

A CEYLON
PRESS TINY
GUIDE

A CHECKLIST
TO THE 7
MICE OF SRI
LANKA

MICE



1 THE CEYLON FIELD MOUSE

The home of the Ceylon Field Mouse stretches from Sri Lanka to Cambodia. It happily populates almost all kinds of habitats. It is often called the Fawn Colour Mouse for its light fur and grows to little more than 15 centimetres in length, nose to tail.

2

THE CEYLON HIGHLAND LONG TAILED TREE MOUSE

The endemic Ceylon Highland Long Tailed Tree Mouse is an increasingly rare creature, little more than 21 centimetres in length, nose to tail. It is found in Sri Lanka's hill country where it lives in trees, venturing out only by night. Like most mice, it has reddish brown fur, that occasionally grows darker and has small ears.

3

THE INDIAN FIELD MOUSE

Measuring a tiny 13 centimetres in length, nose to tail, the Indian Field Mouse is one of those mammals of the Indian subcontinent that has long term residency rights in Sri Lanka where it is found almost everywhere. It is all a mouse aims to be, with a small rounded hunched body, lovely rounded smooth ears, and light brown to white fur.

4

THE INDIAN HOUSE MOUSE

The almost domesticated Indian House Mouse is beloved of pet owners, science and, regrettably, is regularly used in laboratories. It is widely distributed across Asia and has become an almost tame companion to the humans its lives around. Rarely more than 20 centimetres in length, nose to tail, it is one of the world's most studied and understood mammals, its typical behavioural characteristics itemized even down to the differences exhibited if it lives in sandy dunes rather than an apartment.

5

THE INDIAN LONG-TAILED TREE MOUSE

The Indian Long-Tailed Tree Mouse is also known as the Indian Long Tailed Climbing Mouse, and it is common throughout South and Southeast Asia. It grows to little more than twenty centimetres in length, nose to tail, and sports reddish brown fur that fades to white on its underparts. It is widely distributed – but not a creature to go out of your way to befriend for it is notorious for spreading the tick-borne viral Kyasanur Forest Disease that causes headaches, chills, muscle pain, and vomiting.

6 MAYOR'S SPINY MOUSE

The endemic Mayor's Spiny Mouse comes in two (still quite widespread) variants – *Mus Mayori Mayori*, which inhabit the hill country; and *Mus Mayori Pococki* which prefers the low wetlands. Both are covered with reddish grey fur and have small ears. Seeing them is also a challenge for they are both nocturnal creatures. One of their more interesting (albeit worrying) points of mouse difference is their capacity to carry quite so many other creatures on them: from mites, ticks, and sucking louses to small scorpions.

7

THE SRI LANKAN SPINY MOUSE

The endemic Sri Lankan Spiny Mouse is now so endangered that it can be seen in a few locations. A mere maximum of 18 centimetres length, from nose to tail, its reddish grey back, and sides morph into white underparts, with huge, gorgeous smooth scooped out ears that stand like parasols above large dark eyes.

DISCOVER MORE

A HISTORY LIKE NO OTHER

Contrary & creative, Sri Lanka built a tropical Versailles as the West constructed in wattle & daub. When the Cold War ebbed, its own began. The Ceylon Press *History of Sri Lanka* - in eBook and Podcast - unpicks its serpentine history.

BEHIND EACH GREAT STORY

Island Stories: The Sri Lanka Podcast and the Press's *Complete Audio Books* explore the things that make Sri Lanka, Sri Lankan.

OFF PISTE

The Ceylon Press' *Alternative Guides* concern themselves with subjects and places without crowds; forgotten as they are by most academics, historians, and modern travellers.

LESS IS MORE

The Ceylon Press' *Tiny Guides* fillet the essentials of their subject from nature to history, culture to travel.

INSTANT OVERVIEWS

With their short, and readable introductions, The Ceylon Press' *Pocket Professor Very Short Introductions* illuminate Sri Lankan subjects from ancient dynasties to endemic mammals.

COMPANIONABLE LOOK-UPS

The Ceylon Press's subject *Companions to Sri Lanka* makes visible the whole island – from its arts, wildlife, & landmarks to religion, food, & history.

A LITTLE LIGHT RELIEF

And least it gets too serious, enjoy the off-grid *Jungle Diaries* blog & Podcast; and *Archaeologies*, the blank verse diaries of an occasional hermit.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Swarbrick is a publisher, planter, hotelier, hermit, and writer.

He was born in Colombo and raised, with few concessions to modernity, in India, Singapore, and the Middle East. Cornish, he gained his degrees on the Celtic fringe: at the Universities of Wales, and Stirling, prolonging an introduction to accepted working hours for as long as was decently possible.

Having worked at News Corp's HarperCollins UK as board director for various otherwise homeless departments including sales, art and marketing; and HarperCollins India, he ran Hachette's consumer learning division. Prior to this, he launched Oxford University Press's first commercial online business, Oxford Reference Online.

When the doubtful charms of boardroom bawls, bottom lines, and divas diminished, he returned to Sri Lanka, the land of his birth hundreds of years earlier, to rescue a spice plantation and set of art deco buildings that had gone feral in the jungle.

Today, as The Flame Tree Estate & Hotel, it has become one of the country's top ten boutique hotels, run by the kindest and most professional of hospitality teams; and overseen by several small schnauzers.

It also helps fund The Ceylon Press, set up to make Sri Lanka's rich and complicated story, a mystery to many, and a secret to most, more accessible. The Press' books, companions, podcasts, blogs, and guides are freely available at theceylonpress.com. The Press also publishes Poetry from the Jungle, a podcast that recasts the orthodox view of the world's best poets and poems.

ABOUT THE FLAME TREE ESTATE & HOTEL

"It's absolute paradise," wrote one guest recently; "I would fly back to Sri Lanka simply to stay in this place for a couple more days."

Centered on a 25-acre organic spice and timber plantation, The Flame Tree Estate & Hotel has been renovated and furnished with art & antiques; its healthy menus fusing street food with fine dining.

Its 1,000 high rocky hills stalled the Dutch army in 1765; and until the civil war the estate stretched over 100 acres with 3 working elephants.

Today its restored plantations grow cardamom, turmeric, ginger, cloves, pepper, cocoa; rubber, coffee, vanilla; cinnamon, coconuts - and scores of trees from ebony to sapu – best enjoyed from the vantage point of the hotel's infinity pool. Visit www.flametreeestate.com.

It also houses and funds The Ceylon Press whose books, companions, podcasts, blogs, and guides are freely available at theceylonpress.com.

A GIFT FOR READERS

As a reader of this book, you naturally qualify for special treatment should your holiday ever bring you to Sri Lanka and The Flame Tree Estate & Hotel. Simply drop the general manager a note to tell him how you came across us and to make arrangements to best suit your time and budget:

GeneralManager@flametreeestate.com