Department of Botany
Faculty of Science / University of Peradeniya



Prof. D.M. Deepthi Yakandawala

B.Sc. (Perad.), Ph.D. (Reading, UK)

Senior Professor

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About Me

Currently a Senior Professor at the Department of Botany, University of Peradeniya and a leading Plant Taxonomist in the country. Graduated from the University of Peradeniya obtaining B.Sc. Special Degree in Botany (First Class Honours) in 1992 and joined the University in 1993 as a Probationary Lecturer. Proceeded to the University of Reading, United Kingdom for post-graduate studies in September 1996, having secured a Commonwealth Postgraduate Scholarship and was awarded the Ph.D. in 1999 in Plant Molecular Systematics and Phylogenetics. Promoted to Professor in Botany on merit in 2008 and Senior Professor in 2016. Authored over 45 peer reviewed journal publications and 75 conference papers and has been awarded Presidential Awards for Scientific Research and Research Fellowships. My areas of expertise lies in Plant Taxonomy/Molecular Systematics and Phylogenetics, Aquatic plants, Sri Lankan flora, Red-listing and conservation, and Molecular characterization of fungi.

Higher Education Qualifications

PhD

University of Reading, Centre of Plant Diversity and Systematics
UK
(1999)

BSc

University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya
Sri Lanka
(1992)

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Awards, Scholarships, Memberships & Fellowships

- NRC Merit Award for Scientific Publication – 2014
- Presidential Awards for Scientific Research – 2010
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- Fulbright Advanced Research and Lecturing Awards, Fulbright Commission, USA - 2009-2010
- Endeavor Research Fellowship. Australian Education International, Australian Government – 2009
- Commonwealth Post Graduate Scholarship (UK) – 1996
- University of Peradeniya Scholarship – 1992
- SUSRED Award – NSF 2018
- Excellence in Research, Faculty of Science - 2017
- Excellence in Research, Faculty of Science - 2018
- Excellence in Research, Faculty of Science - 2019
- Excellence in Research, Faculty of Science - 2020
- Excellence in Research, Faculty of Science – 2022
- Fellow National Academy of Sciences Sri Lanka (NASSL)
- Excellence in Research, Faculty of Science - 2023
- Excellence in Research, Faculty of Science – 2024
- Excellence in Research, Faculty of Science – 2025
- University Research Council Research Awards – 2023
- ...

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Positions Held

- Head, Department of Botany- (November 2016 to October 2019)
- Member: Board of Study in Plant Sciences, Post Graduate Institute of Science, University of Peradeniya.- (April 2002 – May 2009. October 2016 to-date)
- Member: Board of Study Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Post Graduate Institute of Science, University of Peradeniya.- (April 2002 – May 2009)
- Member: Coordinating Committee, Post Graduate Institute of Science, University of Peradeniya.- (May 2004 – May 2009)
- Member: Biodiversity Conservation of Sri Lanka – A frame work for Action, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources- (2004)
- Member: Expert committee on the discrepancy of the national flower of Sri Lanka, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources- (2012)
- Member: Senate Research Committee, University of Peradeniya,- (April, 2011- January 2015)
- Member: Editorial Board, Ceylon Journal of Science (Biological Science), University of Peradeniya,- (2007 – 2016)
- Member: National Species Conservation Advisory Group (NSCAG) Ministry of Environment, Environment Division : Biodiversity Secretariat- (2002 – to-date)
- Member: Expert Group, National Red-listing of Flora and Fauna, Biodiversity Secretariat, Ministry of Environment and IUCN, Sri Lanka- (2006 and 2011)
- Member: Senate, University of Peradeniya,- (2008 – to-date)
- Member: Senate Library Committee, University of Peradeniya,- (2011 -2016)
- Member: Research Council of the National Institute of Fundamental Studies, Hantana, Sri Lanka.- (2016 to-date)
- Secretary: Board of Study in Plant Sciences, Post Graduate Institute of Science, University of Peradeniya.- (May 2004 – May 2009)
- Program Co-coordinator : M.Sc. in Experimental Biotechnology, Post Graduate Institute of Science, University of Peradeniya- (2002/2003 & 2004/2005)
- Senior Student Counselor: Faculty of Science, University of Peradeniya- (2002 – 2006)
- Senior Treasurer: Botanical Society, University of Peradeniya- (2008-09)
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My Teachings

Nothing to show under this subheading !!!

Research Interests (Research Fields/ Projects)

Trained
as a Plant Molecular Systematist and Phylogenetist, I am working with the
native flora of Sri Lanka which is rich in endemics, concentrating on plant
groups with taxonomic ambiguities. My main interests lies in genomic data and
morphology but extends to other areas such as anatomy, palynology,
cytology (Chromosomes) and phytochemical
data in addressing the questions on species limits and systematics/phylogenetics, evolution and biogeography, and conservation. I also focus on the threats to native flora
especially in the wetland ecosystems, invasive alien species and hybridization
of exotics with natives.

I have extended my research into other groups, such as fungi, and
their molecular characterization
in collaboration with mycologists.

Ongoing Research and Projects

- **Chromosome evolution of the endemic species of Sri Lanka with emphasis on families Anacardiaceae, Ebenaceae, Orchidaceae and Zingiberaceace.**
- **Phylogeny and Systematics of *Aponogeton* (Aponogetonaceae): The Sri Lankan Species.**
- **Molecular characterization of Colletotrichum species causing anthracnose disease in some cultivated fruit species in Sri Lanka.**
- **Taxonomy and molecular phylogeny of the genus Elaeocarpus**
- **Taxonomy, molecular phylogeny and conservation of Lagenandra**

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Key Publications

Journal of the National Science Foundation of Sri Lanka - (2017)

A taxonomic synopsis of Nymphaea nouchali Burm. f. and infraspecific taxa.

Annals of Missouri Botanical Gardens - (2010)

Phylogenetic Relationships of the Chrysobalanaceae Inferred from Chloroplast, Nuclear, and Morphological Data.

Conferences

Nothing to show under this subheading !!!

My Publications

Please goto the website.

https://sci.pdn.ac.lk/botany/staff/Deepthi-Yakandawala

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