



The Open University of Sri Lanka

# Biodiversity Conservation

Exploring to Rich Biodiversity in OUSL





# Safeguarding Biodiversity: Exploring the Rich Ecosystems in OUSL

OUSL's regional centers, strategically distributed throughout Sri Lanka, encompass diverse climates, weather patterns, and environments, each hosting distinct arrays of plant and animal species.

These lands hold intrinsic value for the university, local communities, and the broader ecosystem due to their rich and varied natural characteristics. Our concerted efforts are dedicated to the preservation and augmentation of biodiversity within these areas.



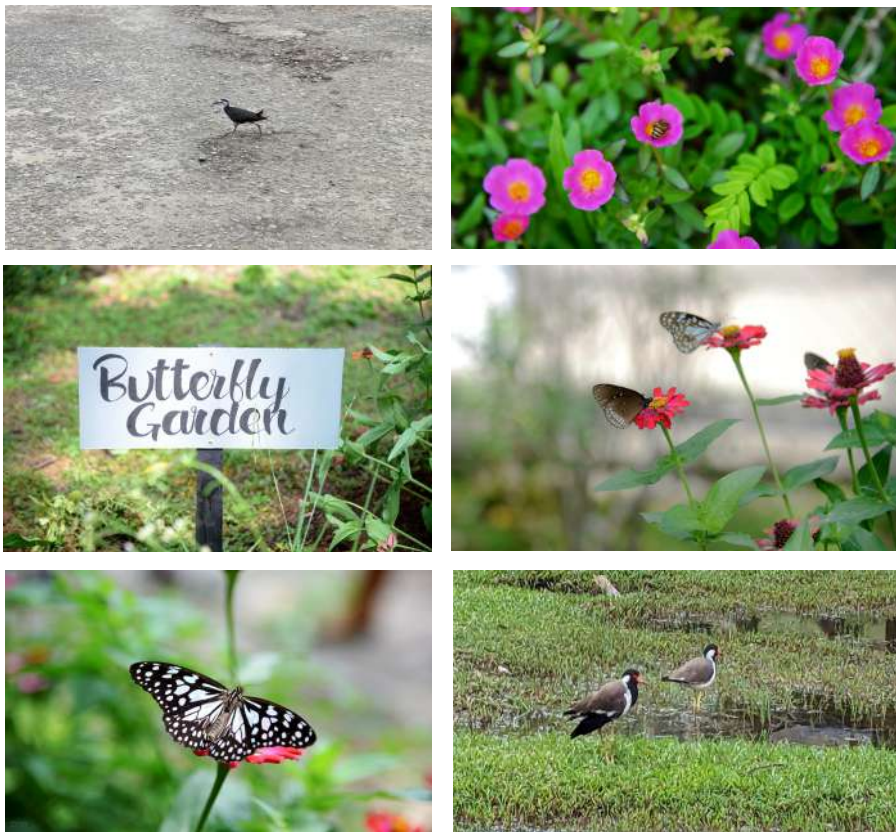
By enhancing biodiversity on and around our campuses, we make a significant and purposeful contribution to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, notably Goal 15: Life on Land.

This goal underscores our commitment to safeguarding, rejuvenating, and facilitating the sustainable utilization of terrestrial ecosystems.



# Conservation of Biodiversity in university premises

OUSL is deeply committed to the preservation and enhancement of our natural environment within the campus, with a strong emphasis on fostering biodiversity and sustainability. Our holistic approach encompasses a range of initiatives, beginning with the protection of critical habitats like wetlands, forests, grasslands, and water bodies, while actively nurturing green spaces that provide essential support to local wildlife and pollinators.



OUSL boasts a thriving butterfly garden and flower yards that serve as havens for various butterfly and bird species, each meticulously identified and acknowledged through prominent displays across the university premises. To further support native wildlife, we have thoughtfully installed birdhouses and other wildlife shelters, providing vital nesting opportunities.



# Conservation of Biodiversity in university premises

Our commitment extends to the establishment of a comprehensive biodiversity museum, where an extensive collection of animal specimens and genetic resources contributes to the conservation of biodiversity.

In a bid to safeguard wildlife, we have also placed strategically located animal crossing and speed limit signs in areas identified as high-traffic zones for animal crossings.



In addition to these measures, OUSL is actively implementing water conservation strategies that ensure the health of aquatic ecosystems while mitigating chemical runoff into water bodies through effective wastewater treatment. Our efforts extend to the creation of eco-friendly campus facilities, incorporating more indoor green spaces, natural lighting, and extensive use of glass windows.



# Conservation of Biodiversity in university premises



As part of our commitment to environmental sustainability, OUSL promotes green infrastructure, exemplified by green walls within the campus. To continually monitor and assess the status of local flora and fauna, we conduct regular biodiversity assessments, gaining insight into the existing state of our ecosystem and identifying local and potentially threatened species.

Our commitment to biodiversity is further reinforced by our practice of replacing non-native and invasive plant species with native alternatives in our landscaping efforts.

The campus includes a greenhouse and fernery, which together host an array of rare plant species.

To educate and engage our academic community, we have installed plant name boards, enhancing the educational experience. We also manage various land areas dedicated to native plant species, fruit plantations, and vegetable cultivation, further promoting sustainable agricultural practices to ensure the food and agriculture in OUSL.

Our sustainable approach to campus management underscores OUSL's dedication to environmental conservation and sustainability, with a view to not only benefiting the current generation but also educating future generations on the importance of protecting and preserving our biodiversity.



# Biodiversity Education

The Departments of Zoology and Botany currently provide a diverse array of academic programs and courses utilizing open and distance learning methodologies related to biodiversity.

These offerings encompass undergraduate and postgraduate degree programs, Advanced Certificates, Diplomas, Certificates, stand-alone courses, as well as short courses in specialized applied fields.

Additionally, the Center for Environmental Studies and Sustainable Development (CESSD) administers a master's degree program and is in the process of developing short courses with a focus on biodiversity-related subjects.







# Biodiversity protection programs

## Removal Of Invasive Species in University Premises

The CESSD, in collaboration with the Botanical Society of the Open University, has undertaken a comprehensive project focused on invasive plant species.

The initial phase of this project involved the identification of invasive plant species within three regional centers of the Open University.

Subsequently, a targeted public awareness campaign was launched to enhance understanding of the potential hazards associated with invasive plant species and to foster preventive measures.

This concerted effort has resulted in the effective identification and removal of numerous invasive plants, underscoring a significant achievement in our continuous dedication to the conservation of our natural ecosystems



# Biodiversity protection programs

## International Virtual Conference on Mangroves for Ecological and Economic Sustainability

The International Virtual Conference on Mangroves for Ecological and Economic Sustainability, organized by the CESSD, stands as a momentous event designed to underscore the pivotal role of mangrove ecosystems in advancing the cause of sustainable development.

The conference comprehensively addressed diverse facets of mangrove ecosystems, emphasizing their prospective contributions to ecological and economic sustainability.

Themes covered during the event encompassed topics such as the utilization of mangroves for climate change mitigation, their significance in maintaining coastal environments and biodiversity, their role in fostering economic development, conservation strategies, rehabilitation efforts, enrichment initiatives, and the integration of mangroves into ecotourism programs.





# Biodiversity protection programs

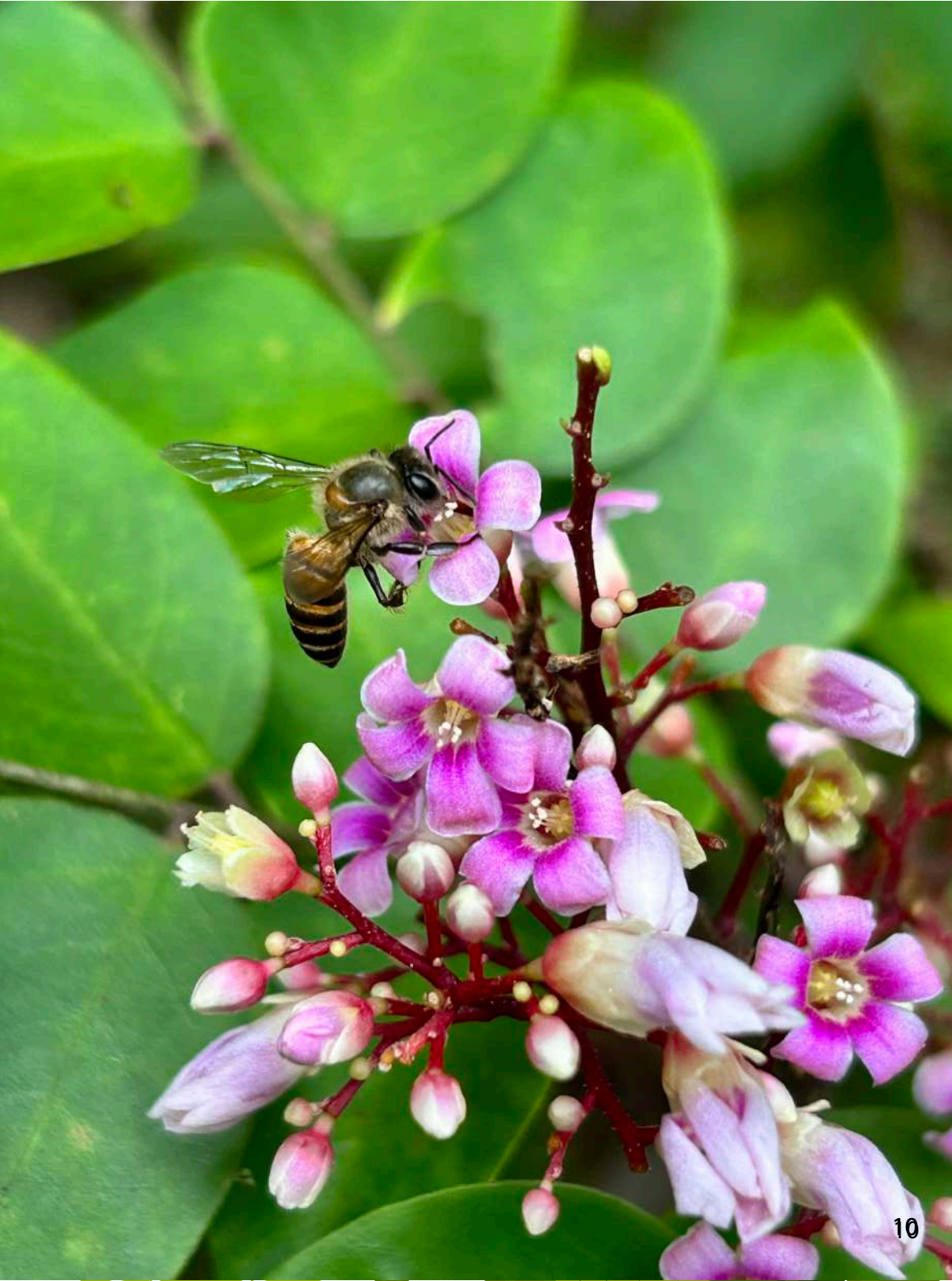
## Biodiversity Education for Future Generation

The “I am Eco Smart” program, orchestrated by the CESSD, is a forward-looking initiative centered on shaping the future generation.

This program uniquely blends theoretical knowledge with hands-on experiences to instill a profound understanding of biodiversity and its preservation among children and school students. Incorporating engaging activities, competitions, and educational events, 'Eco Smart' caters to various age groups, ensuring that knowledge is effectively imparted and diverse learners.







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