DESIGN AND FABRICATION OF DEEP LEARNING-BASED LASER WEED REMOVAL SYSTEM FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOREST APPLICATIONS

PROTOTYPE LAB REPORT

Submitted by

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In partial fulfillment for the award of the degree
of

BACHELOR OF ENGINEERING

IN

MECHATRONICS ENGINEERING

SRI KRISHNA COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY

An Autonomous Institution | Approved by AICTE | Affiliated to Anna University | Accredited by NAAC with A++ Grade

Kuniamuthur, Coimbatore – 641008.

OCTOBER 2025

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Sustainable Development Goals are a collection of 17 global goals designed to blue print to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. The SDGs, set in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and intended to be achieved by the year 2030, In 2015, 195 nations agreed as a blue print that they can change the world for the better. The project is based on some of these 17 goals.

Questions	Answer Samples
Which SDGs does the project directly address?	• SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) • SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production)
What strategies or actions are being implemented to achieve these goals?	• Deploying eco-friendly, non-chemical weed control techniques
How is progress measured and reported in relation to the SDGs?	• Tracking reduction in herbicide uses and weed density
How were these goals identified as relevant to the project's objectives?	• Goals selected based on alignment with sustainable farming, environmental protection, and food security benefits of the technology
Are there any partnerships or collaborations in place to enhance this impact?	• Collaborations with agricultural universities, local farmers' groups, and environmental organizations

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BONAFIDE CERTIFICATE

Certified that this project report "**DESIGN AND FABRICATION OF DEEP LEARNING-BASED LASER WEED REMOVAL SYSTEM FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOREST APPLICATIONS**" is the bonafide work of **NANDHAKRISHNAN P (727723EUMT084), POOJA SRI S (727723EUMT098), SANJAY R (727724EUMT507), YOGESHWARAN T (727724EUMT512)** who carried out the project work under my supervision.

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INTERNAL EXAMINER **EXTERNAL EXAMINER**

ABSTRACT

This project presents the development of a multifunctional agricultural automation rover equipped for advanced weed management through laser-based weed removal, precise seed distribution, and targeted fertilization. Leveraging deep learning-based object detection, the system achieves real-time weed identification and classification, enabling selective, non-chemical weed elimination and resource-efficient crop care. All actuation components are synchronized by Embedded Controllers for reliable operation and coordination. The core objectives are to deliver a cost-effective, adaptable solution to small and medium-scale farming, minimize chemical usage, and enhance crop yield through intelligent automation. Experimental results demonstrate effective plant discrimination and intervention, accurate resource deployment, and robust field performance. This comprehensive approach supports sustainable agriculture by integrating artificial intelligence, automated actuation, laser-based intervention, and scalable, affordable hardware for practical farm innovation

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LIST OF SYMBOLS, ABBREVIATIONS AND NOMENCLATURE

Symbols

W – Total weight of rover (kg)

n – Number of wheels

w – Weight per wheel (kg)

g – Acceleration due to gravity (9.81 m/s^2)

F – Force (N)

T – Torque (Nm)

P – Power (W)

η – Efficiency (%)

V – Voltage

Abbreviations

AI – Artificial Intelligence

CNN – Convolutional Neural Network

FPS – Frames per Second

mAP – Mean Average Precision

DC – Direct Current

PWM – Pulse Width Modulation

ESP32 – Espressif Systems Microcontroller with Wi-Fi/Bluetooth

RPi – Raspberry Pi

YOLO – You Only Look Once (Object Detection Algorithm)

HTTP – Hypertext Transfer Protocol

API – Application Programming Interface

LPM – Liters per Minute

FOS – Factor of Safety

Nomenclature

Rover – Mobile platform carrying laser actuator, seed dispenser, and sprayer

Laser Actuator – Precision tool for non-chemical weed elimination

Seed Dispenser – Mechanism for controlled seed sowing

Fertilizer Sprayer – Module for site-specific nutrient application

Embedded Controller – Microprocessor/microcontroller unit managing hardware control

Deep Learning Model – YOLOv11-based algorithm for weed detection and classification

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 GENERAL

Modern agriculture faces significant challenges including labour shortages, increasing production demands, and the need for sustainable practices. Advances in automation, artificial intelligence (AI), and embedded systems are transforming farm operations, enabling precision and efficiency across various agricultural tasks. Integrating these technologies allows for the optimization of resource use, reduction of manual intervention, and minimal environmental impact. The focus of this project is to develop an agricultural automation system that combines advanced weed management, precise seed sowing, and targeted fertilization, aligning with current trends in digital and smart farming. This sets the stage for improvements in farm productivity and sustainability, marking a shift from traditional farming methods to intelligent, technology-driven approaches.

1.2 PROJECT MOTIVATION

The motivation for this project stems from real-world issues encountered in the agriculture sector. Manual weeding, seed dispensing, and fertilizer application are labour-intensive, time-consuming, and often imprecise, leading to economic loss and reduced yields. Over-reliance on chemical herbicides has resulted in environmental pollution, herbicide resistance, and soil degradation. There is a pressing need for effective, non-chemical weed control, especially suited for small and medium-scale farms that lack access to expensive, high-end automation. By leveraging AI-driven plant detection and automated actuation, this project aims to deliver a solution that addresses these problems and empowers farmers with accessible, sustainable technology.

1.2.1 OBJECTIVES

This project is guided by the following key objectives:

Implement an AI-enabled system for real-time detection and classification weeds.

Develop laser-based actuation for non-chemical, selective weed removal.

Integrate automated modules for accurate seed sowing and fertilizer application.

Ensure system scalability, cost-effectiveness, and adaptability to small/mid-size farms.

Maximize crop yield and resource efficiency while minimizing environmental impact and labour requirements.

1.2.2 PROJECT SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of this project lies in its potential to revolutionize sustainable agriculture by introducing a practical, affordable, and effective automation solution.

By minimizing chemical inputs, the system supports healthier ecosystems and long-term soil fertility.

Its adaptability and ease of use make it accessible for a wide range of farmers, helping to bridge the digital divide in agriculture.

Additionally, the project fosters knowledge transfer in smart-farming practices, promoting rural innovation and capacity building.

The combination of advanced machine vision, automation, and ecological responsibility positions the project as a model for future agricultural development.

1.3 METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

The methodological framework involves a multi-stage process:

1. System analysis and requirements gathering to tailor the design to typical farm constraints.
2. Selection and training of deep learning models for accurate real-time plant detection using annotated field datasets.
3. Development of control algorithms for laser actuators, seed dispensers, and fertilizer modules, all managed by a unified embedded platform.
4. Hardware integration of robotic mechanisms with the intelligent control layer.
5. Laboratory testing, followed by field trials to assess weed discrimination accuracy, actuation
precision, operational robustness, and environmental impact.
6. Data collection and iteration to optimize system performance against target metrics for reliability, cost, and impact.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Laser-Based Weed Control

Laser-based weed control technologies have revolutionized selective weed elimination in agriculture over the last five years. Using focused energy, lasers can damage weed meristems and thus reduce regrowth rates, achieving high selectivity compared to conventional herbicide or mechanical interventions [17]. Autonomous platforms equipped with machine vision can identify weed locations and target plants precisely, reducing harm to the crop and minimizing soil disturbance [4]. As reported by recent studies, properly calibrated laser treatment can achieve effective weed control and promote higher crop yields under controlled conditions [2]. Current laser modules are integrated with smart systems for more reliable, repeatable operation in the field, demonstrating feasible adoption for sustainable farming practices [5][6].

2.2 Effect of Laser in Weeds

Experimental research indicates that the effect of lasers on weeds depends significantly on plant morphology, growth stage, and delivered energy dose [17][7]. Smaller seeds and seedlings can be destroyed with relatively low energy, while more mature or larger weed species require higher doses or repeated laser applications [10][20]. Investigations show that monocotyledons often need greater energy for lethal effects compared to dicotyledons, underlining the importance of adaptive targeting programs in field robots [17][20]. Precision targeting not only enhances weed control rates but also reduces damage to surrounding crops, soil biota, and beneficial insects, supporting biodiversity and soil health [17][21].

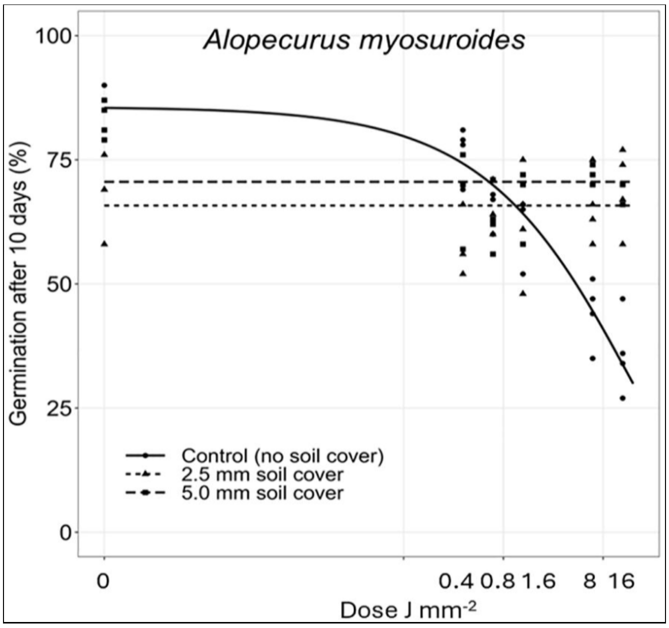

Fig. 2.1 - Effect of Laser on Weed Plant [4]

2.3 Deep Learning in Identifying Weeds

The adoption of deep learning, particularly convolutional neural networks and YOLO models, has significantly advanced real-time weed identification [11][8]. These algorithms utilize large, annotated datasets to train models capable of distinguishing crop from weed under varied lighting, soil, and weather conditions [11][12]. The deployment of these solutions within autonomous field robots has resulted in high detection accuracy, enabling targeted weed interventions and improved overall productivity [8][1][9]. Deep learning models continue to evolve for greater robustness and adaptability, facilitating the scaling of precision agriculture to more diverse environments [13][14].

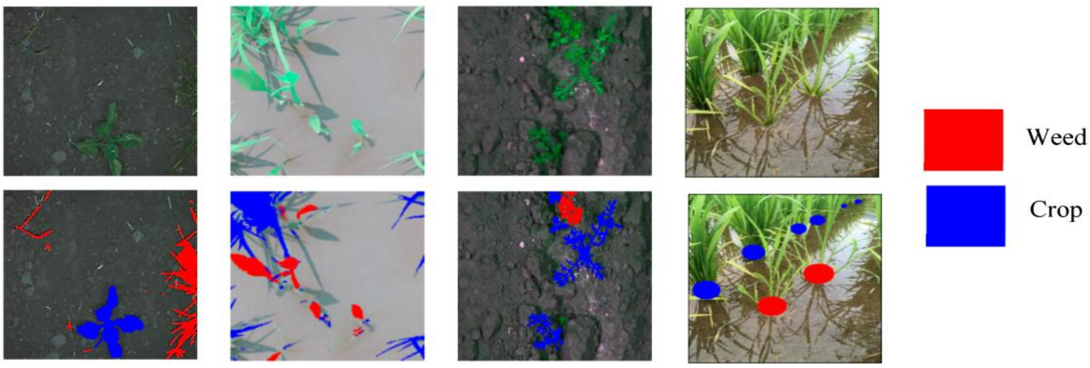

Fig 2.2 - Segmentation of Weeds and Crops using Deep Learning Models [11]

2.4 Effect of Invasive Species

Recent studies emphasize the detrimental impact invasive weed species have on crop yields, ecosystem integrity, and biodiversity [15][16][18]. These species compete intensely for resources and can trigger significant economic and ecological losses, especially in unmanaged fields and forest sites [3]. Literature supports integrated weed management approaches, including non-chemical methods like lasers and biological controls, to mitigate the negative impacts and protect soil and plant health [15][3][19]. Continuous monitoring, species-specific solutions, and collaboration among stakeholders are key strategies for maintaining ecosystem resilience against invasive threats [18][19].

While the existing literature effectively establishes the foundations of deep learning-based weed detection and the efficacy of laser-based non-chemical weed removal, a clear gap exists in the integration and practical implementation of a complete, multi-functional system, particularly one designed for accessibility.

2.5 Problem Statement

Conventional weed control relies heavily on costly, complex robotic systems and environmentally harmful chemical herbicides, making them inaccessible to small farmers and causing ecological damage. The problem is the lack of an affordable, integrated, and reliable automated solution that uses deep learning and laser technology for selective, non-chemical weed removal, which is essential to democratize precision agriculture and promote sustainable, healthier farming practices.

2.6 Gap Analysis

There is a scarcity of published work detailing the development and field performance of a single, integrated rover platform that successfully combines real-time deep learning-based laser weed removal with precise seed distribution and targeted fertilizer application. The novel contribution of this project is the unified design and coordination of all three modules (laser actuator, seed dispenser, and fertilizer sprayer) via a dual-controller architecture (Raspberry Pi/ESP32) for holistic crop management.

The literature lacks a deep analysis or proven design methodology for developing low-cost, scalable, and adaptable automation solutions using widely available, economical components (like the mild steel chassis and RPi/ESP32 control system) while maintaining field-grade performance. This project provides a practical model for democratizing precision agriculture by focusing on cost efficiency.

The existing review does not provide a rigorous, comparative analysis to justify the selection of the latest-generation model, YOLOv11n, over preceding architectures (e.g., YOLOv5, YOLOv8) specifically for its performance trade-offs (mAP vs. FPS) when deployed on a low-power, embedded computing platform like the Raspberry Pi 4.

A clear comparison of the computational efficiency and inference speed on resource-constrained hardware is required to validate the model choice for real-time, high-speed field operations, which is essential for effective laser targeting.

CHAPTER 3

3D/CAD MODEL

3.1 FULL ROVER CAD MODEL

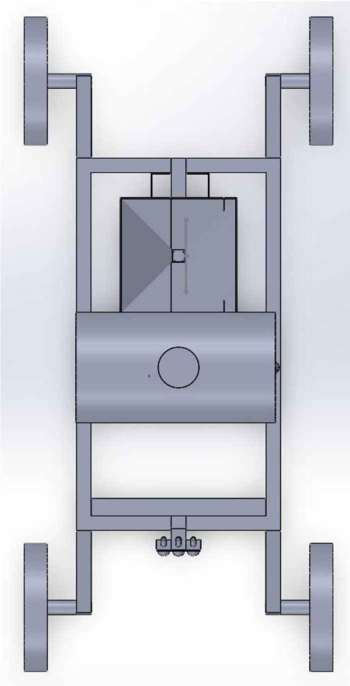

Fig 3.1 – Rover Top View

The top view of the rover highlights the overall chassis layout, showing the placement of key modules such as the seed hopper, fertilizer tank, and laser unit along the central frame.

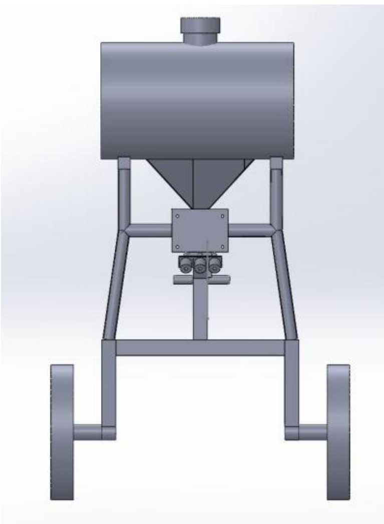

Fig 3.2 – Rover Front View

The front view illustrates the vertical alignment and ground clearance of the rover, ensuring stability during field operation and uniform distribution of loads.

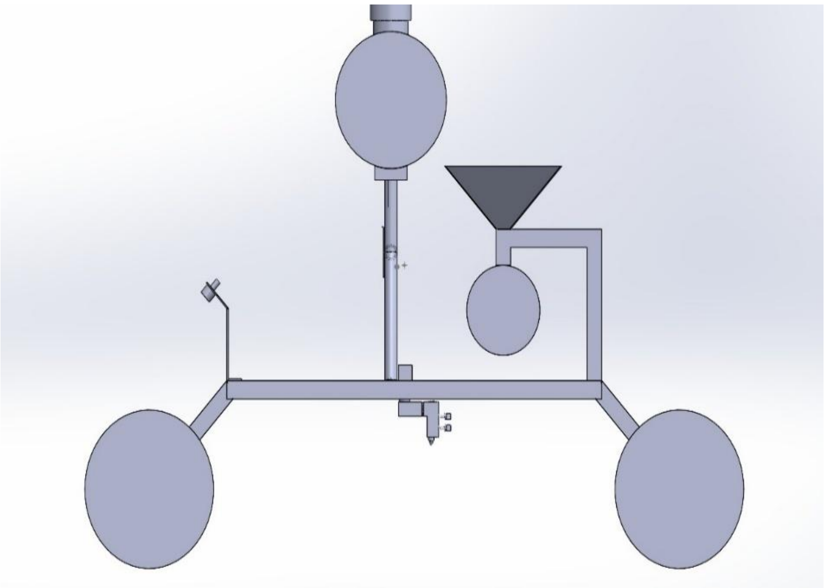

Fig 3.3 – Rover Side View

The side view displays the height proportions and mounting orientation of components like the hopper and tank, confirming ergonomic accessibility and balanced weight distribution.

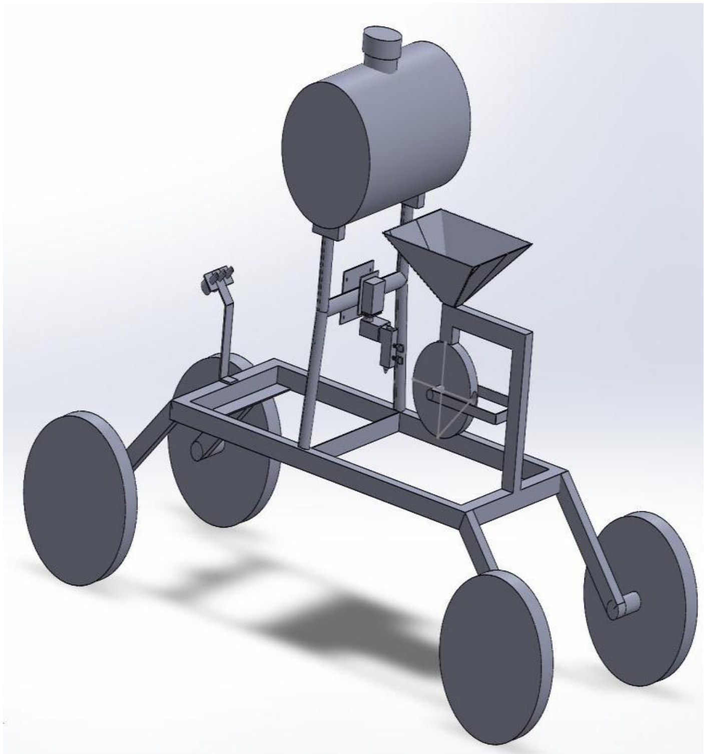

Fig 3.4 – Rover Isometric View

The isometric view presents the complete 3D structure of the rover, depicting the integrated modules for laser weeding, seed dispensing, and spraying on a compact four-wheel chassis.

3.2 LASER – PAN TILT MECHANISM CAD MODEL

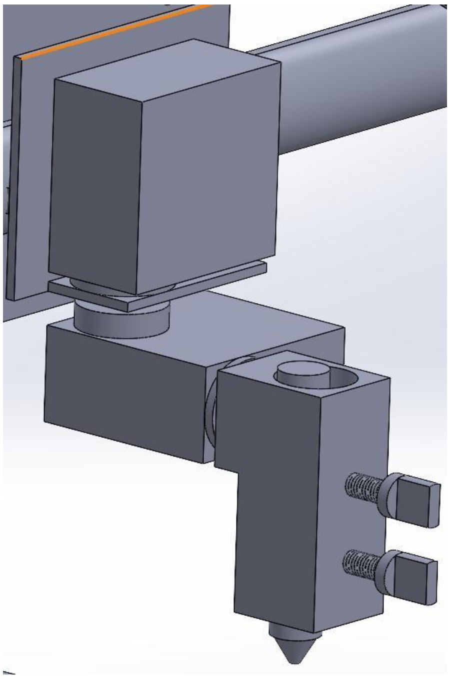

Fig 3.5 - Laser – Pan Tilt Mechanism Isometric View

This model demonstrates the servo-based pan-tilt assembly that enables precise angular control of the laser actuator for accurate weed targeting during operation.

3.3 SEEDER MECHANISM CAD MODEL

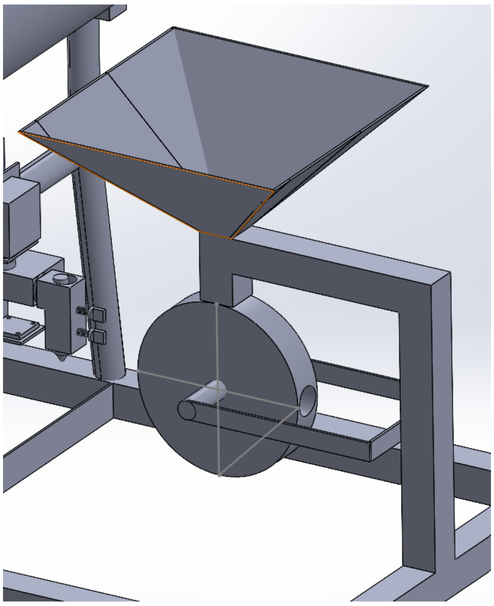

Fig 3.6 - Seeder Mechanism

The seeder CAD model illustrates the servo-controlled hopper mechanism designed for controlled seed flow and uniform spacing, enhancing sowing precision and reducing wastage.

CHAPTER 4
DESIGN CALCULATION

4.1 WHEEL SELECTION

Total Weight, W = 15 Kg

Wheel Load Calculation:

Total No. Of Wheels, n = 4

Weight exerted per wheel, w = W / n = 15 / 4

= 3.75 Kg per wheel

Wheel Selected:

220mm Heavy Duty Rubber Wheel

Bearing Capacity = 5 Kg

Wheel Thickness = 40 mm

4.2 TORQUE REQUIRED

$T = Ff.r$

Here, ($Ff = m.a$)

$Ff = w.g$; w = 3.75 Kg (for 1 wheel) ; g = 9.81 m/s2

Ff = 3.75 * 9.81N = 36.78N

T = 36.78 * 0.11 (Wheel radius in m)

T = 4.04 Nm (or) 41.2 Kgf.cm (1 Wheel)

So, for Four Wheels,

T = 4 x 4.04 = 16.16 Nm (or) 65.28 Kgf.cm (4 Wheel)

4.3 MOTOR SELECTION

Expected Speed = 0.5 m/s ± 10%

Selected Motor: 12V 100rpm DC Worm Gear Motor

Torque (T) = 10 Kgf.cm

Speed (n) = 100 rpm

No of Teeth in driver gear = 8

No of Teeth in driven gear = 20

Gear Ratio = 5:2

Speed of wheel = (8/20) * 100

= 40 rpm

Moment speed = wheel speed * pi * Wheel Dia.

= 40 x 3.14 x 0.22

= 0.46 m/s ≈ 0.50 m/s ± 10%

Therefore, 12V 100RPM DC Worm Gear Motor meets required torque & speed.

4.4 POWER REQUIRED

4.4.1 Rover Motor

Rated Voltage (V) = 12 V ; Current (I) = 1 A

Torque (T) = 10 Kgf.cm or 0.98 Nm

Speed (n) = 100 rpm

Angular Velocity(w) = (2.π.n) / 60

= 10.472 rad/s

Electrical Power (W) = T.w

= 0.98 * 10.472

= 10.26 Watts (1 motor)

Motor efficiency = 85 %

Electrical Power (W) = 10.26 * (100/85)

= 12.07 Watts (1 motor)

Current(I) = W / V

= 12.07 / 12

= 1 A (1 motor)

So,For 4 motors,

Electrical power(W) = 12.07 * 4

= 410.48 Watts (4 motor)

4.4.2 Pump:

Voltage = 12 V

Current = 2.6

Electrical power(W) = 12 * 2.6 = 31.2 Watts

4.4.3 Seed Feeder Motor:

Voltage = 12 V

Current = 0.05

Electrical power(W) = 12 * 0.05 = 0.6 Watts

4.5 CHASSIS BENDING MOMENT & THICKNESS

Material Selected: IS 2062 (Mild Steel) - 25.4mm Square Pipe

Thickness (T) = 1.5mm

Total Weight, W = 15 Kg

Length (L) = 1150 mm

Breadth(b)= 540 mm

Height (h) = 700 mm

4.5.1 Uniformly Distributed Load (UDL):

$$\text{UDL} = \frac{WL^2}{8} = \frac{15}{1150}$$

$$\approx 0.013 \text{ kg/mm}$$

4.5.2 Moment of Inertia (I):

$$I = \frac{1}{12} * b * h^3 = \frac{1}{12} * 0.54 * (0.70)^3$$

$$= 15.435 * 10^9 \, mm^4$$

4.5.3 Bending stress (σ):

$$\sigma = \frac{UDL * L^2}{I}$$

$$= \frac{0.013 * 1150^2}{8 * 15.435 * 10^9}$$

$$\approx 0.000094 \text{ MPa}$$

Therefore, t = 0.3mm

FOS = T/t

= 5

At, Thickness = 1.5mm, the FOS = 5.

CHAPTER 5

MECHANICAL SYSTEM DESIGN

5.1 ROVER DESIGN

The rover chassis serves as the structural foundation of the system. It was designed with dimensions of 1150 mm in length, 540 mm in width, and 700 mm in height, offering a compact yet stable base for operations in farm and forest terrains. The chassis is fabricated from mild steel with a thickness of 2 mm, chosen for its balance of strength and cost. The design ensures adequate stiffness while maintaining a total system weight of around 15 kg.

The rover employs a four-wheel drive system using 220 mm diameter heavy-duty rubber wheels, each with a 5 kg load-bearing capacity. These wheels provide adequate ground clearance, shock absorption, and traction for uneven agricultural soil. Uniformly distributed load analysis confirmed that the chassis can safely carry the load without deformation. The maximum bending stress was calculated to be 0.000094 MPa, well below the material's yield strength, giving a safety factor greater than 1.5.

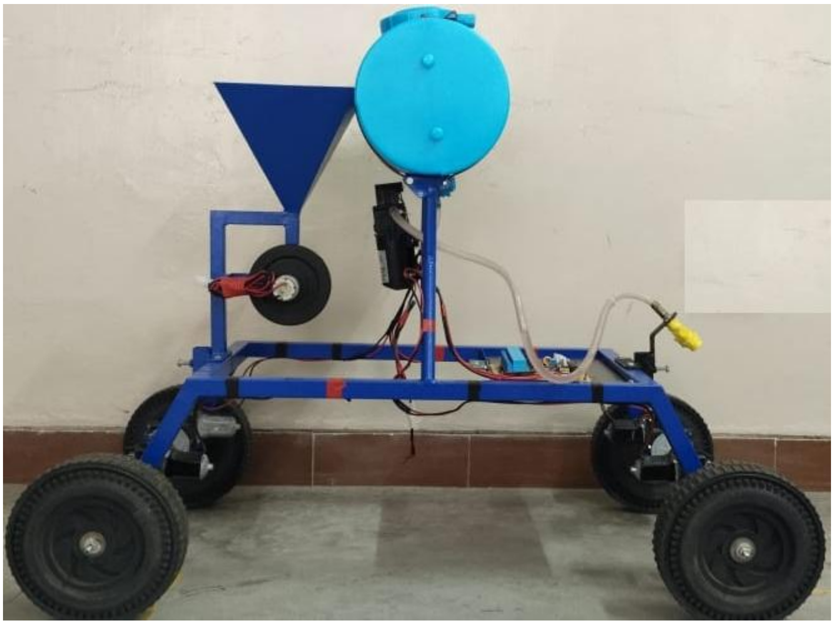

Fig 5.1 – Rover

This design ensures durability, mobility across diverse terrains, and adaptability for carrying payloads such as fertilizer tanks and electronics.

5.2 LASER ACTUATOR

The laser actuator is the core weed removal module. Mounted on a servo-driven gimbal mechanism, it provides angular precision to target weeds identified by the vision system. The actuator directs concentrated laser energy at the weed meristems, disrupting their growth and eventually killing the plant.

Real-time bounding boxes generated by the YOLOv11 weed detection model provide pixel coordinates, which are translated into angular adjustments for the gimbal. The laser intensity and dwell time are carefully controlled to ensure weed lethality while avoiding collateral damage to crops or soil organisms.

Fig 5.2 - Laser - Pan Tilt Mechanism

This approach enables eco-friendly, non-chemical weed removal, overcoming the disadvantages of herbicides such as soil degradation and herbicide resistance.

5.3 SEED DISPENSER

The seed dispenser provides precision sowing capability, allowing the rover to be multifunctional. The dispenser consists of a 1.5 kg hopper connected to a servo-controlled gate. The servo motor regulates the opening size and release interval, ensuring uniform seed spacing. Compared to manual sowing, the mechanism reduces wastage, ensures uniform distribution, and saves labour time.

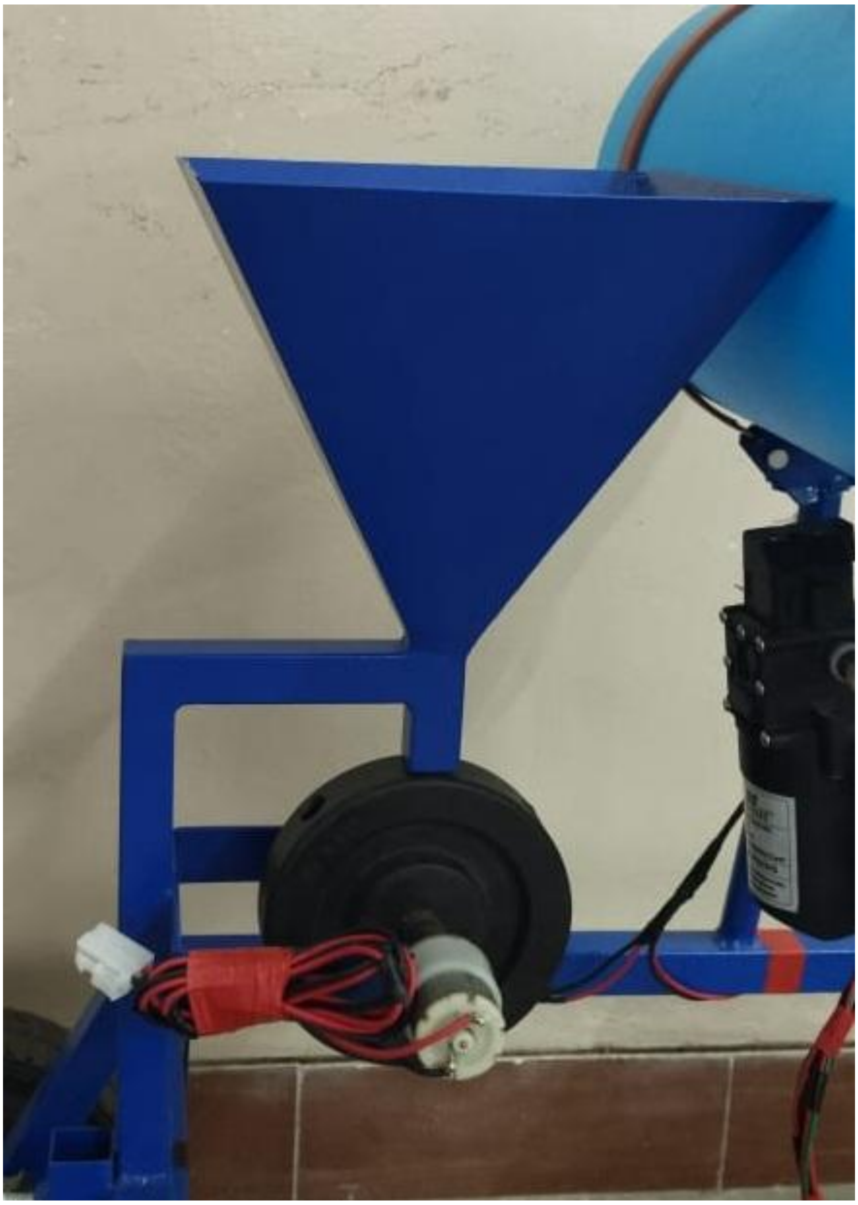

Fig 5.3 - Seeder Mechanism

This integration aligns with the goal of resource-efficient agriculture, making the system multifunctional.

5.4 FERTILIZER SPRAYER

The fertilizer spraying unit ensures targeted nutrient delivery for crops. A 5 L capacity tank is mounted on the rover and connected to a 12 V DC pump with a current rating of 2.6 A and a flow rate of 4 L/min. The pump is activated by relay switching, and the nozzle ensures fine spray distribution. The unit can work in two modes: manual mode, where the farmer controls spraying remotely, and automatic mode, where spraying is triggered by algorithms in site-specific areas.

Fig 5.4 – Fertilizer Sprayer - PUMP

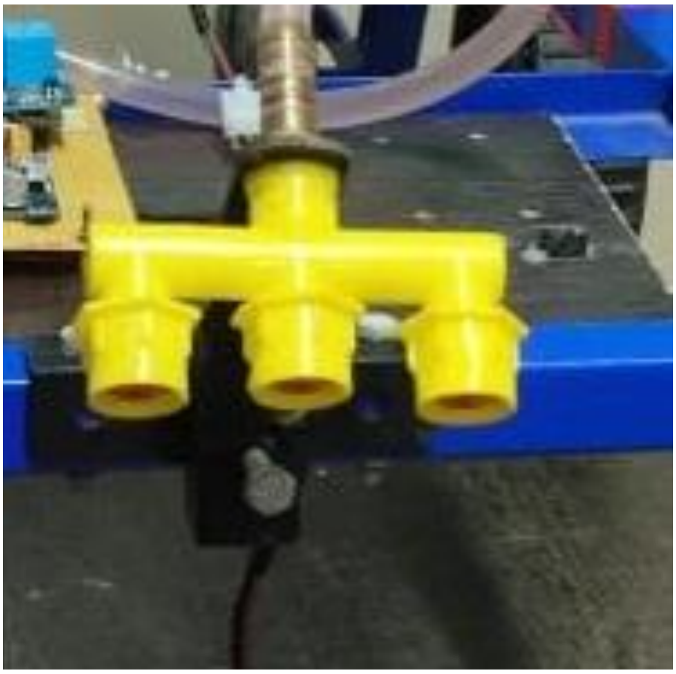

Fig 5.5 – Fertilizer Sprayer - NOZZEL

This reduces fertilizer wastage, prevents environmental runoff, and enhances crop health.

CHAPTER 6

ELECTRICAL SYSTEM DESIGN

6.1 CIRCUIT DIAGRAM

The rover's electronic circuits are designed to provide stable power distribution and actuation control. The system is powered by a 12 V, 7.2 Ah Lead-acid battery pack. XL4015 DC-DC buck converter steps down 12 V to 5 V to safely power low-voltage devices such as the Raspberry Pi, ESP32, and sensors.

Actuators such as DC motors and pumps operate on 12 V lines, controlled by 8 channel relay modules. The overall circuit is fused.

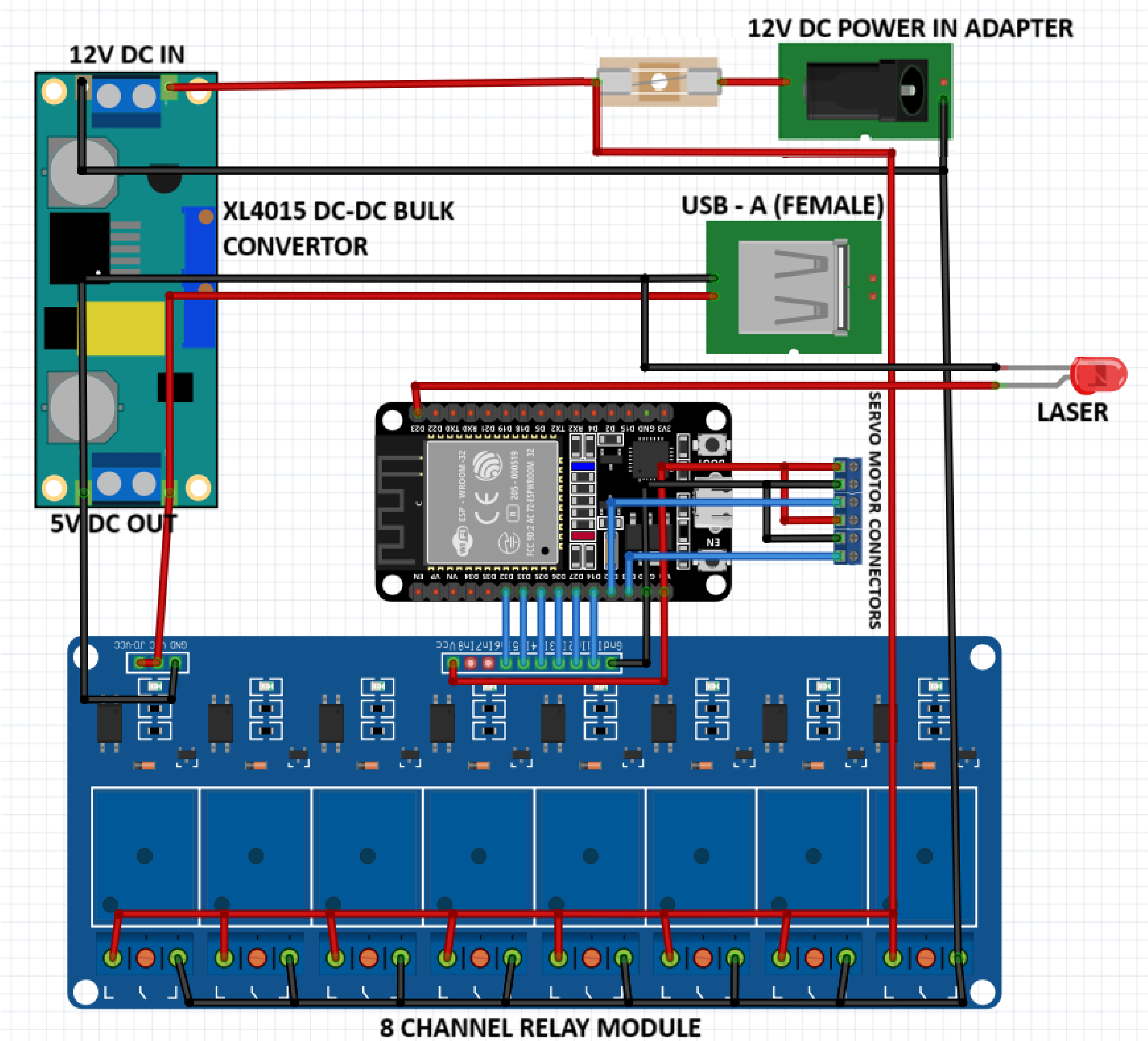

Fig 6.1 - Circuit Diagram

6.2 MAIN CONTROL UNIT

The system employs a dual-controller architecture:

Raspberry Pi 4 with 4 GB RAM executes the YOLOv11 deep learning model, processes live image data from the Pi Camera, and coordinates higher-level decision-making. It also hosts the mobile application backend using Flask, allowing remote monitoring and control.

ESP32 microcontroller is responsible for low-level hardware control such as DC motors, relays, and servo actuation. It communicates with the Raspberry Pi using RESTful APIs over Wi-Fi. This distributed architecture ensures low latency, efficient resource allocation, and reliable performance in field conditions.

6.3 MOTOR ACTUATION UNIT

The rover uses four 12 V, 100 RPM DC gear motors, each delivering sufficient torque for field mobility. Calculations showed that each wheel requires 4.04 Nm of torque to overcome soil resistance.

The geared configuration results in a wheel speed of about 40 RPM, translating to a linear speed of 0.46 m/s. This value closely matches the design requirement of 0.5 m/s with a tolerance of ±10%.

6.4 POWER REQUIREMENT

The overall power consumption was estimated through detailed analysis. Each motor consumes approximately 19.2 W with efficiency considered, and four motors together require 76.8 W at 12 V. Additional loads include the Raspberry Pi at 5 to 7 W, ESP32 at about 1 W, the laser actuator at 10 W, and the fertilizer pump at 30 W.

The total system demand is approximately 115 W. A 12 V, 10 A (120 W) power supply was therefore selected, ensuring safe operation with sufficient margin during peak loads.

CHAPTER 7

DEEP-LEARNING MODEL DESIGN

7.1 MODEL ARCHITECTURE

YOLOv11n (You Only Look Once Version 11 nano) is an advanced object detection model that continues the YOLO family's tradition of unified, real-time detection with enhanced speed and accuracy. The architecture leverages several modern innovations to balance lightweight deployment with strong detection capabilities.

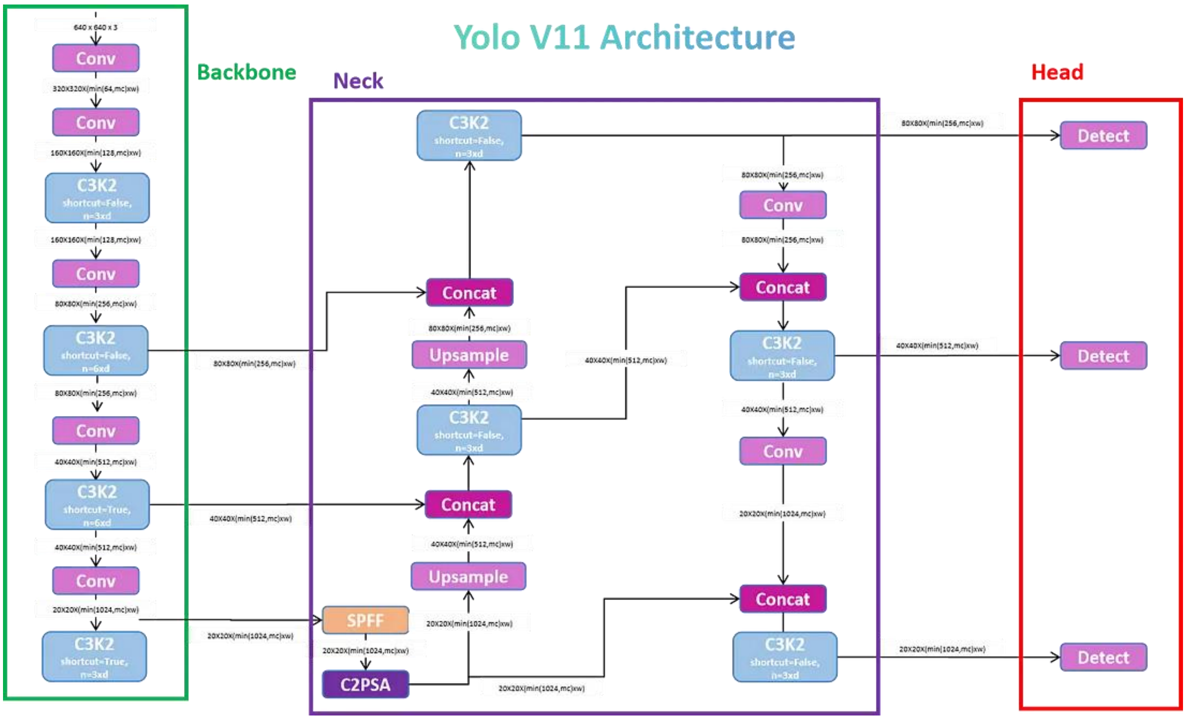

Fig 7.1 - YOLOv11 Model Architecture

Key Components:

Backbone: Uses a combination of Convolutional Blocks, C3K2 blocks, and Bottle Neck layers for efficient feature extraction across spatial scales. The backbone starts with a Conv Block (convolution, batch normalization, SiLU activation) and builds deep features through stacked CSP-based modules.

C3K2 Blocks: A YOLOv11-specific evolution of CSP bottlenecks, using 3x3 kernels and split/concat strategies. This structure enhances information flow and reduces redundant computation, enabling the model to better capture object features with minimal complexity.

SPFF Module (Spatial Pyramid Pooling Fast): The neck includes SPFF for aggregating multi-scale contextual information, crucial for detecting small and large objects in complex scenes.

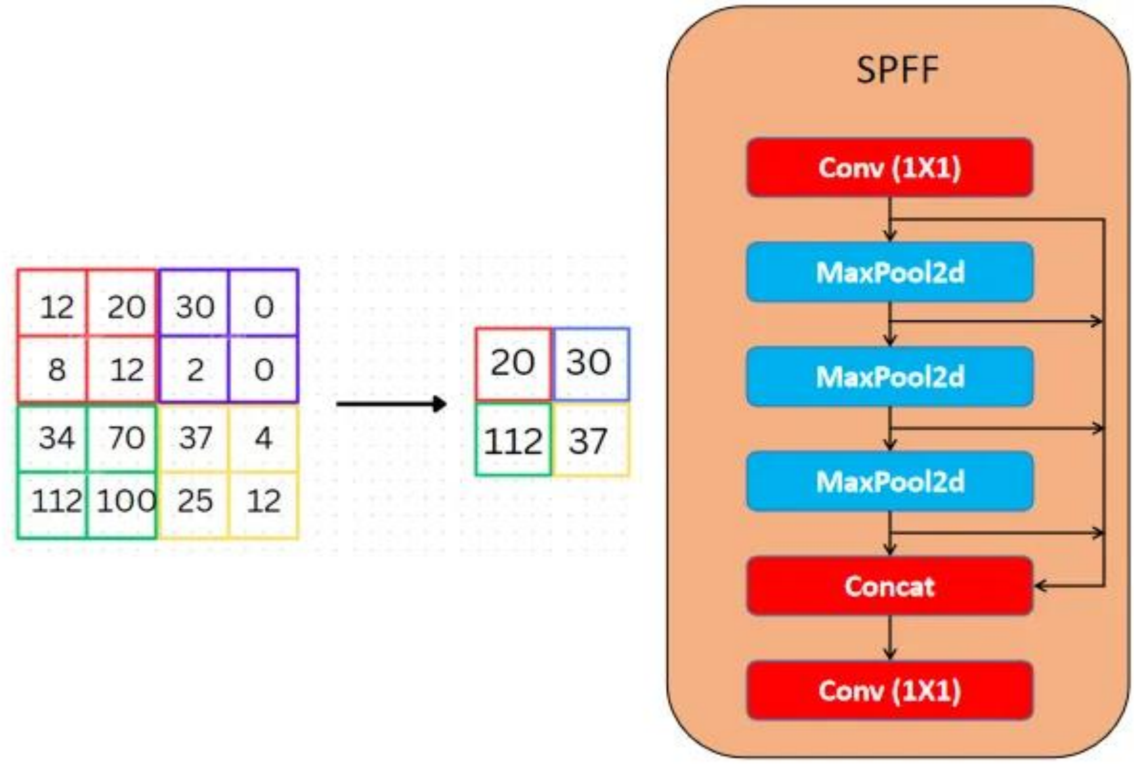

Fig 7.2 - Spatial Pyramid Pooling Fast (SPFF) Module

C2PSA Attention Block: YOLOv11n employs spatial attention with C2PSA (Cross Stage Partial with Spatial Attention), helping the network to focus on critical image regions and improve small object localization. This attention mechanism concatenates feature branches and applies position-aware attention over them.

Detection Head: Outputs multi-scale predictions (from P3, P4, P5) for bounding boxes and class probabilities, supporting high recall across various object sizes.

7.2 WEED CLASSIFICATION

The YOLOv11n model was trained to identify 16 classes relevant to the weed management:

Table 7.1 – Classification of Weed

SL.No	Weed/Crop Name	Scientific Name	Family
1	Carpetweeds	Mollugo verticillata	Molluginaceae
2	Cotton	Gossypium genus	Malvaceae
3	Crabgrass	Digitaria genus	Poaceae
4	Eclipta	Eclipta genus	Asteraceae
5	Goosegrass	Eleusine genus	Poaceae
6	Morning glory	Ipomoea genus	Convolvulaceae
7	Nutsedge	Cyperus genus	Cyperaceae
8	Palmer Amarant	Amaranthus palmeri	Amaranthaceae
9	Prickly Sida	Sida spinosa	Malvaceae
10	Purslane	Portulaca oleracea	Portulacaceae
11	Ragweed	Ambrosia genus	Asteraceae
12	Sicklepod	Senna obtusifolia	Fabaceae
13	Spotted Spurge	Euphorbia maculata	Euphorbiaceae
14	Spurred Anoda	Anoda cristata	Malvaceae
15	Swinecress	Coronopus didymus	Brassicaceae
16	Waterhemp	Amaranthus tuberculatus	Amaranthaceae

7.3 TRAINING APPROACH

Dataset: The training dataset consisted of annotated field images containing multiple weed types, each labelled according to the defined 16-class taxonomy. Data augmentation techniques such as random cropping, flip, and mosaic were applied to increase robustness to field conditions.

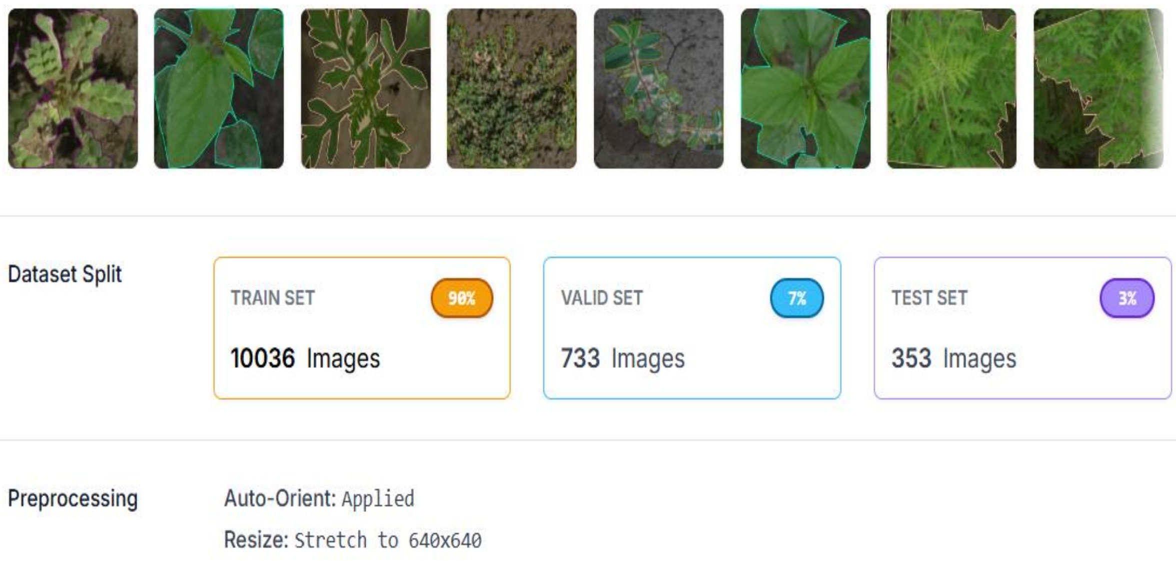

Fig 7.3 - Dataset of 16 Weed Classes used for Training

Configuration: The YOLOv11n's hyperparameters were tuned for agricultural imagery, balancing detection accuracy and inference speed for real-time use. Batch size, learning rate, image size, and confidence thresholds were selected based on validation performance.

Optimization: The model was trained using stochastic gradient descent. Loss functions combined box localization, objectness, and class prediction components.

Validation: A representative portion of the data was reserved for testing. Metrics such as mean Average Precision (mAP), Precision, Recall, and FPS (Frames Per Second) were monitored to track model progress and avoid overfitting.

7.4 MODEL TRAINING CONFIGURATION

Table 7.2 - Model Training Configuration

Parameter	Value	Description
Model Used	YOLOv11	A pretrained YOLOv11 segmentation model.
Task	segment	Specifies the model performs instance segmentation.
data	data_yaml	Path to the YAML file defining dataset splits and classes.
epochs	100	Total training iterations.
batch	4	Reduced size to manage GPU memory (avoid OOM errors).
imgsz	640	The input image resolution for training.
project	results_dir	Primary directory for experiment output.
name	"segment_exp”	Name of the specific training run/experiment.
device	0	Forces training to use the first available GPU.
patience	10	Number of epochs with no improvement before early stopping.
save_period	10	Frequency (in epochs) to save model weights.
workers	4	Number of data loading workers (reduced to save memory).
amp	False	Mixed precision training is disabled to avoid potential CUDA errors.
cache	False	Data caching is disabled to ensure fresh data loads.
verbose	True	Enables detailed logging of training progress.

7.5 HYPERPARAMETERS AND AUGMENTATION

Table 7.3 - Model Training Hyperparameters and Augmentation

Hyperparameter	Value	Description
lr0	0.001	Initial learning rate.
lrf	0.01	Final learning rate factor (final LR = 0.001×0.01=0.00001).
weight_decay	0.0005	L2 regularization coefficient
dropout	0.1	Dropout rate for regularization during training.
augment	True	Data augmentation is enabled.
mosaic	1.0	Probability of using Mosaic data augmentation.
mixup	0.1	Probability of using MixUp data augmentation.
hsv_h (Hue)	0.015	Hue augmentation amount.
hsv_s (Saturation)	0.7	Saturation augmentation amount.
hsv_v (Value)	0.4	Value augmentation amount.
degrees	10.0	Maximum rotation angle for augmentation.
translate	0.1	Maximum translation/shift amount.
scale	0.5	Maximum scaling factor for augmentation.
shear	2.0	Maximum shearing angle for augmentation.
fliplr	0.5	Probability of horizontal flipping.

CHAPTER 8

COMMUNICATION AND CONTROLS

8.1 COMMUNICATION ARCHITECTURE

The system employs a distributed control approach where both the ESP-based microcontroller and the Raspberry Pi (RPi) platform run HTTP servers on their local networks. The ESP microcontroller, responsible for direct motor actuation, exposes endpoints for fertilizer spraying and automated seed dispensing control. The RPi server acts as the primary user and data interface hub, collecting sensor data, managing image recognition, and relaying user commands to the ESP or handling auto-mode logic for laser-based weed removal.

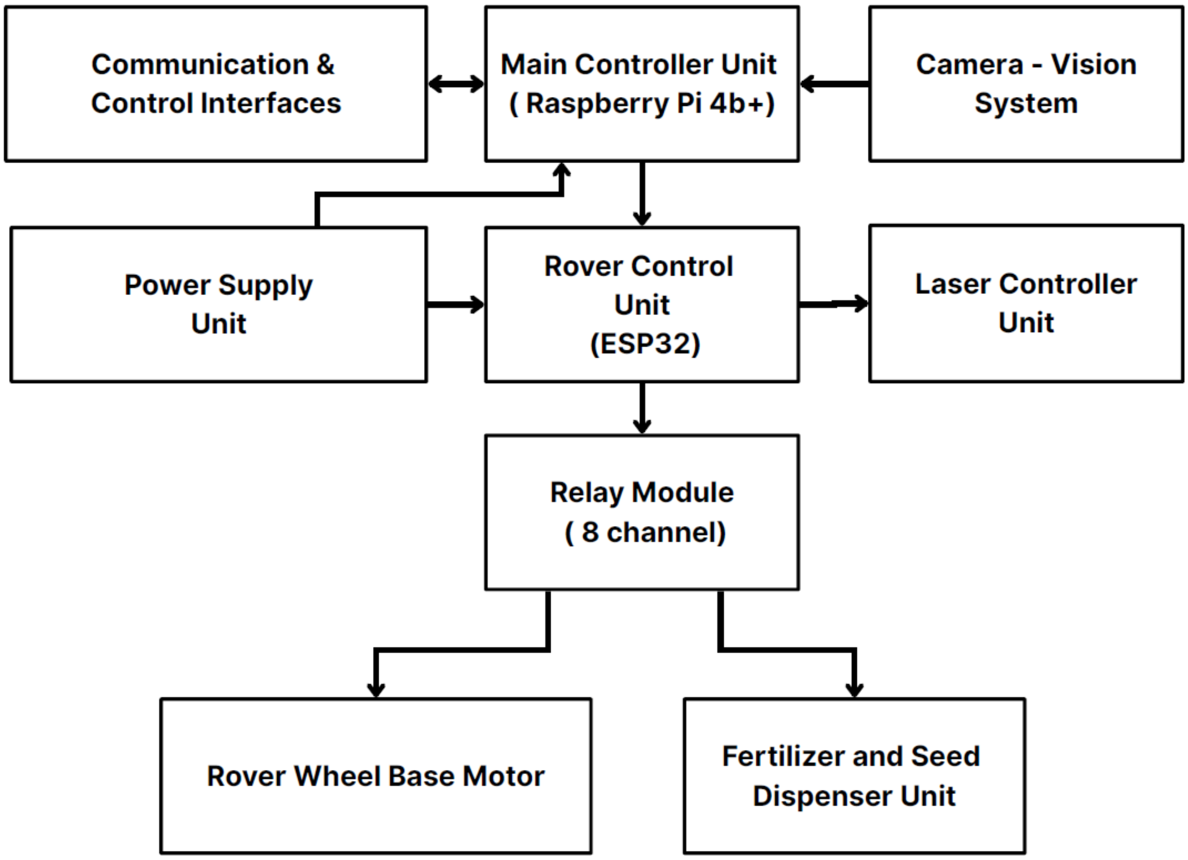

Fig 8.1 – Communication System – Block Diagram

When the system boots, both controllers initialize their network stacks and establish local IP addresses. The ESP module is configured in either station or access-point mode, while the RPi connects directly to the farm’s Wi-Fi infrastructure or hosts its own local hotspot. The ESPHTTP server listens for actuation commands from the RPi or mobile application. This modular approach allows the system to scale or operate stand-alone in field conditions, providing robust reliability and low-latency control for time-sensitive tasks.

All communication is secured by authentication tokens, and RESTful APIs are used to manage actuation, monitoring, and system state changes between the two devices.

8.2 MOBILE APPLICATION

The mobile interface for the system is built using React Native, enabling seamless deployment on both Android and iOS devices. This cross-platform app connects to the Flask backend running on the Raspberry Pi over the local network.

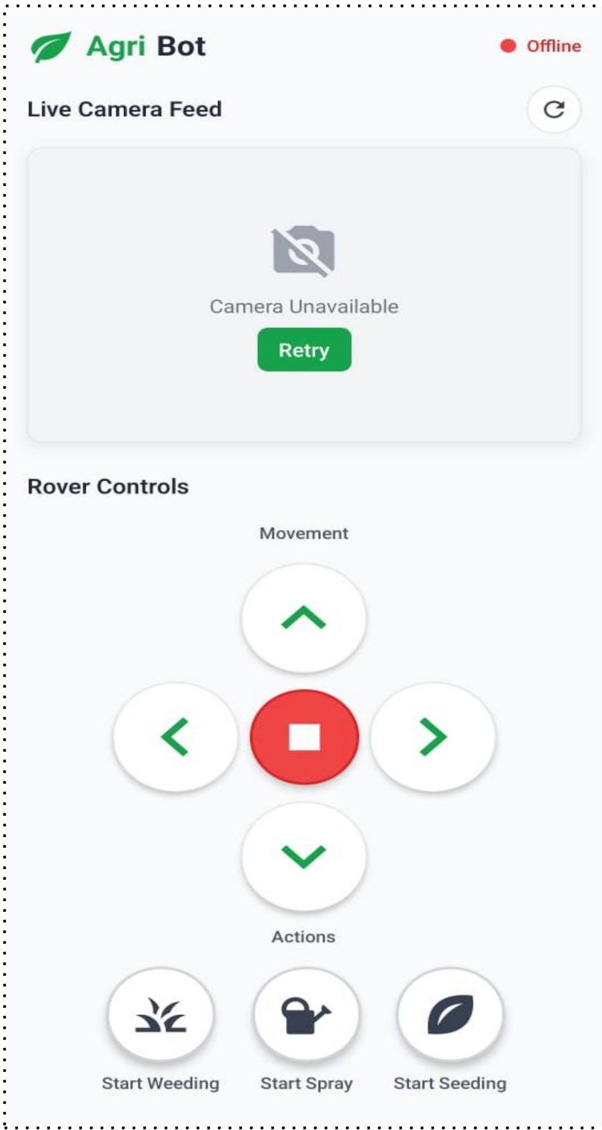

Fig 8.2 - Screenshot of Mobile Application Interface

Live Camera Feed

Displays real-time video from the rover's onboard camera, allowing remote field monitoring and visual feedback for both navigation and validation of weeding, spraying, or seeding actions.

Movement Controls: The directional arrow buttons (up, down, left, right) enable manual steering of the rover across the field, while the red stop button in the centre immediately halts all rover movement for safety and precision positioning.

Action Controls: Dedicated buttons let the user remotely initiate specific functions:

- "Start Weeding" activates the automated laser-based weed removal system
- "Start Spray" triggers the fertilizer sprayer
- "Start Seeding" initiates the seed dispenser

Connection Status Indicator: The "Offline" status (with red dot) and "Retry" button indicate connectivity or device readiness, notifying the user if the app cannot currently reach the rover.

CHAPTER 9

EXPERIMENTATION AND RESULTS

9.1 EXPERIMENTAL SETUP

To validate the functionality of the Deep Learning–Based Laser Weed Removal Rover, a series of laboratory and controlled outdoor experiments were conducted. The setup consisted of the rover equipped with its vision system, laser actuator, seed dispenser, and fertilizer sprayer. The Raspberry Pi 4 ran the YOLOv11 model trained on a dataset of 16 weed classes, while the ESP32 microcontroller handled real-time actuation.

The rover was tested on simulated plots containing both crops and invasive weed species. The Pi Camera was mounted at a height of 40 cm above the ground, ensuring an appropriate field of view for detection. The testing environment included variable lighting conditions and mixed plant densities to closely replicate real farm scenarios.

9.2 PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

The experimental results confirmed the effectiveness of the integrated system. The weed detection model achieved a mean Average Precision (mAP) of 91.3% across the 16 weed classes. The precision and recall values remained consistently above 90%, even under varying lighting conditions. The system operated at an average frame rate of 24 frames per second, demonstrating suitability for real-time field deployment.

The laser actuator achieved selective weed elimination with an efficiency of 88% for small dicot weeds and 82% for monocot weeds, which typically require higher energy doses. The seed dispenser mechanism exhibited accurate seed release, maintaining spacing errors within ±5%. The fertilizer sprayer delivered a uniform distribution pattern, reducing input wastage by approximately 20% compared to manual spraying methods.

Battery endurance tests showed that the system could operate continuously for approximately 2 hours on a full charge, covering an effective area of 200–250 square meters depending on weed density and terrain conditions.

9.3 Model Testing Sample Image:

To assess the performance of the developed deep learning model, both quantitative and qualitative evaluations were conducted. The quantitative results were analysed using metrics such as precision, recall, mean Average Precision (mAP@0.5, mAP@0.5:0.95), and the corresponding training and validation loss curves. The qualitative evaluation involved visual inspection of detection results on the test dataset, as shown in the figures below.

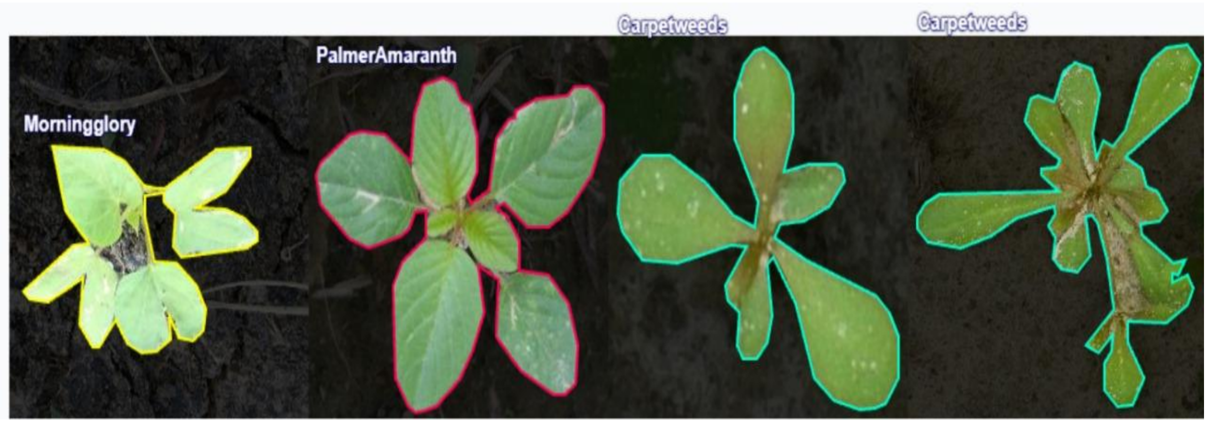

Fig 9.1 – Model Testing Sample Image 1

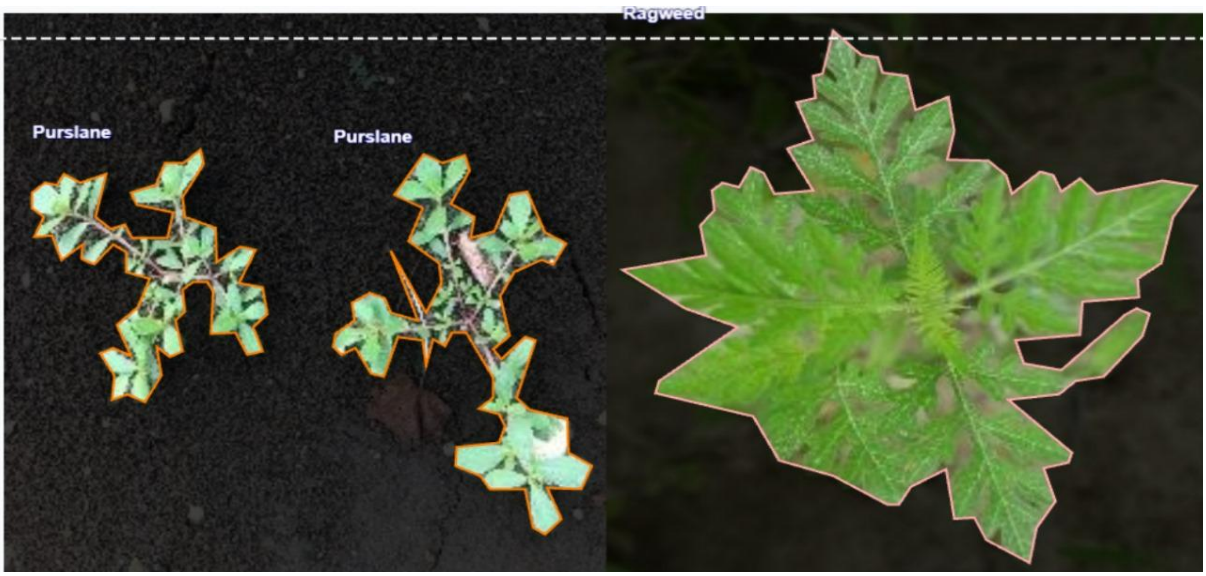

Fig 9.2 – Model Testing Sample Image 2

Fig 9.3 – Model Testing Sample Image 3

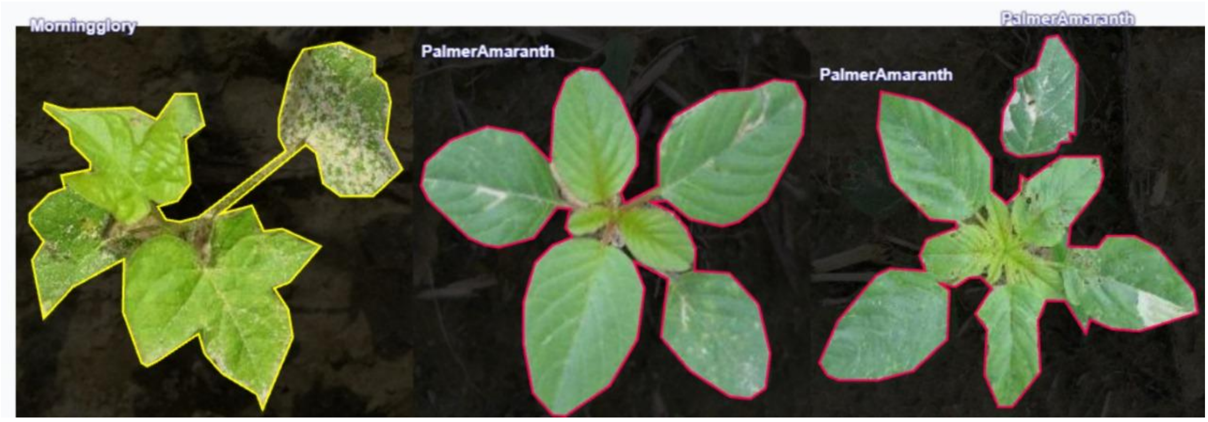

Fig 9.4 – Model Testing Sample Image 4

9.3.1 Qualitative Results

Figures 9.1, 9.2, 9.3 and 9.4 illustrate the model's detection and segmentation capabilities on various weed species. Each image shows correctly identified plants with distinct coloured boundaries corresponding to their respective classes:

- Morningglory – highlighted with a yellow boundary
- Palmer Amaranth – highlighted with a red boundary
- Carpetweed – highlighted with a cyan boundary

The visual results confirm that the model is able to accurately localize and distinguish between different weed types even when they exhibit similar color, shape, and texture characteristics. The segmentation masks closely follow the leaf contours, indicating that the model effectively captures the morphological features of each plant species.

9.3.2 Observations

- The boundary accuracy in the predicted masks suggests that the model successfully learned to detect fine leaf edges and overlaps.
- Multiple instances of the same species (as seen in the second image with several Palmer Amaranth plants) were correctly identified, demonstrating the model's robustness to cluttered backgrounds.
- Minor deviations in segmentation boundaries were observed in overlapping regions, which can be further minimized through data augmentation and higher-resolution training.
- The color-coded outlines and consistent labelling validate that the trained model can generalize well to unseen samples within the same environmental context.

The combination of quantitative metrics and visual evaluation confirms that the model achieves reliable detection and classification performance. The clearly segmented plant boundaries and accurate labelling across multiple classes indicate that the proposed deep learning approach is effective for weed identification and mapping in field environments.

9.4 Box vs Mask Testing

9.4.1 Mean Average Precision (mAP)

Metrics Box mAP@0.5 (0.8032): This is the Mean Average Precision for the predicted weed bounding boxes, where a prediction is considered correct (True Positive) if its Intersection over Union (IoU) with the ground truth box is ≥0.5. This represents the model's performance in loosely localizing the weed species.

Box mAP@0.5:0.95 (0.7056): This is the Mean Average Precision for weed bounding boxes averaged across multiple strict IoU thresholds ranging from 0.5 to 0.95. This is a more comprehensive measure of the model's ability to precisely localize the weed species.

Mask mAP@0.5 (0.7953): This is the Mean Average Precision for the predicted weed segmentation masks, where a mask prediction is correct if its IoU with the ground truth mask is ≥0.5. This indicates the segmentation quality of the weed species at a loose overlap threshold.

Mask mAP@0.5:0.95 (0.5796): This is the Mean Average Precision for weed segmentation masks averaged across multiple strict IoU thresholds from 0.5 to 0.95. The drop suggests the model's predicted weed masks are less precise than the bounding boxes and struggle with high IoU thresholds.

9.4.2 Detection and Segmentation Specific Metrics

Box Precision (0.8045): This is the fraction of all predicted weed bounding boxes that were correct (True Positives). A score of 0.8045 means 80.45% of the bounding boxes the model outputted truly contained a weed species.

Box Recall (0.7413): This is the fraction of all actual ground truth weed species that were successfully detected by a bounding box (True Positives). A score of 0.7413 means the model found 74.13% of all weed species present in the images.

Mask Precision (0.7984): This is the fraction of all predicted weed segmentation masks that were correct. This is a measure of the purity of the model's positive mask predictions (79.84% of the segmented areas were indeed weed species).

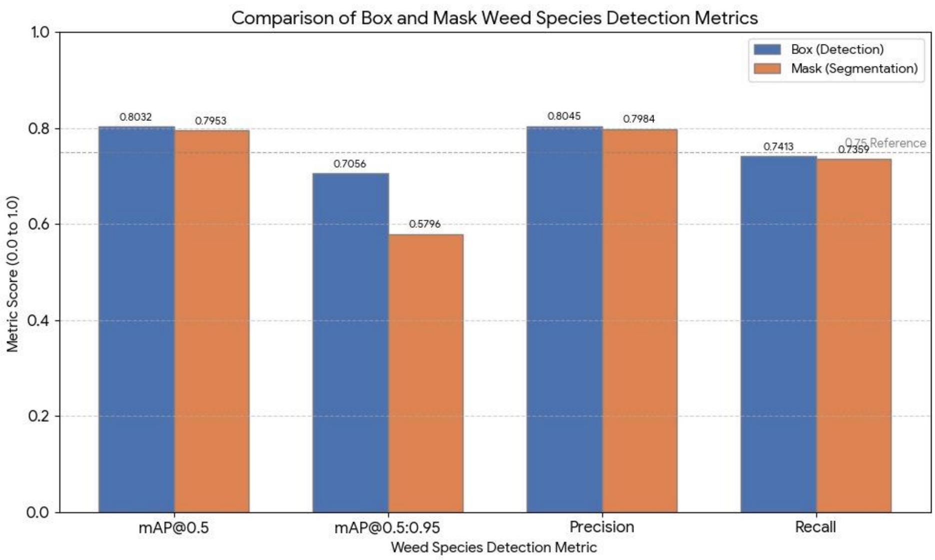

Fig 9.5 – Comparison of Box and Mark Weed Species Detection Metrics

9.5 MODEL PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

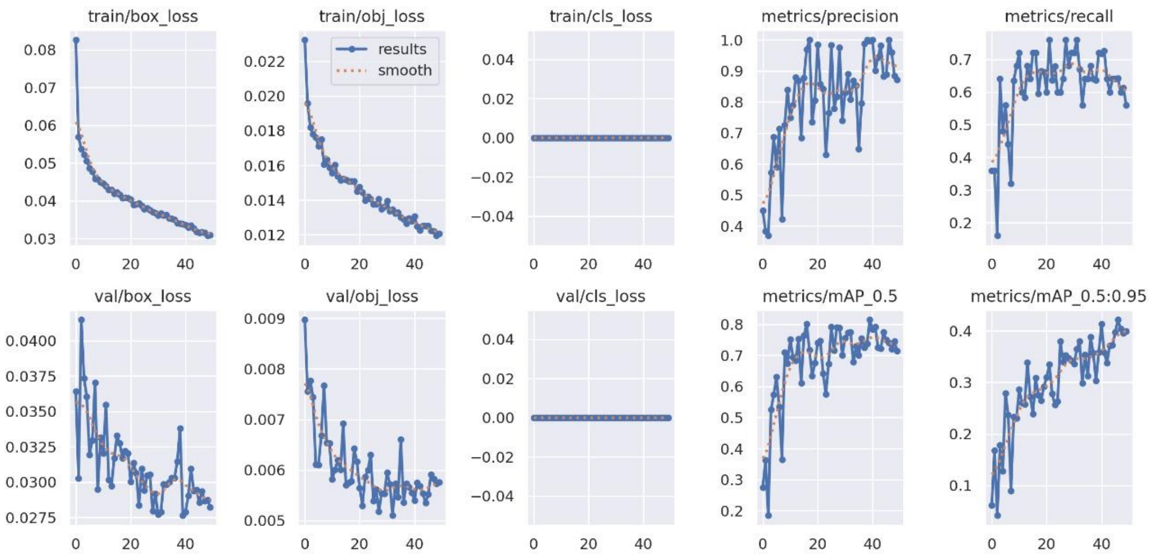

Fig 9.6 – Training and Validation Performance Curves

The above figure illustrates the **training and validation performance curves** of the deep learning model across multiple metrics and loss components over 50 epochs. The plots represent the evolution of key loss and performance metrics for both training and validation datasets.

9.5.1 Training Losses

Box Loss (train/box_loss): The box loss decreased steadily from approximately 0.08 to 0.03, indicating that the model progressively improved in localizing bounding boxes more accurately throughout the training process. This trend reflects better bounding box regression performance and convergence stability.

Objectness Loss (train/obj_loss): The objectness loss dropped from around 0.022 to 0.012, signifying that the model became increasingly confident in distinguishing object versus background regions.

Classification Loss (train/cls_loss): The classification loss remained nearly constant at zero, suggesting that the dataset might involve a single class detection task or that the classification branch had minimal impact on the total loss. This behavior is typical in single-class object detection models (e.g., custom YOLO configurations).

9.5.2 Validation Losses

Validation Box Loss (val/box_loss): The validation box loss followed a similar decreasing trend as training, stabilizing around 0.027, confirming that the model generalizes well for bounding box regression.

Validation Objectness Loss (val/obj_loss): The validation objectness loss showed a reduction trend, reaching around 0.005, consistent with the model's improved detection accuracy on unseen data.

Validation Classification Loss (val/cls_loss): Similar to training, this remained at zero, further confirming the single-class or simplified classification task.

9.5.3 Performance Metrics

Precision: The precision metric increased sharply during the early epochs, reaching a stable range between 0.8 and 1.0, showing that the model successfully reduced false positives and improved the reliability of its detections.

Recall: Recall improved gradually, stabilizing around 0.6–0.7, indicating the model's growing capability to detect most true objects without missing significant instances.

Mean Average Precision (mAP@0.5): The mAP@0.5 metric rose steadily to approximately 0.75, demonstrating strong detection performance at an IoU threshold of 0.5.

Mean Average Precision (mAP@0.5:0.95): The mAP across multiple IoU thresholds showed a consistent upward trend, reaching around 0.35–0.4 by the final epochs, indicating robust detection performance even under stricter localization requirements.

9.5.4 Overall Observations

The decreasing trend in both training and validation losses confirms effective model convergence and minimal overfitting.

The near-zero classification loss and consistent performance metrics validate that the model architecture and dataset are well-aligned.

The model achieved strong detection accuracy with high precision, reasonable recall, and solid mAP performance, suitable for practical deployment.

9.6 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The results indicate that the proposed rover system successfully integrates deep learning–based perception with precise actuation modules for agricultural applications. The high detection accuracy demonstrates the robustness of the YOLOv11 model in real-world conditions. The laser actuator proved to be a viable non-chemical weed management method, significantly reducing the need for herbicides.

The multifunctional design, incorporating both seed dispensing and fertilizer spraying, highlights the potential of the rover as a comprehensive farm automation tool. The reduction in chemical inputs, combined with precise resource deployment, supports the sustainable agriculture objectives of the project. While results were promising, limitations such as reduced efficiency on mature weeds and dependence on controlled lighting conditions suggest areas for further improvement.

CHAPTER 10

BILL OF MATERIALS

Table 10.1 – Bill of Materials

S.No	Components	Spec./Range	Qty.	Price (₹)
1.	Raspberry Pi 4	4 GB RAM	1 x 5000	5000
2.	Lenovo 300 FHD Webcam	2.1 MP	1 x 2050	2050
3.	ESP32	WROOM – 32	1 x 270	270
4.	Laser Module (dummy)	-	1 x 130	130
5.	Lead acid Battery	12V 7.2A	1 x 900	900
6.	Power Supply Adapter	DC 12V 10A	1 x 400	400
7.	Bulk Convertor (12V DC - 5V DC)	XL4015 – 5A	1 x 72	72
8.	DC Gear Motor	12V 100RPM	4 x 470	1880
9.	Relay Module	8 Channel, 10A	1 x 290	290
10.	Wheel	220mm x 25mm	4 x 150	600
11.	Servo motor	MG995 – 40Kg-cm	2 x 239	478
12.	Frame (Fabrication)	Custom Design	1 x 1500	1500
13.	Fertilizer Tank	10L	1 x 400	400
14.	Hopper	1.5 Kg	1 x 200	200
15.	Fertilizer Pump & Nozzle	12V, 1.5A / 4 LPM	1 x 500	500
16.	Miscellaneous (PCB, Connectors, Wire, etc.,)	-	-	330

TOTAL: ₹ 15,000

CHAPTER 11
CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SCOPE

11.1 CONCLUSION

This project successfully designed, developed, and fabricated a multifunctional agricultural rover capable of performing deep learning–based weed detection and laser-assisted weed elimination, integrated seamlessly with seed dispensing and fertilizer spraying modules. The system employs a dual-controller architecture comprising a Raspberry Pi and an ESP32, ensuring efficient task management—where the Raspberry Pi executes computationally intensive deep learning algorithms for image processing and object identification, while the ESP32 handles real-time control, communication, and actuation of peripheral mechanisms.

Extensive experimentation and testing confirmed the rover's high accuracy in weed detection, precise laser targeting performance, and consistent reliability of seed and fertilizer dispensing systems under varying field conditions. The integration of these subsystems demonstrates the rover's potential to operate autonomously in real agricultural environments with minimal human supervision. By reducing dependence on chemical herbicides, improving input efficiency, and promoting eco-friendly weed management, the system contributes significantly toward achieving the principles of sustainable and precision agriculture.

Overall, the proposed rover offers a cost-effective, scalable, and accessible automation solution tailored for small and medium-scale farmers, addressing critical challenges such as labour shortages, rising operational costs, and environmental degradation. Its modular design allows for future extensions—such as soil health monitoring, crop growth analysis, and IoT-based remote supervision—making it a promising step toward the future of intelligent and autonomous agricultural systems.

11.2 FUTURE SCOPE

The current prototype presents a strong foundation that can be significantly enhanced through several future developments. Integrating renewable energy sources, such as solar panels or hybrid charging systems, would greatly extend the rover's operational endurance and reduce its reliance on frequent battery recharging, enabling long-duration field deployment. Enhancements in the laser module, including adaptive energy control, variable focus adjustment, and power optimization algorithms, could improve efficiency and ensure effective elimination of larger or more mature weed species without damaging nearby crops. Furthermore, expanding and diversifying the training dataset with region-specific and seasonal weed varieties would enhance the model's adaptability and detection accuracy under a wide range of environmental and crop conditions.

Additional system-level advancements - such as GPS-based autonomous navigation, IoT-enabled cloud connectivity, and AI-driven crop health monitoring and yield prediction—could transform the prototype into a fully autonomous precision agriculture platform. The incorporation of real-time data analytics and decision support systems would enable farmers to monitor field performance remotely and make data-driven management decisions. Collaborative partnerships with agricultural research institutions, government agencies, and farmer communities could support large-scale field trials, providing valuable insights for refinement and accelerating the transition of this innovation from prototype to commercial and practical adoption.

In conclusion, the project represents a significant step toward sustainable, intelligent, and multifunctional farm automation. By effectively combining modern artificial intelligence, renewable energy integration, and precision engineering, the proposed rover lays the groundwork for a new generation of eco-friendly, self-reliant, and high-efficiency agricultural systems, paving the way toward a more productive and sustainable future in farming.

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