

VIBRANT GANGA 



wings *of* *ganga*

RIVER AND
WETLAND
BIRDS OF
GANGA RIVER



भारतीय वन्यजीव संस्थान
Wildlife Institute of India

हंससारससंघुष्टां चक्रवाकोपशोभिताम् ।
सदामतैश्च विहगैरभिपन्नामनिन्दिताम् ॥

.....the River (Ganga) is resonant with the sounds of swans and cranes, and adorned with cackling of Chakrawaka birds and other birds which are always overjoyed (and stays in her vicinity), such is the virtuous river (VR 2.50.19)

Dedicated to
Dr. Sálím Moizuddin Abdul Ali



The Birdman of India
(12 November 1896 - 20 June 1987)



wings OF
ganga

PART II

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This publication is second part of the “Wings of Ganga” series under the “Vibrant Ganga: Book Series ” and includes important wetland and wetland obligate birds of the Ganga River. The representative species were selected on the basis of the four criteria listed as follows-

International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) Red List categories

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Appendices

Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) Appendices

Indian Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 (IWPA) Schedules

This book covers 23 families of wetland and wetland obligate birds of the Ganga River represented by 34 species. At least one representative species from each family is illustrated. The species are described through scientific and common names. The book also provides information about the conservation status of species, taxonomy, key identifying features, habit and habitat, reproduction ecology and major threats.



PREFACE

A megadiverse country, India harbours 1301 species of birds. Rivers and associated wetlands are crucial habitats for native as well as migratory waterbirds. The Ganga River basin in the Central Asian flyway is one of the most important stopover sites for migratory waterbirds and supports 177 species of birds including riverine, wetland and associated terrestrial species. Some iconic and globally threatened birds also breed along the Ganga River.

Conversely, waterbirds manage riverine and wetland habitats by maintaining its diversity, controlling pests and therefore, are effective indicators of healthy ecosystems. They also provide a myriad of provisioning and regulating services to humans such as pest control, seed dispersal, pollination, scavenging through their behaviour and feeding patterns. Waterbirds also hold important cultural values and have often been described in mythology and ancient scriptures.

The Wildlife Institute of India through the Biodiversity Conservation and Ganga Rejuvenation project funded by the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation has been working towards the conservation of these birds through various platforms, as a part of our goal to formulate a comprehensive strategy to restore the biodiversity value of the Ganga River.

To ensure ecological restoration through the active involvement of stakeholders, their sensitization on the biodiversity of the river is essential. With this objective in mind, the present publication 'Wings of Ganga – Part II' is second of the series 'Vibrant Ganga' and has been conceptualised as an information booklet for a glance into the birds of the Ganga River. This booklet is targeted for a wide audience and can be used by students to the scientific community to check the conservation status and related information on these birds.

All species belong to

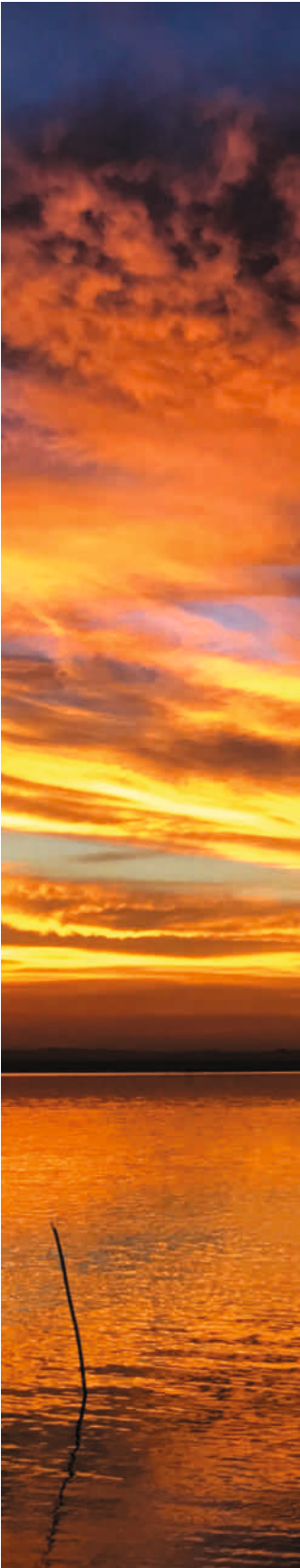
Kingdom: Animalia,
Phylum : Chordata,
Class: Aves

Following colour coding
are adopted to describe
the conservation status
according to IUCN Red List.



Following codes were used
for describing migration
status of the species

-  **Non breeding**
-  **Breeding**
-  **Resident**
-  **Possibly resident**
-  **Possibly extinct**





Lesser White-fronted Goose

Anser erythropus

Vernacular name: [Swetmal hans](#)
Order: [Anseriformes](#)
Family: [Anatidae](#)
Genus: [Anser](#)
Species: [A. erythropus](#)
IUCN Red List: [Vulnerable](#)
CITES: [Not listed](#)
CMS: [Appendix II](#)
IWPA, 1972: [Schedule IV](#)
Population Trend: [Decreasing](#)



VU



Distribution

This species is winter migrant and vagrant in India. Arrives by October and departs by January. Found in parts of upper and middle stretches of the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Herbivorous, feeds on grasses, roots, stems, leaves, fruits and the green parts of aquatic and terrestrial plants along lake-shores, rivers and marshes. During the winter, the species supplements its diet with winter agricultural grains. Mostly found in wet grassland and lakes.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: The east Asian population breeds in northern Russian tundra to Western Siberia and breeds during late May to early June.

Nest site/type: Nests in rocky outcrops or prominent hummocks, hidden amongst vegetation or in boggy hollow, usually in close proximity to open water or marshy areas.

Clutch size: 3-5

Incubation period: 2-3 months

Key Identifying Features

Size 53-66 cm. Small grey-brown goose with pink bill and yellow eye-ring. Adult has half-moon white frontal band on head and black barring on belly.

Major Threats

The species is vulnerable to habitat loss, human interference, hunting, climatic shifts, hydrology alteration and pollution.

Gadwall

Mareca strepera

Vernacular name:	<i>Myla, Bhuar, Beykhur</i> (Hindi) <i>Peeing Hans</i> (Bengali)
Order:	Anseriformes
Family:	Anatidae
Genus:	<i>Mareca</i>
Species:	<i>M. strepera</i>
IUCN Red List:	Least Concern
CITES:	Not listed
CMS:	Appendix II
IWPA, 1972:	Schedule IV
Population Trend:	Increasing



LC



Distribution

The species is a winter migrant in India. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Usually shy and wary. Feeds mainly by dipping head into shallow water; sometimes also by upending. Predominantly herbivorous, consumes seeds, leaves, roots and stems of aquatic plants as well as grasses; occasionally takes cereal grains on land and small amount of insects, molluscs, annelids, amphibians, and small fish during winter.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: Early winter

Nest site/ type: Nests in dense grasses of at least a foot tall within 200 yards of open water or on islands for greater safety from predators.

Clutch Size: 7-12

Incubation Period: 24-27 days

Key Identifying Features

Size 50 cm. Dull, grey-brown duck. Male has distinct vermiculations on scapular and back, grey and brown upperparts; grey bill and orange legs. Brown head; upper and lower tail-coverts black. Long, pointed, silver-grey tertials; white secondaries with black greater secondary coverts distinctive and obvious in flight. Female lacks vermiculation and is more brownish on back and buffy tan on breast.

Major Threats

The species is vulnerable to hunting, pollution and disturbance from recreational use of freshwater wetlands.

Eurasian Wigeon

Mareca penelope

Vernacular name: [Chhota lalsir \(Bengali\)](#)

Order: [Anseriformes](#)

Family: [Anatidae](#)

Genus: [Mareca](#)

Species: [M. penelope](#)

IUCN Red List: [Least Concern](#)

CITES: [Not listed](#)

CMS: [Appendix II](#)

IWPA, 1972: [Schedule IV](#)

Population Trend: [Decreasing](#)



LC



Distribution

This species is a winter migrant in India. Arrives by October-November and departs by March-April. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Gregarious and a diurnal feeder. Feeds on leaves, seeds, stems and root bulbs of pond weeds, fine grasses, as well as algae, especially from agricultural land surrounding lakes. Breeds in lowland freshwater marshes, slow-flowing large rivers and shallow lakes and lagoons with ample submerged, floating and emerging vegetation.

Reproduction

Breeding season: April to May

Nest site/type: The nest is a shallow depression in the ground lined with vegetation, usually positioned near water and well concealed under overhanging vegetation.

Clutch size: 6-12

Incubation Period: 40-45 days

Key Identifying Features

Size 50 cm. Plump, large-headed and short-necked duck. Breeding male has grey back, white belly and pink chest, rusty red head with buff forehead, tail predominantly black. White shoulder patch; stubby, greyish-blue bill with black tip. Male in eclipse resembles female. Female is dull, mottled greyish-brown. Juvenile is very similar to female.

Major Threats

The species is vulnerable to habitat loss, hunting and pollution.

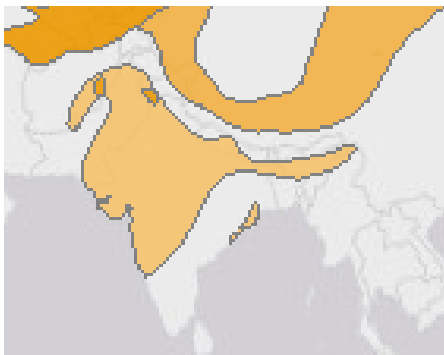
Mallard

Anas platyrhynchos

Vernacular name:	Nilsir (Hindi & Bengali)
Order:	Anseriformes
Family:	Anatidae
Genus:	Anas
Species:	<i>A. platyrhynchos</i>
IUCN Red List:	Least Concern
CITES:	Not listed
CMS:	Appendix II
IWPA, 1972:	Schedule IV
Population Trend:	Increasing



LC



Distribution

The species is a winter migrant in India. Arrives by October and departs by February. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Gathers in flocks of upto 40-50 birds. Omnivorous and opportunistic feeder; feeds on seeds, shoots of grasses and aquatic plants, tadpoles, fish spawn and worms.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: March to June

Nest site/ type: The nest is a shallow depression or a bowl of vegetation placed within vegetation on the ground, in natural tree cavities, under bushes and even in abandoned nests of other species.

Clutch Size: 5-14

Incubation Period: 30 days

Key Identification Features

Size 60 cm. Male has a yellow bill, dark green head and purplish-chestnut breasts, grey body, and black rear end. Female is pale brown and boldly patterned with dark brown. Bill variable, patterned mainly in dull orange and dark brown. Eclipse male is similar to female, but with rusty brown breast, glossed blackish-green crown and eye-stripe, and uniform olive-yellow bill.

Major Threats

The species is vulnerable to wetland habitat degradation caused by pollution, wetland drainage, peat-extraction and hunting.

Indian Spot-billed Duck

Anas poecilorhyncha

Vernacular name: *Garm pai, Gugral (Hindi)*

Order: *Anseriformes*

Family: *Anatidae*

Genus: *Anas*

Species: *A. poecilorhyncha*

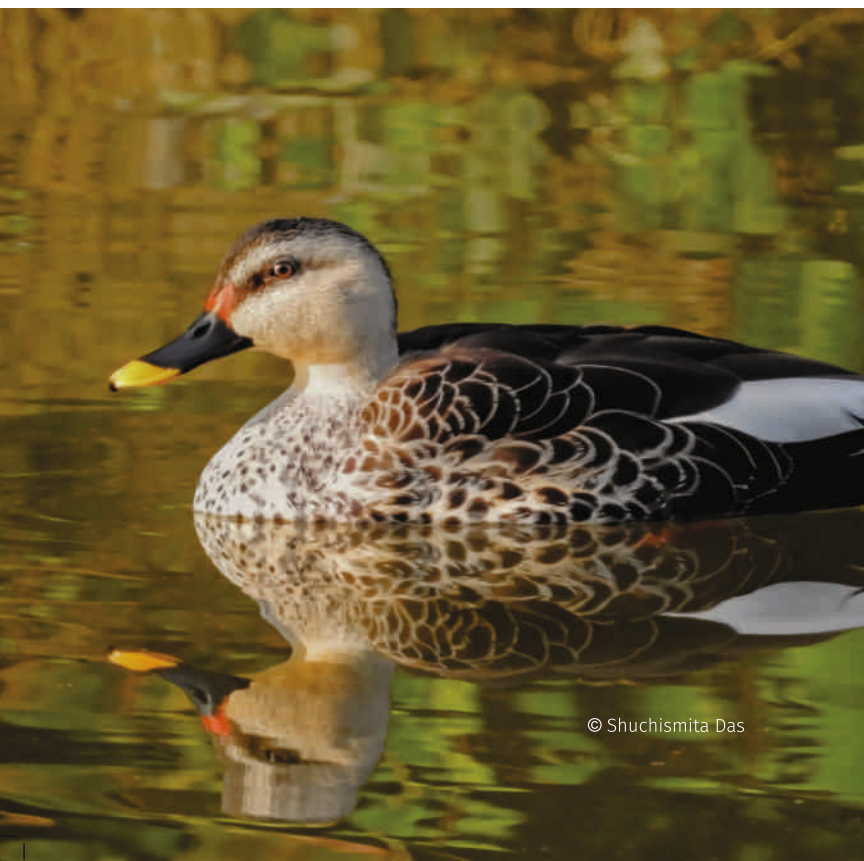
IUCN Red List: *Least Concern*

CITES: *Not Listed*

CMS: *Not Listed*

IWPA, 1972: *Schedule IV*

Population Trend: *Decreasing*



LC



Distribution

The species is a resident breeder in India. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

It is a surface feeder and obtains food chiefly by tipping or up-ending in shallow water. Feeds on vegetable matter.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: July to September

Nest site/ type: The nest consists of a pad of grass and weeds concealed among herbage on marshy margins of waterbodies.

Clutch Size: 6-12

Key Identifying Features

Size 65 cm. Overall grey bird with paler head and neck; black bill with bright yellow tip. Whitish wings with black flight feathers below; whitish head; upper parts blackish-brown, feathers edged paler; black cap, dark, broad eye-stripe; green-blue speculum bordered above with white; coral red legs and feet. Male has red spot on base of bill. Sexes are alike.

Major Threats

Conversion of wetlands due to rapid urbanization has resulted to loss of habitat of the species.

Demoiselle Crane

Anthropoides virgo

Vernacular name: [Karkara \(Hindi\)](#)

Order: [Gruiformes](#)

Family: [Gruidae](#)

Genus: [Anthropoides](#)

Species: [A. virgo](#)

IUCN Red List: [Least Concern](#)

CITES: [Appendix II](#)

CMS: [Appendix II](#)

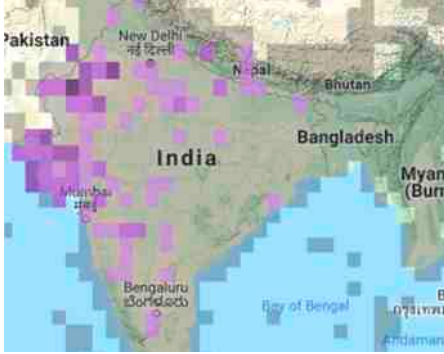
IWPA, 1972: [Schedule IV](#)

Population Trend: [Increasing](#)



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LC



Distribution

A winter migrant in India. Arrives by September and departs by February. Found in the upper and middle stretches of the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Moves in huge flocks often with the Common crane in 'V' shaped formations. Feeds during early mornings and early evenings; rests during hot hours on marsh edges and sandbanks. A voracious feeder, feeds on cultivated seeds and pulses, and also insects, especially grasshoppers.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: March to April

Nest site/ type: Nest is a shallow scrape on dry ground, lined or surrounded by pebbles and plant materials.

Clutch Size: 2

Incubation Period: 27-29 days

Key Identifying Features

Size 95 cm. Overall grey bird with black head and neck, prominent white ear-tufts. Long black feathers of lower neck fall over breast; brownish-grey secondaries sickle-shaped and drooping over tail. Juvenile has grey head and much shorter drooping secondaries over tail than adults. Sexes are alike.

Major Threats

The species is vulnerable to habitat loss and degradation, hydrologic alterations, pollution and hunting.

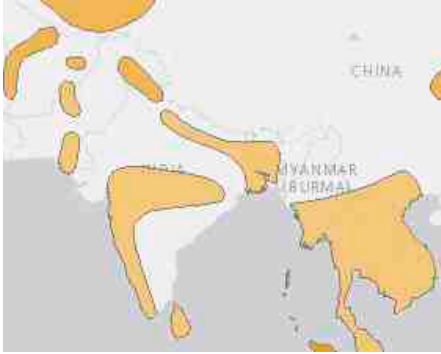
Baillon's Crake

Zapornia pusilla

Vernacular name:	<i>Jhilli</i> (Hindi) <i>Chhota Jal-bater</i> (Bengali)
Order:	Gruiformes
Family:	Rallidae
Genus:	<i>Zapornia</i>
Species:	<i>Z. pusilla</i>
IUCN Red List:	Least Concern
CITES:	Not Listed
CMS:	Appendix II
IWPA, 1972:	Schedule IV
Population Trend:	Unknown



LC



Distribution

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor throughout India. Breeds in Kashmir Himalayas. Visits upper and middle stretches of the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

The species forages diurnally and feeds mainly on insects, annelids, molluscs, small crustaceans, small fish, amphibians, and vegetation. Found in marshes, edges of lakes and pools and paddy fields.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: May to July

Nest site/ type: The nest is a shallow cup or platform of vegetation close to water on a grass tussock, usually 4-6 cm above the water level. Occasionally the nest may be floating or anchored to vegetation in water.

Clutch Size: 4-11

Incubation Period: 16-20 days

Key Identifying Features

Size 19 cm. Very small crane with streaked black-and-white upperparts. Pale grey underparts that stretch from breast to around eyes. Pale green bill and legs. Females often has reddish-brown streak over ear and paler grey upperparts; stout, well-muscled legs. Juvenile has mottled-white breast.

Major Threats

The species is vulnerable to degradation and loss of seasonal and ephemeral wetlands, sudden changes in water levels and collisions with powerline during migration.

Greater Adjutant

Leptoptilos dubius

Vernacular name:	<i>Hargila, Garud, Peda dhauk</i> (Hindi) <i>Hargila</i> (Bengali)
Order:	Ciconiiformes
Family:	Ciconiidae
Genus:	<i>Leptoptilos</i>
Species:	<i>L. dubius</i>
IUCN Red List:	Endangered
CITES:	Not listed
CMS:	NA
IWPA, 1972:	Schedule IV
Population Trend:	Decreasing





Distribution

Resident in India. Found in patches in the upper and lower stretches of the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Gathers with vultures and kites at refuse dumps. Hunts small animals in typical stork fashion. Feeds on injured ducks and carrions. Found in marshes, lakes and agricultural land.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: October to June

Nest site/ type: Nest is made up of sticks in canopy of large trees.

Clutch Size: 3

Incubation Period: 28-30 days

Key Identifying Features

Size 120-150 cm. Stout, conical bill with convex ridge to culmen. Adult breeding has bluish-grey mantle, prominent silvery-grey panel across greater coverts and tertials, white neck ruff and grey undertail-coverts. It has blackish face and forehead (with appearance of dried blood), sparsely feathered head and neck and larger neck pouch (visible when inflated). Non-breeding adult has darker grey mantle and wing-coverts.

Major Threats

The species is vulnerable to direct exploitation at nesting colonies, habitat destruction, pollution and over-exploitation of wetlands; also threatened by the reduced use of open rubbish dumps for the disposal of carcasses and food items.

Great White Pelican

Pelecanus onocrotalus

Vernacular name: *Gulabi Hawasil* (Hindi)
Gaganber (Bengali)

Order: *Pelecaniformes*

Family: *Pelecanidae*

Genus: *Pelecanus*

Species: *P. onocrotalus*

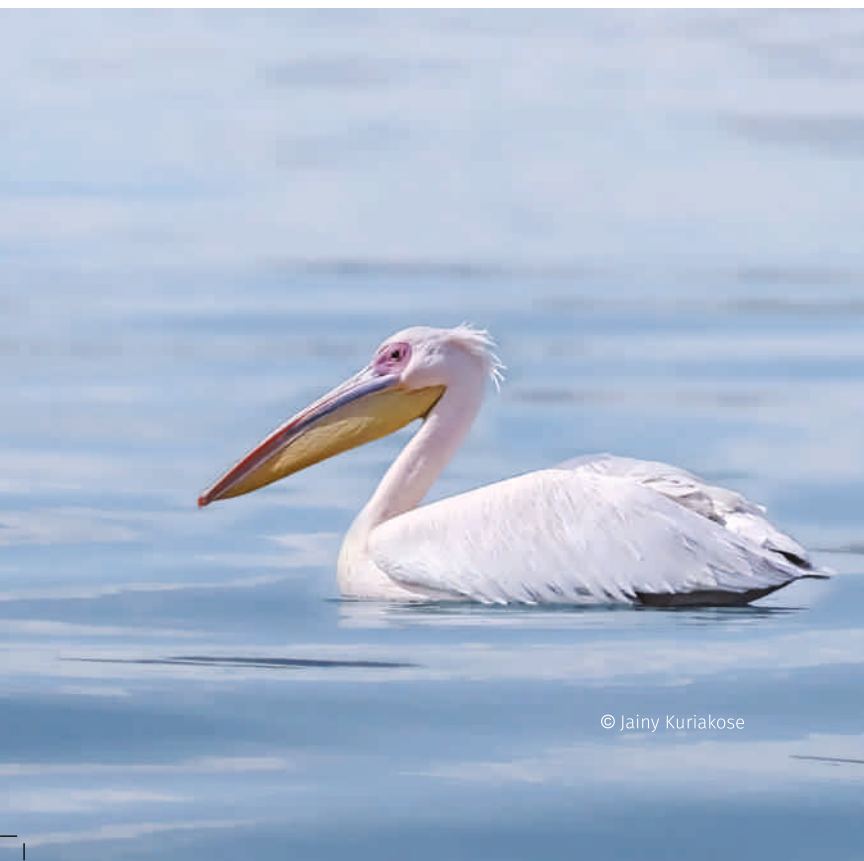
IUCN Red List: *Least Concern*

CITES: *Not Listed*

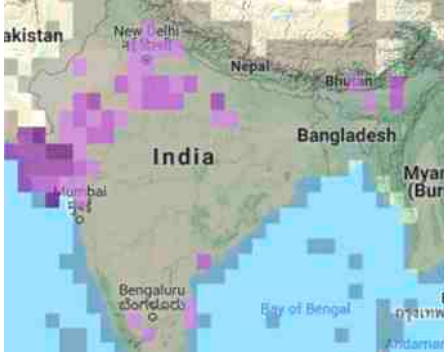
CMS: *Appendix I*

IWPA, 1972: *Not Listed*

Population Trend: *Unknown*



LC



Distribution

Mainly a winter visitor to northern, southern and south-eastern India. Found in the middle stretch of the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Usually found in pairs on larger lakes, lagoons and tidal creeks. Roosts on open sand bars. Entirely piscivorous; often fishes cooperatively by swimming forward in a semicircular formation, driving fish into shallow waters and then scooping fish from the water into its pouch, before swallowing it.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: February to April

Nest site/ type: Deserted nests of flamingos, on the ground either on a pile of sticks and vegetation or in a simple shallow scrape are used as nesting site. Shed-feathers are used as nest-linings.

Clutch Size: 1-8

Incubation Period: 38 days

Key Identifying Features

Size 175 cm. Enormous bird with dramatic azure blue bill with central red stripe. Bright yellow, expandable pouch extends from lower jaw to base of throat. Bare, fleshy pink face; white, bushy crest; creamy white plumage with pale pinkish wash; pink feet and yellowish tuft on breast; black primaries and underside of secondaries.

Major Threats

The species is vulnerable to habitat destruction, climatic shifts, hydrology alteration, pollution and hunting.

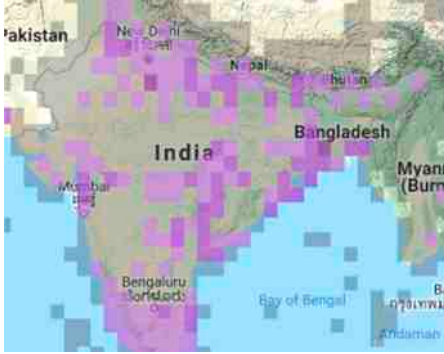
Black Bittern

Ixobrychus flavicollis

Vernacular name:	<i>Kala bagla</i> (Hindi) <i>Kalo bak</i> (Bengali)
Order:	Pelecaniformes
Family:	Ardeidae
Genus:	<i>Ixobrychus</i>
Species:	<i>I. flavicollis</i>
IUCN Red List:	Least Concern
CITES:	Not listed
CMS:	Not listed
IWPA, 1972:	Schedule IV
Population Trend:	Decreasing



LC



Distribution

Widespread resident in India. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Crepuscular, solitary and extremely secretive. May fly quite high to feeding sites. Feeds on fish, frog, reptiles and invertebrates. Occurs in reed beds with bushes and bushy margins of canals, rivers and jheels.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: May to September

Nest site/ type: The nest is a platform, with a shallow central depression; made of twigs or reeds and is placed from 1 to 15 m above the water or ground.

Clutch Size: 3-6

Key Identifying Features

Size 58 cm. Male has blackish upperparts, with yellowish malar and sides of neck and dark streaking on upperparts. Females are similar to males but has browner upperparts and chestnut-streaked underparts. Juvenile is similar but with distinct fringes to upperparts.

Major Threats

The species is threatened by habitat destruction due to rapid urbanization, and water pollution.

Striated Heron

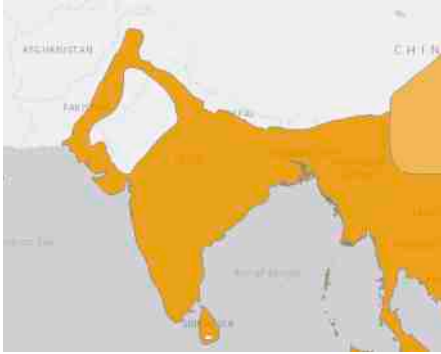
Butorides striata

Vernacular name:	<i>Kancha bagla</i> (Hindi) <i>Kana bak, Kuro bak</i> (Bengali)
Order:	Pelecaniformes
Family:	Ardeidae
Genus:	<i>Butorides</i>
Species:	<i>B. striata</i>
IUCN Red List:	Least Concern
CITES:	Not listed
CMS:	Not listed
IWPA, 1972:	Schedule IV
Population Trend:	Decreasing



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LC



Distribution

A widespread resident in India. Found in the middle and lower stretches of the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Skulking predator; feeds on crab, shrimp, mud-fish. Occurs in secluded ponds, rivers with dense shrubby vegetation on banks, mangroves and intertidal flats.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: March to August

Nest Site/ Type: The nest is a small, shallow structure of twigs placed well hidden amongst the branches of trees or bushes.

Clutch Size: 3-5

Incubation Period: 21-29 days

Key Identifying Features

Size 45 cm. Small, stocky heron with longish drooping crest. Upperpart is greenish slaty-grey; underpart is grey with pinkish tint; green wing feathers are outlined with yellow; yellow eye has deep grey surround. Deep green forehead, short legs, grey head and black crown. Orange feet in breeding. Juvenile is darker, more heavily streaked and mottled.

Major threats

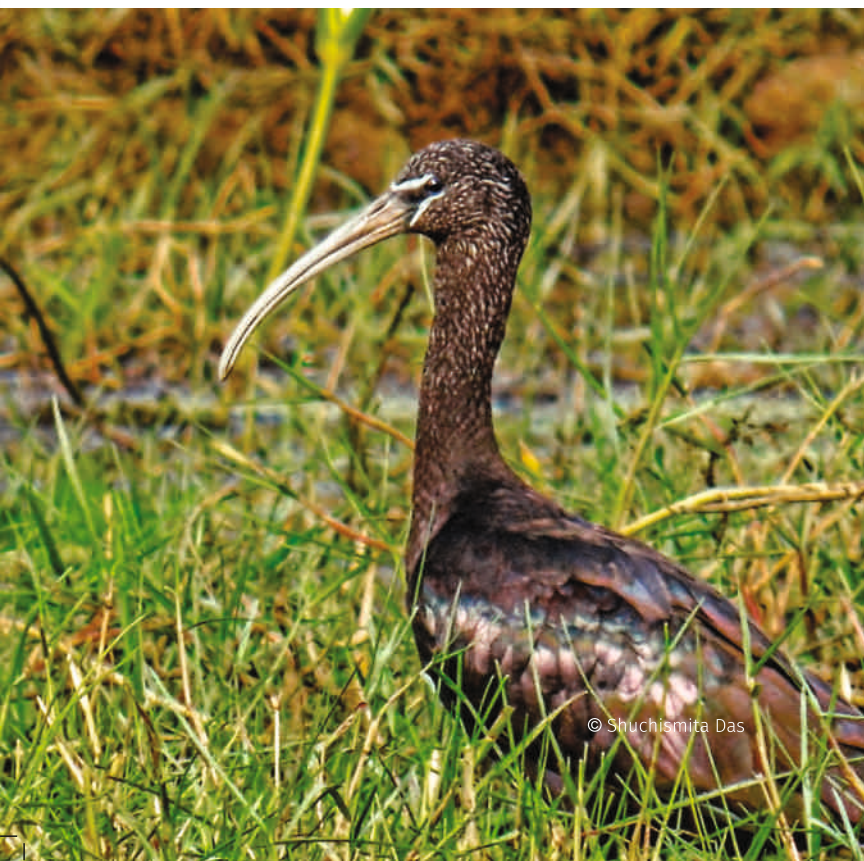
The species is vulnerable to habitat destruction, human disturbances and pesticide pollutions.



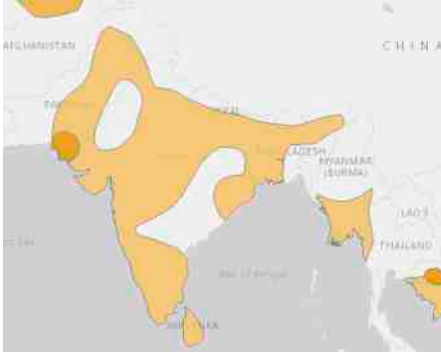
Glossy Ibis

Plegadis falcinellus

Vernacular name:	<i>Kawari, Kowar, Chhota baza</i> (Hindi) <i>Kachia tora</i> (Bengali)
Order:	<i>Pelecaniformes</i>
Family:	<i>Threskiornithidae</i>
Genus:	<i>Plegadis</i>
Species:	<i>P. falcinellus</i>
IUCN Red List:	<i>Least Concern</i>
CITES:	<i>Not listed</i>
CMS:	<i>Appendix II</i>
IWPA, 1972:	<i>Schedule IV</i>
Population Trend:	<i>Decreasing</i>



LC



Distribution

A local breeding resident in India. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Feeds in shallow water or marshy wetlands on small fish, aquatic insects, molluscs, frogs and food sifted from water surface. Occurs in all types of shallow freshwater, particularly with floating vegetation.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: June to August

Nest Site/ type: The nest is a platform of twigs and vegetation usually positioned less than 1 m above water in tall dense stands of emergent vegetation.

Clutch Size: 3-6

Incubation Period: 25-28 days

Key Identifying Features

Size 60 cm. Dark wading bird with long legs and fine downcurved bill. Breeding adult chestnut with green and purple gloss; naked, grey facial skin; pale blue lines bordering the front part of face; brown eyes and bill; grey legs with red knee joints.

Major Threats

The species is vulnerable to habitat loss and degradation, invasion of exotic plants, aquaculture, pollution and hunting.

Marsh Sandpiper

Tringa stagnatilis

Vernacular name: [Chhota gotra, Biler balubatan \(Bengali\)](#)

Order: [Charadriiformes](#)

Family: [Scolopacidae](#)

Genus: [Tringa](#)

Species: [T. stagnatilis](#)

IUCN Red List: [Least Concern](#)

CITES: [Not Listed](#)

CMS: [Appendix II](#)

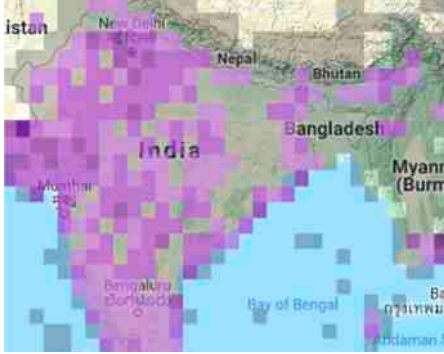
IWPA, 1972: [Schedule IV](#)

Population Trend: [Decreasing](#)



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LC



Distribution

A common winter visitor in India. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat:

Feeds on small fish, molluscs and insects. Congregates in small flocks with other waders in shallow freshwater jheels, village ponds, wet paddy and river shoals.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: April to June

Nest Site/ Type: The nest of this species is a shallow depression, often on a mound at the marshy edge of a lagoon, lake or pool.

Clutch Size: 2-4

Key Identifying Features

Size 22-25 cm. Distictive wader with long and slender needle-like bill and very long olive greenish legs. Upperparts are grey and foreneck and underparts white in non-breeding plumage. In breeding plumage, foreneck and breast streaked and upperparts blotched and barred.

Major Threats

The species is vulnerable to habitat loss and degradation due to agricultural intensification, egg collection from nesting sites, aquaculture and pollution.

Wood Sandpiper

Tringa glareola

Vernacular name: *Chupka, Titvari* (Hindi)
Balu batan (Bengali)

Order: *Charadriiformes*

Family: *Scolopacidae*

Genus: *Tringa*

Species: *T. glareola*

IUCN Red List: *Least Concern*

CITES: *Not Listed*

CMS: *Not Listed*

IWPA, 1972: *Schedule IV*

Population Trend: *Stable*



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LC



Distribution

A widespread winter visitor in India. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Forages singly, in pairs or in scattered groups. It walks slowly in shallow water or mud, gleaning, probing or sweeping with the bill through the water. Feeds on small fish, molluscs, aquatic and freshwater insects. Occurs in wet cultivation, marshes, tidal creeks and muddy flats.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: May to mid-July

Nest site/ type: The nest is a scrape on the ground amongst dense vegetation or raised on a tussock or slight ridge and is surrounded by water

Clutch Size: 3-4

Incubation Period: 22-23 days

Key Identifying Features

Size 18-21 cm. Upperpart greyish-brown, spotted white; breast and neck white and stripe brown. White supercilium, extending from behind eye to back of ear-covert, short, straight bill with deep olive-green base; long greenish-yellow leg; brownish tail contrast with white rump patch. Breeding adult is olive-brown, spotted white and bill has pale-base.

Major Threats

The species is vulnerable to habitat loss and degradation, climatic shift and wetland pollution.

Little Ringed Plover

Charadrius dubius

Vernacular name: *Zirrea, Merwa* (Hindi)
Jira (Bengali)

Order: *Charadriiformes*

Family: *Charadriidae*

Genus: *Charadrius*

Species: *C. dubius*

IUCN Red List: *Least Concern*

CITES: *Not listed*

CMS: *Appendix II*

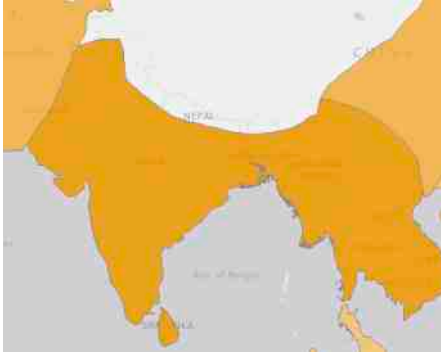
IWPA, 1972: *Schedule IV*

Population Trend: *Stable*



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LC



Distribution

A widespread resident in India. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Tramples around on sand or mud to flush prey out of hiding places. Feeds on insects, freshwater shrimp, mussels and grasses. Inhabits shingle-covered riverbanks, tidal mudflats, estuaries and edges of lakes.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: Mainly during March to May, but varies with latitude.

Nest Site/ Type: The nest is a shallow scrape on loose sand, dry mud or on flat, bare rocks surrounded by mud or sand.

Clutch Size: 3-4

Incubation Period: 22-27 days

Key Identification Features

Size 14-17 cm. Small, elongated and small-headed appearance, and uniform upperwing with only a very narrow wing-bar. Bill small and mainly dark. Legs yellowish or pinkish. Breeding adult has striking yellow eye-ring. Non-breeding adults and juveniles have uniform head pattern with buff forehead and supercilium.

Major Threats

The species is vulnerable to habitat loss and degradation due to hydrology alteration and pollution, and human interferences at breeding sites.



Indian Thick Knee

Burhinus indicus

Vernacular name: *Barsiri, Karwanak* (Hindi)

Order: *Charadriiformes*

Family: *Burhinidae*

Genus: *Burhinus*

Species: *B. indicus*

IUCN Red List: *Least Concern*

CITES: *Not listed*

CMS: *Not listed*

IWPA, 1972: *Not listed*

Population Trend: *Decreasing*



LC



Distribution

Widespread resident, mostly in the drier parts of India. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Crepuscular and nocturnal; feeds mostly on insects, small reptiles and seeds. They feed on the ground. Occurs in light dry forest, stony dry riverbeds with scrubs and ravinous country.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: March and April

Nest site/ type: The nest is a small depression on bare ground or under a bush.

Clutch Size: 2-3.

Key identifying features

Size 41 cm. Sandy-brown bird streaked darker; whitish underparts; thick head, long, bare, yellow legs and large goggle-eyes; white wing patch in flight; black-tipped bill with yellow base. Sexes are alike.

Major threats

The species is vulnerable to habitat degradation and hunting.



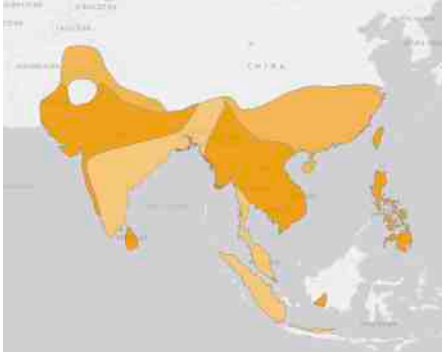
Pheasant-tailed Jacana

Hydrophasianus chirurgus

Vernacular name:	<i>Piho, Pihuya</i> (Hindi) <i>Jal Mayur, Jal Pipi</i> (Bengali)
Order:	Charadriiformes
Family:	Jacanidae
Genus:	<i>Hydrophasianus</i>
Species:	<i>H. chirurgus</i>
IUCN Red List:	Least Concern
CITES:	Not Listed
CMS:	Not Listed
IWPA, 1972:	Schedule IV
Population Trend:	Decreasing



LC



Distribution

A widespread resident in India. Found in the middle and lower stretches of the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Purely aquatic, moves on vegetation-covered pond surfaces. Forages in water or edge and also in cultivation. Food comprises of insects, molluscs and seeds. Occurs in ponds and jheels covered with floating vegetation, but prefers open waters.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: March to July

Nest site/ type: The nest is a large circular floating mass built with plant material, placed close to water edge.

Clutch Size: 4

Key identifying features

Size 31 cm. extensive white on upperwing, and white and black underwing. Yellowish patch on sides of neck. Breeding adults have brown or chocolate underparts and long, curved tail. Non-breeding adults and juveniles lack elongated tail and have white underparts, with dark line down side of neck and dark breast-band.

Major threats

The species is vulnerable to habitat destruction and degradation.



Black Winged Stilt

Himantopus himantopus

Vernacular name:	<i>Gaz paon</i> (Hindi) <i>Lal thengi</i> (Bengali)
Order:	Charadriiformes
Family:	Recurvirostridae
Genus:	<i>Himantopus</i>
Species:	<i>H. himantopus</i>
IUCN Red List:	Least Concern
CITES:	Not Listed
CMS:	Appendix I
IWPA, 1972:	Schedule IV
Population Trend:	Increasing



LC



Distribution

A widespread winter visitor in India. In some parts of North-West region, it is a summer visitor. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Gregarious; seen in large numbers, often along with other waders in wetlands. Feeds on larval and aquatic insects, molluscs, small fish, tadpoles and occasionally seeds. Occurs in marshes, salt pans, tidal creeks, village ponds and also riversides.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: May to July

Nest Site/ Type: The nest is a depression on hard ground near water on a floating mass of aquatic vegetation or amongst grass and sedge, and is made up of soft vegetation.

Clutch Size: 1-5

Incubation Period: 21-26 days

Key identifying features

Size 35-40 cm. Slender appearance, with long pinkish legs, and a fine straight black bill. Black upperwing strongly contrasts with white back V in flight. Adult at rest shows mainly white head, neck and underbody, contrasting with upperparts. Both sexes can show variable amount of black or dusky-grey on crown and hind neck. Juvenile has browner upperparts with buff-fringed.

Major threats

The species is vulnerable to pollution from runoffs containing pesticides, habitat loss and human interferences.

Pallas's Gull

Larus ichthyaetus

Vernacular name:	<i>Dhomra</i> (Hindi)
Order:	Charadriiformes
Family:	Laridae
Genus:	<i>Larus</i>
Species:	<i>L. ichthyaetus</i>
IUCN Red List:	Least Concern
CITES:	Not listed
CMS:	Appendix II
IWPA, 1972:	Schedule IV
Population Trend:	Increasing



© Moumita Chakraborty

LC



Distribution

A widespread winter visitor in India. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Solitary or in groups of 2-3 individuals; mixes with smaller gulls and terns where fish is in abundance. Inhabits coastal areas, large rivers and lakes.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: April

Nest site/ type: The nest is a shallow depression placed in the open on bare rock, among reeds or scrub vegetation, or on vegetated sand-dunes.

Clutch Size: 2-4.

Key identifying features

Size 69 cm. Long-winged gull with long-sloping forehead and strong black and orange tipped yellow bill. Breeding adult has velvety-black hood and white eye-rings. Non-breeding adult has duskier head. Upperparts are pale grey; whiter outer wing with black speckling near tips. Orangish-yellow bill; greenish-yellow legs with orange web.

Major threats

The species is vulnerable to nest predation, commercial fishing and nest flooding.

Common Tern

Sterna hirundo

Vernacular name: *Pardeshi dhomdi*

Order: *Charadriiformes*

Family: *Laridae*

Genus: *Sterna*

Species: *S. hirundo*

IUCN Red List: *Least Concern*

CITES: *Not listed*

CMS: *Appendix II*

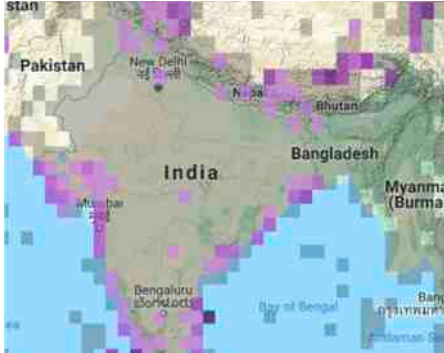
IWPA, 1972: *Not listed*

Population Trend: *Unknown*



© Girish Ketkar

LC



Distribution

A winter visitor mainly in the coastal and island regions. Breeds in Ladakh. Found in parts of upper, middle and lower stretches of the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Opportunistic feeder; feeds mainly on small fish and occasionally planktonic crustaceans and insects. Occurs in large rivers, jheels, tidal creeks and estuaries.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: April to June

Nest Site/ Type: The nest is a shallow depression on open substrate with little or no vegetation placed near rocks to provide shelter.

Clutch Size: 1-4

Incubation Period: 22-27 days

Key identifying features

Size 35 cm. Grey mantle contrasts with white rump and uppertail-coverts. Breeding adult has orange-red bill with black tip, red legs, pale grey wash to underparts, dark trailing edge to underside of primaries and dark outer wedge to upperside, and shorter tail streamers which do not extend beyond tail at rest. Non-breeding adults has darker grey upperparts, shorter tail with grey outer webs to feathers, shorter and stouter bill.

Major threats

The species is vulnerable to human interference at nesting colonies, flooding of nest sites, overfishing and pollution.

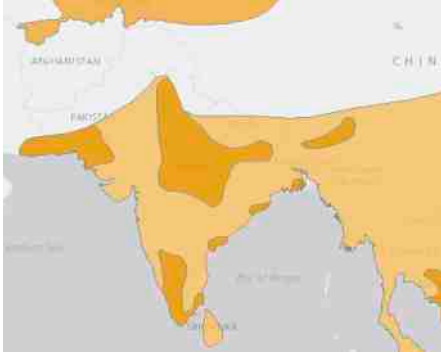
Great Cormorant

Phalacrocorax carbo

Vernacular name:	<i>Ghogur, Paan-kowwa</i> (Hindi) <i>Paan-kawri</i> (Bengali)
Order:	Suliformes
Family:	Phalacrocoracidae
Genus:	<i>Phalacrocorax</i>
Species:	<i>P. carbo</i>
IUCN Red List:	Least Concern
CITES:	Not listed
CMS:	Not listed
IWPA, 1972:	Schedule IV
Population Trend:	Increasing



LC



Distribution

A widespread resident in India. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Largely sedentary outside breeding season; usually one or two birds feeding close by; feeds on fish by diving and chasing underwater. Inhabits large inland lakes, reservoirs, mountain torrents and occasionally coastal lagoons.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: September to February

Nest Site/ Type: The nest varies from a depression to a platform of sticks, reeds and seaweed.

Clutch Size: 1-7

Key identifying features

Size 80-100 cm. Larger and bulkier with thicker neck, angular head and stouter bill. Breeding adults has glossy black, with dark gular skin, red spot at base of bill, white cheeks and throat, extensive white plumes and white thigh patch. Non-breeding lacks white head plumes and thigh patch. Base of bill and gular skin are yellow.

Major threats

The species is vulnerable to poisoning, hunting, oil spills and drowning by fishing net.

Great Crested Grebe

Podiceps cristatus

Vernacular name: *Chotili dubki, Chotili moti dubki*

Order: *Podicipediformes*

Family: *Podicipedidae*

Genus: *Podiceps*

Species: *P. cristatus*

IUCN Red List: *Least Concern*

CITES: *Not listed*

CMS: *Not listed*

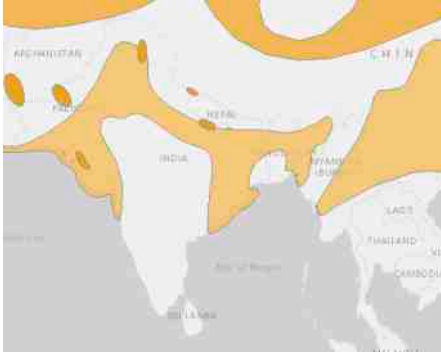
IWPA, 1972: *Schedule IV*

Population Trend: *Unknown*



© Partha Sen

LC



Distribution

A winter visitor to North India; breeds in North-West subcontinent. Found in the middle and lower stretches of the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Both sexes perform striking, ritual courtship displays. Feeds on large fish, insects and molluscs. Favours open water, lakes and reservoirs, river, and also coastal waters and salt pans.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: January to April.

Nest site/ type: The nest is a platform of aquatic plant matter either floating or anchored to emergent vegetation or built from the lake bottom in shallow water.

Clutch Size: 4.

Incubation Period: 27-29

Key identifying features

Size 46-51 cm. Long neck, long bill and distinctive black double crest. Black crown, white face; black line from base of bill to eye; dark brown wings with prominent white-patches; satiny-white underparts; dark olive-green feet prominent in flight. Breeding adults has reddish-orange head plumes, tipped black. Females slightly smaller than male.

Major threats

The species is vulnerable to habitat loss and degradation, hydrological alteration, predation and accidental drowning by fishing nets.

Pallas's Fish-eagle

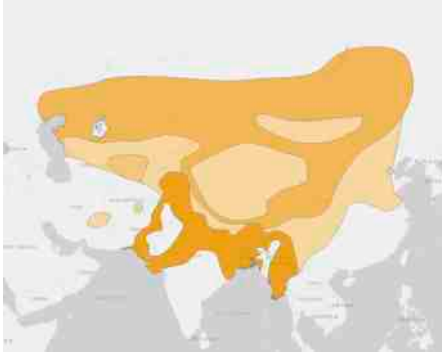
Haliaeetus leucoryphus

Vernacular name:	<i>Machhmanga, Dhenk, Patras</i> (Hindi) <i>Koral, Machhal</i> (Bengali)
Order:	Accipitriformes
Family:	Accipitridae
Genus:	<i>Haliaeetus</i>
Species:	<i>H. leucoryphus</i>
IUCN Red List:	Endangered
CITES:	Appendix II
CMS:	Appendix II
IWPA, 1972:	Schedule IV
Population Trend:	Decreasing



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EN



Distribution

A resident breeder in India. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Known to hunt in pairs and sometimes steal food from other birds. Feeds mostly on fish caught close to surface of water. Inhabits wheels and large rivers.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: November to March

Nest site/ type: The nest is a huge platform of sticks lined with hay, rushes, straw, fine twigs and green leaves. It usually nests in trees near water.

Clutch Size: 1-3.

Key identifying features

Size 76-84 cm. Upperparts dark brown with pale brown-grey head and neck and brown underparts; dark grey beak and cere; long, rounded tail and contrasting broad, white band diagnostic. Juveniles are brown with white markings on underwing. Sexes are alike; females are larger.

Major threats

The species is vulnerable to habitat loss and degradation, spread of water hyacinth, siltation due to catchment deforestation, and hunting.



Egyptian Vulture

Neophron percnopterus

Vernacular name:	<i>Safed gidh</i> (Hindi) <i>Shwet shakun</i> (Bengali)
Order:	Accipitriformes
Family:	Accipitridae
Genus:	<i>Neophron</i>
Species:	<i>N. percnopterus</i>
IUCN Red List:	Endangered
CITES:	Appendix II
CMS:	Appendix I
IWPA, 1972:	Schedule IV
Population Trend:	Decreasing



EN



Distribution

A resident breeder in India. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Feeds on garbage, carrion, insects, stranded turtles. Adept at killing stranded freshwater turtles and extricating flesh from the shell. Inhabits open country and in vicinity to human habitation.

Reproduction

Nest site/ type: The nest is a shabby mass of twigs, rags, hair and rubbish on a ledge of rock or in ruined fortifications and occasionally in large trees.

Clutch Size: 2.

Key identifying features

Size 60-70 cm. Small vulture with long, pointed wings, small and pointed head, and wedge-shaped tail. Adult mainly dirty white, with bare yellowish face and black flight feathers. Juvenile blackish-brown with bare grey face.

Major threats

The species is vulnerable to habitat loss, reduced food availability, lead poisoning, electrocution and ingestion of Diclofenac (NSAID) used for livestock.

Red-headed Falcon

Falco chicquera

Vernacular name:	<i>Turumti</i> (Hindi)
Order:	Falconiformes
Family:	Falconidae
Genus:	<i>Falco</i>
Species:	<i>F. chicquera</i>
IUCN Red List:	Near Threatened
CITES:	Not listed
CMS:	Not listed
IWPA, 1972:	Schedule I
Population Trend:	Decreasing



© Arijit Banerjee

NT



Distribution

It is a resident breeder in India. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Hunts from sheltered perch. Feeds on small birds like sparrows, starlings and pigeons. Inhabits open country and wide cultivated plains with patches of trees close to water.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: January to May

Nest site/ type: Nest is made of sticks and twigs, lined with grass roots, erected on well foliated tree, sometimes old nests of kites and crows are used.

Clutch Size: 3-5.

Incubation Period: 32-35 days

Key identifying features

Size 31-36 cm. Small, stout and dashing falcon with pointed wings and long tail. Adult has rufous crown, nape and narrow moustachial stripe, pale blue-grey upperparts with fine dark barring, white underparts finely barred with black, and grey tail has broad black subterminal band. Females are slightly larger. Juvenile is darker, with fine dark shaft-streaking on crown, fine rufous fringes to upperparts.

Major threats

The species is vulnerable to rapid urbanization and development.

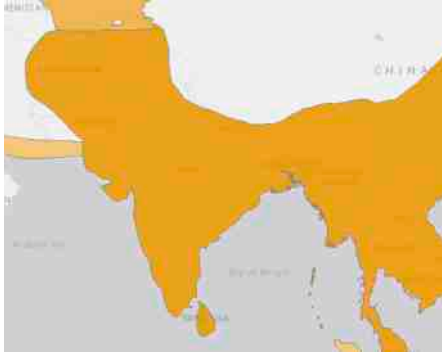
Common Kingfisher

Alcedo atthis

Vernacular name:	<i>Chhota kilkila</i> (Hindi), <i>Chhota machranga</i> (Bengali)
Order:	Coraciiformes
Family:	Alcedinidae
Genus:	<i>Alcedo</i>
Species:	<i>A. atthis</i>
IUCN Red List:	Least Concern
CITES:	Not Listed
CMS:	Not listed
IWPA, 1972:	Schedule IV
Population Trend:	Unknown



LC



Distribution

A widespread resident in India. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

The species prefer still or gently flowing water with excess of fish and vegetation on the banks to perch. Feeds predominantly on fish; occasionally tadpoles and insects. Also uses streams, lakes, canals and coastal areas.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: March to June.

Nest site/ type: Nest-sites can be over 250 m from foraging waters and can occur infrequently in walls, rotten tree stumps, concrete tunnels in canal banks.

Clutch Size: 6-7.

Incubation Period: 19-21 days

Key identifying features

Size 18 cm. Bright blue above, greenish on wings, orange ear-coverts and paler orange underparts; white patch on neck-sides, white chin and throat, coral red legs and blackish beak. Sexes are alike, but female has red on lower mandible.

Major threats

The species is vulnerable to habitat loss and degradation, climatic shift, river pollution and inadequate food due to canalization of streams.

Stork-billed Kingfisher

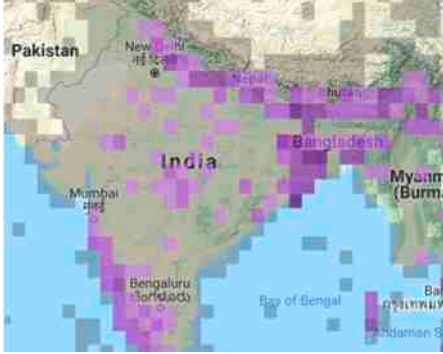
Pelargopsis capensis

Vernacular name:	<i>Bada kilkila, Badami kourilla</i> (Hindi), <i>Gurial, Mach ghorel</i> (Bengali)
Order:	Coraciiformes
Family:	Alcedinidae
Genus:	<i>Pelargopsis</i>
Species:	<i>P. capensis</i>
IUCN Red List:	Least Concern
CITES:	Not listed
CMS:	Not listed
IWPA, 1972:	Schedule IV
Population Trend:	Decreasing



© Shuchismita Das

LC



Distribution

A widespread resident in India.
Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Solitary, more heard than seen. Feeds on fish, frog, crabs and shrimps. Occurs in canals, streams, coastal backwaters in well-wooded country.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: January to September

Nest site/ type: Cavity nesters; dig tunnels into the earth banks on the sides of rivers and lakes.

Clutch Size: 2-5.

Key identifying features

Size 35 cm. Very large with huge coral-red bill, brownish cap, pale orange-buff collar and underparts, and blue-green upperparts. In flight, shows turquoise rump and lower back. Juvenile has dusky barring on underparts, especially on breast.

Major threats

The species is vulnerable to deforestation and loss of habitat.

Oriental Skylark

Alauda gulgula

Vernacular name: *Bharat chandul* (Hindi),
Jhunti bharat (Bengali)

Order: *Passeriformes*

Family: *Alaudidae*

Genus: *Alauda*

Species: *A. gulgula*

IUCN Red List: *Least Concern*

CITES: *Not listed*

CMS: *Not listed*

IWPA, 1972: *Not Listed*

Population Trend: *Decreasing*



© Vijay Kumar Sethi

LC



Distribution

A widespread resident in India. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

It lays low among shrubs and grass, runs in short spurts, and sometimes flylow in an undulating manner; food comprises small insects and weed seed. Occurs in grasslands, cultivation, mudflats and fallow lands.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: February to July

Nest site/ type: The nest is a cup-like depression on the ground in cultivated fields or grasslands, lined with fine grass and roots.

Clutch Size: 2-5.

Incubation Period: 10-11 days

Key identifying features

Size 16 cm. Brownish above, feathers edged yellow-brown with black centres; short, indistinct crest, not often visible; dark brown tail with pale-buff outer feathers; dull-buff below; more yellowish-brown on breast, faintly streaked and spotted darker. Sexes are alike.

Major threats

The species is vulnerable to urbanization and habitat loss.

Barn Swallow

Hirundo rustica

Vernacular name: [Ababil \(Hindi & Bengali\)](#)

Order: [Passeriformes](#)

Family: [Hirundinidae](#)

Genus: [Hirundo](#)

Species: [H. rustica](#)

IUCN Red List: [Least Concern](#)

CITES: [Not listed](#)

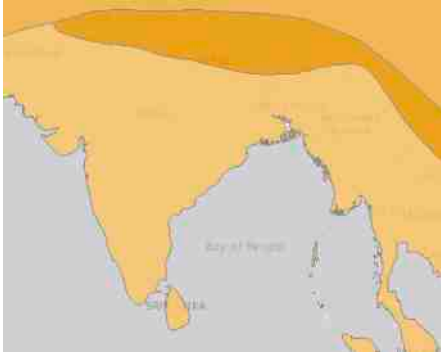
CMS: [Not listed](#)

IWPA, 1972: [Not listed](#)

Population Trend: [Decreasing](#)



LC



Distribution

Breeds in Himalayas and hills of NE India; widespread further south in winter. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Gregarious, agile flier. Feeds predominantly on insects. Occurs in cultivations, towns and villages usually near or over water.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: May to August

Nest site/ type: The nest is a cup or half-cup, made from mud pellets mixed with fibres such as dry grass, straw and horsehair and lined with dry grass and white feathers.

Clutch Size: 2-7.

Incubation Period: 12-17 days

Key identifying features

Size 18 cm. Adult has bright red forehead and throat, blue-black breast-band and upperparts, and long tail-streamers.

Underparts vary from white to rufous.

Immature has duller orange forehead and throat, breast-band is browner and less well defined, upperparts are duller, and shorter tail-streamers.

Major threats

The species is vulnerable to habitat loss, intensification of agriculture, climatic shift and hunting.

Black Redstart

Phoenicurus ochruros

Vernacular name:	<i>Thirthira</i> , <i>Thirthir-kampa</i> (Hindi), <i>Lal-girdi</i> (Bengali)
Order:	Passeriformes
Family:	Muscicapidae
Genus:	<i>Phoenicurus</i>
Species:	<i>P. ochruros</i>
IUCN Red List:	Least Concern
CITES:	Not Listed
CMS:	Appendix II
IWPA, 1972:	Schedule IV
Population Trend:	Increasing



LC



Distribution

A widespread winter visitor to all over India. Breeds in the Northern Himalayas. Found in the upper, middle and lower stretches of the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Perches on stones mid-stream, bobbing body and flicking and fanning wings and tails. Flies low over water. Feeds on invertebrates and berries. Found in rocky streams and rivers, fast-flowing water and alpine pastures.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: May to August

Nest site/ type: The nest is a loose cup of grass, moss, hair, wool and feathers, which is set in a crevice of a wall or rock, or in an earth bank, pile of stones or on the ground

Clutch Size: 4-6.

Key identifying features

Size 15 cm. Male has black or dark grey upperparts, black breast and rufous underparts. Females and first-year males are almost entirely dusky-brown with rufous-orange wash on lower flanks and belly. Juvenile has diffused dark scaling on upperparts and underparts, and fine-buff greater-covert bar.

Major threats

The species is vulnerable to habitat loss and degradation and accidental removal of nest sites.

White-capped Redstart

Phoenicurus leucocephalus

Vernacular name: *Sada-tupi pangirdi* (Bengali)

Order: *Passeriformes*

Family: *Muscicapidae*

Genus: *Phoenicurus*

Species: *P. leucocephalus*

IUCN Red List: *Least Concern*

CITES: *Not Listed*

CMS: *Not Listed*

IWPA, 1972: *Schedule IV*

Population Trend: *Stable*



LC



Distribution

A common breeding resident in the Himalayas and North-East hills of India. Found in the upper stretch of the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Usually seen on stony areas, repeatedly pumping, fanning and cocking the tail. Feeds primarily on insects, spiders and molluscs. Occurs in rocky streams and rivers, fast-flowing water and alpine pastures.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: May to August

Nest site/ type: The nest is a fairly deep bulky cup, with thick lining of grass, rootlets, animal hair and moss, bound with mud.

Clutch Size: 3-5.

Key identifying features

Size 19 cm. Adult has white cap and rufous tail with broad black terminal band. Juvenile has black fringes to white crown and blackish underparts with rufous fringes.

Major threats

No substantial threats documented.

White-browed Wagtail

Motacilla maderaspatensis

Vernacular name:	<i>Mamula, Khanjan</i> (Hindi), <i>Sada-bhuru khanjana</i> (Bengali)
Order:	Passeriformes
Family:	Motacillidae
Genus:	<i>Motacilla</i>
Species:	<i>M. maderaspatensis</i>
IUCN Red List:	Least Concern
CITES:	Not Listed
CMS:	Not Listed
IWPA, 1972:	Not Listed
Population Trend:	Stable



LC



Distribution

A widespread resident in India. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Prefers flowing waters, especially rock-strewn rivers. Feeds on insects at edges of water, frequently wags tail; also rides on ferry boats plying rivers. Inhabits clear, shingly or rocky smooth-running streams with diminutive grass-covered islets here and there; also village tanks and irrigation reservoirs. Usually tame and confiding.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: March to September

Nest site/ type: The nest is a cup-shaped pad of rootlets, hair, wool and dry algae etc., placed under a projecting rock, among rafters of a dwelling house, or under girders of a bridge.

Clutch Size: 3-4.

Key identifying features

Size 21 cm. Black above; prominent white supercilium and large wing-band; black throat and breast; white below. Females are usually more brown, while males black.

Major threats

No substantial threats documented.

Western Yellow Wagtail

Motacilla flava

Vernacular name:	<i>Pilkya</i> (Hindi), <i>Halud khanjana</i> (Bengali)
Order:	Passeriformes
Family:	Motacillidae
Genus:	<i>Motacilla</i>
Species:	<i>M. flava</i>
IUCN Red List:	Least Concern
CITES:	Not Listed
CMS:	Not Listed
IWPA, 1972:	Not Listed
Population Trend:	Decreasing



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LC



Distribution

A widespread winter visitor in India. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Found near edges of water bodies and irrigated fields, moves in small spurts, roosts in reed beds or in standing crops. Feeds on small insects, beetles and spiders.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: April to August

Nest site/ type: The nest is a grass cup lined with hair and placed on or close to the ground in a shallow scrape.

Clutch Size: 4-6.

Incubation Period: 11-13 days

Key identifying features

Size 17 cm. Greenish-and-yellow wagtail; many races and hybrids occur; only wagtail with olive-green or brownish mantle, back, and rump. Relatively shorter tail; yellow underparts, vent; two wing-bars. Breeding male has greenish-yellow to dark grey crown and ear-coverts.

Major threats

The species is vulnerable to habitat loss and degradation, agricultural intensification, dumping of manures and pesticide pollution.

Asian Pied Starling

Gracupica contra

Vernacular name: *Ablak myna* (Hindi),
Guye shalik (Bengali)

Order: *Passeriformes*

Family: *Sturnidae*

Genus: *Gracupica*

Species: *G. contra*

IUCN Red List: *Least Concern*

CITES: *Not Listed*

CMS: *Not Listed*

IWPA, 1972: *Schedule IV*

Population Trend: *Increasing*



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LC



Distribution

A widespread resident in India. Found throughout the Ganga River.

Habit & Habitat

Found usually in neighbourhood of villages, towns, and cities where refuse dumps act as attractive feeding site. Feeds on insects, flower-nectar, grains. Commonly seen in attendance on grazing cattle, particularly on moist or marshy environs of village tanks.

Reproduction

Breeding Season: March to September

Nest site/ type: The nest is large, untidy, globular, of twigs, leaves, grass and rubbish, with a lateral entrance; placed in branch of mango or similar tree

Clutch Size: 4-5.

Key identifying features

Size 23 cm. Sexes are alike. Black and white, with white cheek patch and scapular line. Has orange orbital skin and base to large, pointed yellowish bill. In flight, white uppertail-coverts contrast with black tail. Juvenile has black of plumage replaced by brown; white cheeks are washed with brown and less distinct and breast-band is not clearly defined.

Major threats

No major threats documented.

Team Leaders

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NMCG

National Mission
for Clean Ganga,
Ministry of Water
Resources, River
Development &
Ganga Rejuvenation

GACMC

Ganga Aqualife
Conservation
Monitoring
Centre

Wildlife Institute of India

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