

## Mulawella Nature Trail from Kudawa Conservation Centre (KCC) – Sinharaja Rain Forest.

**Trail Difficulty:** Easy | Moderate | Strenuous | Tough

**Trail Head:** Entrance to the protected area, Kudawa Conservation Centre, Weddagala, Kalawana

**Nearest Town:** Weddagala (south)

**Nearest City:** Kalawana

### **Access to Trail head:**

Route to Kudawa Conservation Centre (KCC)

Route1: Colombo -> Kalutara -> Nagoda -> Mathugama -> Agalawatta -> Baduraliya -> Kalwana(Manana) -> Weddagala(South) -> KCC (approximately 125KM)

Route2: Colombo -> Avissawella -> Ratnapura -> Nivitigala -> Karawita -> Kalwana(Manana) -> Weddagala(South) -> KCC

KCC is accessible by any kind of a vehicle except extremely low profiled cars (The road from Weddagala to KCC (6km) can be rough).

From KCC, there is a jeep track to the trail head (Entrance to protected area, **waypoint: MV01**). Distance from KCC to the entrance is 2.5km. You need a 4WD / SUV with good ground clearance to tackle this or you will have to walk up to the trail head from KCC.

**Trail End:** Mulawella Peak

**Total Length:** 2.4 km

**Elevation Gain:** 300m (Elevation at Trail Head: 457m | Elevation at Trail End: 758m)

**Approximate time:** 1 - 2 hours

**Hiking Season:** Best months are December to April. July, August is also fairly dry. Avoid monsoon months.

**Permit Required:** YES. Permit can be obtained from the Kudawa Conservation Center (KCC).

Trail to Mulawella peak is one of the popular nature trails in Sinharaja forest, accessible from the most convenient entrance to Sinharaja, the KCC.

Mulawella Peak is one of the several mountain peaks in Sinharaja forest. Even though Mulawella is not the highest peak in Sinharaja (Highest peak is Hinipitigala), it offers a very good scenic view of the mighty rain forest, better than the view from most other peaks.

**0 to 525m:** The trail starts from the gate at the entrance to the protected area (**waypoint: MV01**). You will be asked to produce your permits before you enter the protected area. From this point walk along the jeep track leading to Kudawa Research Centre.

This part of the trail is the best area to observe birds of Sinharaja. Early morning and late evening there is a very high chance of coming across mixed specie flocks which will provide you an opportunity to observe some of the rarest birds of Sri Lanka such as the red faced mal-koha.

Since the jeep track is fairly broad, unlike the rest of the trail, it is easy to spot birds and butterflies.

At 525m from the trail head, you will see a narrow foot path on the left hand side going in to the forest from the jeep track (**waypoint: MV02**).

**525m to 1.44km:** As you take the left turn in to the forest, you enter the second section of the Mulawella trail. This portion of the trail follows an abandoned, semi circular logging trail which goes in to the forest and then joins the jeep track again at around 1.5km from the way point MV02. Total length of the semi-circular logging trail is 2km. You have to walk around 900m on this trail to enter the third and last section of the Mulawella trail.

The forest which surrounds this section of the trail is predominantly a secondary forest appeared after selective logging in 1970's. The section of the trail is mostly a flat walk except a slight climb at the very beginning and another at around 250m from MV02.

As you walk about 50m from MV02, there is a "Y" division of the trail (**waypoint: MV03**). Continue along the right branch. At 1.44 km from the trail head (**waypoint: MV04**) observe a small stream on the left side. This small stream is called "Halmandi Dola".

Turn left and climb down to the valley at MV04 and cross the stream to enter the third and the last section of the trail. Remember to get your water bottles re-filled from the stream since there are no water sources beyond this point.

**1.44km to 2.4km:** This final section of the trail is the most difficult part of the hike. The first 750m is a continuous climb through the primary forest. Conditions under foot are fairly rough. Frequent boulders and tree roots blocking the trail would require you to be mindful of every single step. The climb eases off in the last 200m as you approach Mulawella peak. This section ends at Mulawella peak (**waypoint: MV05**).

#### **Tips, Notes & special remarks:**

- This area of the rain forest is heavily infected with leaches. Take necessary precautions such as wearing leach proof socks or carry a repellent such as soap or Detol.
- Water from streams flowing in the forest is safe to drink without treatment.

- Even during the dry months occasional heavy showers can be experienced. It is always a good idea to carry rain coats and a plastic bag to protect electronics.
- On your way back you can turn right after crossing the stream (MV04) and track back, or turn right, complete the logging trail and merge on to the jeep track at a point about 1.5km from the gate (**waypoint: MV06**). If you turn right your return journey will be 3.4km instead of 2.4km.

### Way Points

	<b>N: dd° mm.mmm'</b>	<b>E: dd° mm.mmm'</b>	Elevation
MV01 (Gate)	6° 25.753'	80° 24.835'	457 m
MV02	6° 25.470'	80° 25.004'	469 m
MV03	6° 25.471'	80° 25.073'	520 m
MV04	6° 25.306'	80° 25.401'	600 m
MV05 (Peak)	6° 25.431'	80° 25.627'	758 m
MV06	6° 25.108'	80° 25.280'	513 m