIVITY FREQUENCIES OF PURPLE-RUMPED SUNBIRD *LEPTOCOMA ZEYLONICA* AND LONG-BILLED SUNBIRD *CINNYRIS LOTENIUS* IN PERADENIYA UNIVERSITY PARK, SRI LANKA

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Sunbirds (Nectariniidae) are small passerines that feed largely on nectar. The aim of this work was to observe and describe the frequencies of activities of the Purple-rumped sunbird *Leptocoma zeylonica* and Long-billed sunbird *Cinnyris lotenius*, since only a few previous studies on passerine behaviour have been carried out in Sri Lanka. The study was carried out in garden habitats of University of Peradeniya (7° 5' N; 80° 59' E) between March and September 2013. Data on categorised behavioural events (hopping, perching, probing, hovering, piercing, interspecific aggression, intraspecific aggression, preening, flitting and rubbing the beak) were collected using continuous focal sampling for 1500 mins. Both sunbird species visited 11 different plant species for nectar feeding, namely *Hamelia patens*, *Thunbergia erecta*, *Ixora coccinea*, *Pyrostegia venusta*, *Caesalpinia pulcherrima*, *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*, *Graptophyllum pictum*, *Amherstia nobilis*, *Jacaranda mimosifolia*, *Bauhinia variegate* and *Tecoma stans*. Presence of sunbirds as a fraction of the total study time period in the study area varied as 21% for Purple-rumped sunbird and 29.33% for Long-billed sunbird. Probing, hovering and piercing were considered as feeding activities and hopping and flitting was considered as foraging activities. During the day, sunbirds spent most of their time foraging rather than feeding (foraging vs. feeding per min: 2.43 vs. 1.57 [Purple-rumped male], 4.97 vs. 2.93 [purple-rumped female], 4.63 vs. 4.00 [Long-billed male], 3.63 vs. 3.41 [Long-billed female]. Depending on the sunbird preference on flowering plants in the study area, the time they spent in that particular area varied. When selecting the plant species on which sunbirds feed on, the morphological dissimilarities of them, especially bill morphology may play a major role. The availability and distribution of food sources and the nutritive value of the nectar may affect the time spent on searching.