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75 RAMSAR SITES IN 75TH YEAR OF INDEPENDENCE

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Environmental Conservation, Sustainable Development, and EIA

PM Shri <u>@narendramodi</u> ji's love and care for environment is helping India scale newer heights in conservation.

Elated to inform that 11 more Indian wetlands have got Ramsar recognition. This takes our tally to 75 sites. #AmritMahotsav#IndiaAt75 pic.twitter.com/jsYGTBGOQo

India adds 11 more wetlands to the list of Ramsar sites to make total 75 Ramsar sites covering an area of 13,26,677 ha in the country in the 75th year of Independence.

The 11 new sites include: Four (4) sites in Tamil Nadu, Three (3) in Odisha, Two (2) in Jammu & Kashmir and One (1) each in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Designation of these sites would help in conservation and management of wetlands and wise use of their resources.

India is one of the Contracting Parties to Ramsar Convention, signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971. India signed it on 1st Feb 1982. During 1982 to 2013, a total of 26 sites were added to the list of Ramsar sites, however, during 2014 to 2022, the country has added 49 new wetlands to the list of Ramsar sites.

During this year itself (2022) a total of 28 sites have been declared as Ramsar sites. Based on the date of designation mentioned on Ramsar Certificate, the number is 19 for this year (2022) and 14 for previous year (2021).

Tamil Nadu has maximum no. of Ramsar sites (14 nos), followed by UP which has 10 nos. of Ramsar sites.

Brief of 11 wetlands designated as Ramsar sites

S.No

Name of wetland

Area in Ha

State

1.

Tampara Lake

300

Odisha

Hirakud Reservoir
65400
3.
Ansupa Lake
231
4.
Yashwant Sagar
822.90
Madhya Pradesh
5.
Chitrangudi Bird Sanctuary
260.47
Tamil Nadu
6.
Suchindram Theroor Wetland Complex
94.23
7.
Vaduvur Bird Sanctuary
112.64
8.
Kanjirankulam Bird Sanctuary
96.89
9.
Thane Creek
6521.08
Maharashtra
10.

	801.82
Jammu and Kashmir	
11.	
Shallbugh Wetland Conservation Res	erve
	1675
Total area of 11 sites	
	76316
Year wise designation of 75 Rams	ar sites
	S. No.
	Year of Designation
1	lo of site designated
(As	per date of designation)
Sites designated upto 2013	
	and
;	after 2014 to till date
	Area covered in Ha
	1
	1981
	2
	26
	(1981 to 2013)
	633871

Hygam Wetland Conservation Reserve

(2014 to 2022)

Total

75

75

1326678

ANNOTATED SUMMARY AND PICS OF 11 NEW RAMSAR SITES

1. Tampara Lake:

Tampara Lake is among the most prominent freshwater lakes in the State of Odisha situated in Ganjam district. The depression on the ground gradually filled with rainwater from catchment flow and was called "Tamp" by the British and subsequently termed "Tampra" by the locals. The wetland supports at least 60 species of birds, 46 species of fishes, at least 48 species of phytoplanktons, and more than seven species of terrestrial plants and macrophytes. The wetland is an important habitat for vulnerable species such as Cyprinus carpio, common pochard (Aythya ferina), and river tern (Sterna aurantia). With an estimated average fish yield of 12 tonnes per year, the wetland is an important source of livelihood for the local communities. Along with fishes the wetland also provides provisioning services like water for agriculture, and domestic use and is a well-known tourism and recreation site.





Birds above the wetland





Wetland surface

Adjacent vegetation

2. Hirakud Reservoir

Hirakud Reservoir, the largest earthen dam in Odisha started operating in 1957. The reservoir to support a range of floral and faunal species, including several of high conservation significance. Out of the known 54 species of fish from the reservoir, one has been classed as being endangered, six near threatened and 21 fish species of economic importance. Fisheries presently yield a catch of around 480 MT of fish annually and is the mainstay of livelihoods of 7,000 fisher households. Similarly, over 130 bird species have been recorded at this site, out of which 20 species are of high conservation significance. The reservoir is a source of water for producing around 300 MW of hydropower and irrigating 436,000 ha of cultural command area. The wetland also provides important hydrological services by moderating floods in the Mahanadi delta, the ecological and socio-economic hub of the east coast of India. Hirakud reservoir supports abundant tourism, and forms an integral part of the high touristic value sites located around Sambalpur with over 30,000 tourists annually visiting the site.





Hirakud Reservoir

Migratory Birds





Waterbirds _ Hirakud Reservoir

Landscape

3. Ansupa Lake

Ansupa Lake is the largest freshwater lake of Odisha situated in Banki sub-division of Cuttack district and has its fame from time immemorial for its scenic beauty, biodiversity, and natural resources. The wetland is an oxbow lake formed by River Mahanadi and is spread over an area of 231 ha. The wetland is home to at least 194 species of birds, 61 species of fishes and 26 species of mammals in addition to 244 species of macrophytes. The wetland provides a safe habitat to at least three threatened bird species- Rynchops albicollis (EN), Sterna acuticauda (EN) and Sterna aurantia (VU) and three threatened fish species- Clarias magur (Clariidae) (EN), Cyprinus carpio (Cyprinidae) (VU) and Wallago attu (VU). Ansupa lake sustains the freshwater demands of the surrounding areas and also supports the livelihood of the local communities through fisheries and agriculture. The wetland has immense recreational and tourism potential as it is a major wintering ground for migratory birds and is also known for its scenic beauty.





A view of Ansupa Lake

A view of Ansupa Lake





Migratory ducks in Ansupa Lake

4. Yashwant Sagar

Yashwant Sagar is one of the two Important Bird Areas (IBA) in the Indore region as well as one of the most important birding sites in Malwa region of Madhya Pradesh. Presently it is mainly used for water supply to the city of Indore and is also being used for fish culture on a commercial scale. Yashwant Sagar reservoir comes under the jurisdiction of Indore City Municipal Corporation. Indore which has bagged the title of one of the cleanest cities in India is also often known as center of economic growth of Madhya Pradesh. The catchment area of this wetland is predominantly agriculture. Yashwant Sagar is considered to be a stronghold of the vulnerable Sarus Crane in central India. The lake backwaters have plenty of shallow areas, conducive for waders and other waterfowl. As the water level recedes, many islands serve as roosting sites for waterfowl. Due to its vast shallow reed beds, the wetland is considered heaven to a large number of winter migratory birds.







Lotus farming, Yashwant Sagar





Panoramic view of Yashwant Sagar

5. <u>Chitrangudi Bird Sanctuary</u>

Chitrangudi Bird Sanctuary, locally known as "Chitrangudi Kanmoli" is located in Ramanathapuram district in Tamil Nadu. The wetland is a protected area since 1989 and declared as Bird Sanctuary, coming under the jurisdiction of Tamil Nadu Forest Department, Ramanathapuram division. Chitrangudi Bird Sanctuary is an ideal habitat for winter migratory birds. Around 50 birds belonging to 30 families have been reported from the site. Out of these 47 are water birds and 3 terrestrial birds. Notable waterbirds spotted from the site area spot-billed pelican, little egret, grey heron, large egret, open billed stork, purple, and pond herons. Chitrangudi is surrounded by agricultural fields, where different crops are grown throughout the year. The wetland also supports a number of fishes, amphibians, molluscs, aquatic insects, and their larvae forming good food sources for arriving waterbirds. Groundwater is extracted for irrigation around and within the wetland for agricultural purposes.









Chitrangudi Bird Sanctuary

6. <u>Suchindram Theroor Wetland Complex</u>

Suchindrum Theroor Wetland complex is part of the Suchindrum-Theroor Manakudi Conservation Reserve. It is declared an Important Bird Area and lies at the southern tip of the Central Asian flyway of migratory birds. It was formed for birds' nesting purposes and it attracts thousands of birds every year. The total population dependent upon Theroor is about 10,500 and 75% of the population's livelihood hinges on agriculture which in turn is dependent upon the water released from the Theroor tank. This is a man-made, inland Tank and is perennial. Copper plate inscriptions from the 9th century mention Pasumkulam, Venchikulam, Nedumarthukulam, Perumkulam, Elemchikulam and Konadunkulam. Around 250 species of birds have been recorded in the area, of which 53 are migratory, 12 endemic, and 4 threatened.

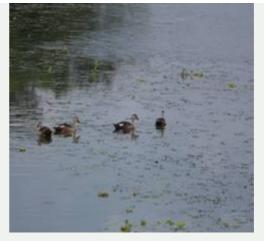




Landscape of Suchindram Tank

Indian Cormorant





Heronry in Suchindram Theroor

Spot-billed Duck

7. Vaduvur Bird Sanctuary

Vaduvur bird sanctuary spreads over an area of 112.638 ha, is a large human-made irrigation tank and shelter for migratory birds as it provides a suitable environment for food, shelter, and breeding ground. While these irrigation tanks have socio-economic and cultural significance, very little is known of their ecological importance. These tanks have the potential to harbor good populations of resident and wintering water birds but no studies have been done to confirm this. Indian Pond Heron Ardeola grayii occurred in most of the surveyed tanks. Large concentrations of wintering waterfowl such as Eurasian Wigeon Anas penelope, Northern Pintail Anas acuta, Garganey Anas querquedula were recorded in tanks. Vaduvur Bird Sanctuary has a diverse habitat including a number of inlets and surrounding irrigated agricultural fields which provides good nesting and foraging habitats for birds. Thus, the site provides support to the species listed above during critical stages of their life-cycle.





Panoramic View of Vaduvur Bird Sanctuary

Black headed Ibis nest





Nesting Site

Panoramic view of the sanctuary

8. Kanjirankulam Bird Sanctuary

Kanjirankulam Bird Sanctuary is a Protected area near Mudukulathur Ramanathapuram District, Tamil Nadu. India, declared in 1989. It is notable as a nesting site for several migratory heron species that roost in the prominent growth of babul trees there. The breeding population of migratory waterbirds arrive here between October and February and include: painted stork, white ibis, black ibis, little egret, great egret. The site qualifies as an IBA as the threatened Spotbilled Pelican Pelecanus philippensis breeds here. The wetland exhibits rich biodiversity including many globally near-threatened species like Spot-billed Pelican, Oriental Darter, Oriental white Ibis and Painted Stork and also commonly occurring shore and water birds like greenshank, plovers, stilts and forest birds like bee-eaters, bulbuls, cuckoos, starlings, barbets, etc. They act as breeding, nesting, roosting, foraging, and stopover sites for the birdsThe wetland supports IUCN RedList vulnerable avian species like Sterna aurantia (River Tern).





Black winged stilt

Black Ibis



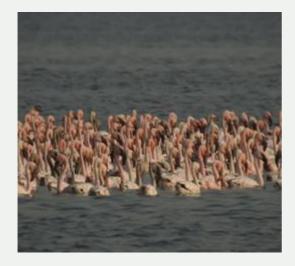




Kanjirankulam Bird Sanctuary

9. Thane Creek

Thane Creek is located in Maharashtra, India. There are several sources of fresh water to the creek, of which Ulhas River is the largest, followed by many drainage channels from various suburban areas of Mumbai, Navi Mumbai & Thane. It has been declared as Thane Creek Flamingo Sanctuary. Thane creek is fringed by mangroves on both banks & comprises around 20% of the total Indian mangrove species. The mangrove forest acts as a natural shelter belt & protects the land from cyclones, tidal surges, seawater seepage & intrusions. The mangrove serves as a nursery for several fishes & sustains the local fishery. The area is an important part of the wetland complex of the Central Asian Flyway of the birds and has been categorized as an Important Bird Area (IBA). Other than 202 avifaunal species, the creek also houses 18 species of fishes, crustaceans & molluscs, 59 species of butterflies, 67 species of Insects, and 35 species of phytoplankton, and 24 species of zooplankton & 23 species of Benthos.



congregation of Lesser flamingos



Closeup view





Mangroves of Thane creek

Flamingoes in Thane creek

10. Hygam Wetland Conservation Reserve

Hygam Wetland falls within the River Jhelum basin and plays a significant role as a flood absorption basin, biodiversity conservation site, eco-tourism site, and livelihood security for the local communities. The wetland is located in the Baramulla district. It serves as an abode to many residents and migratory bird species. It is also recognized as an Important Bird Area (IBA). Consequent to the high rate of siltation, Hygam Wetland has lost its wetland characteristics to a large extent and in many places changed its profile into a landmass. This has resulted in further loss of habitat conditions to offer a suitable site for visiting migratory birds (Winter/ Summer migrants) and for resident birds as well. Hygam Wetland provides a plethora of ecosystem services, these include fish and fiber, water supply, water purification, climate regulation, flood regulation, and recreational opportunities. The livelihoods of people living in, and adjoining the fringes of wetlands depend partially or entirely on wetland ecosystem services.





Photograph of the flood basin

Migratory Waterfowl congregation at Hygam wetland





Photograph of the flood basin.

Photograph of the wetland channel.

11. Shallbugh Wetland Conservation Reserve

Shallabug Wetland Conservation Reserve is located in the District Srinagar, UT of J&K. Large areas of the wetland dry up between September and March. The area has extensive reedbeds of Phragmites communis and Typha angustata, and rich growth of Nymphaea candida and N. stellata on open water. It serves as an abode to more than four lakh resident and migratory birds of at least 21 species. Shallabugh Wetland plays a major role in the natural control, amelioration or prevention of flooding, It is also important for seasonal water retention for wetlands or other areas of conservation importance downstream. The wetland is important for the recharge of aquifers. A major natural floodplain system. Shallabugh Wetland provides plethora of ecosystem services, these include fish and fiber, water supply, water purification, climate regulation, flood regulation, recreational opportunities. The wetland serves as an important breeding ground for many species of waterbirds





Pics of Shallabugh Wetland





Panoramic view of Shallabugh Wetland

HS

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Total area of 11 sites
76316
Year wise designation of 75 Ramsar sites
S. No.
Year of Designation
No of site designated
(As per date of designation)
Sites designated upto 2013
and

after 2014 to till date

Area covered in Ha

(1981 to 2013)

(2014 to 2022)

692807
7
2020
5
8
2021
14
9
2022
19
Total
75

ANNOTATED SUMMARY AND PICS OF 11 NEW RAMSAR SITES

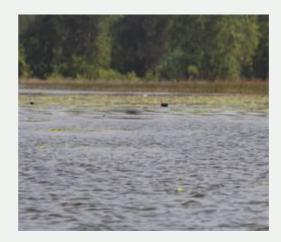
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1326678

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Birds above the wetland





Wetland surface

Adjacent vegetation

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Hirakud Reservoir

Migratory Birds





Waterbirds _ Hirakud Reservoir

Landscape

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A view of Ansupa Lake

A view of Ansupa Lake



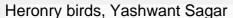


Migratory ducks in Ansupa Lake

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Lotus farming, Yashwant Sagar





Panoramic view of Yashwant Sagar

5. Chitrangudi Bird Sanctuary

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Chitrangudi Bird Sanctuary

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Landscape of Suchindram Tank



Heronry in Suchindram Theroor

Indian Cormorant



Spot-billed Duck

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Vaduvur bird sanctuary spreads over an area of 112.638 ha, is a large human-made irrigation tank and shelter for migratory birds as it provides a suitable environment for food, shelter, and breeding ground. While these irrigation tanks have socio-economic and cultural significance, very little is known of their ecological importance. These tanks have the potential to harbor good populations of resident and wintering water birds but no studies have been done to confirm this. Indian Pond Heron Ardeola grayii occurred in most of the surveyed tanks. Large concentrations of wintering waterfowl such as Eurasian Wigeon Anas penelope, Northern Pintail Anas acuta, Garganey Anas querquedula were recorded in tanks. Vaduvur Bird Sanctuary has a diverse habitat including a number of inlets and surrounding irrigated agricultural fields which provides good nesting and foraging habitats for birds. Thus, the site provides support to the species listed above during critical stages of their life-cycle.





Panoramic View of Vaduvur Bird Sanctuary

Black headed lbis nest





Nesting Site

Panoramic view of the sanctuary

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Black winged stilt



Spot-billed pelican nesting site

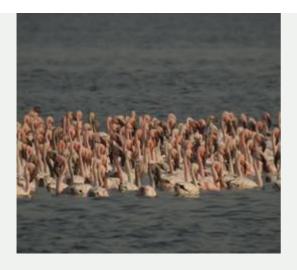
Black Ibis



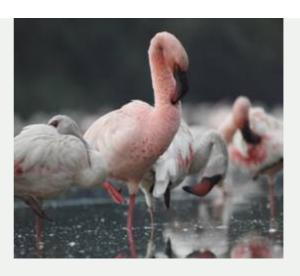
Kanjirankulam Bird Sanctuary

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congregation of Lesser flamingos



Closeup view



Mangroves of Thane creek



Flamingoes in Thane creek

10. Hygam Wetland Conservation Reserve

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Hygam Wetland falls within the River Jhelum basin and plays a significant role as a flood absorption basin, biodiversity conservation site, eco-tourism site, and livelihood security for the local communities. The wetland is located in the Baramulla district. It serves as an abode to many residents and migratory bird species. It is also recognized as an Important Bird Area (IBA). Consequent to the high rate of siltation, Hygam Wetland has lost its wetland characteristics to a large extent and in many places changed its profile into a landmass. This has resulted in further loss of habitat conditions to offer a suitable site for visiting migratory birds (Winter/ Summer migrants) and for resident birds as well. Hygam Wetland provides a plethora of ecosystem services, these include fish and fiber, water supply, water purification, climate regulation, flood regulation, and recreational opportunities. The livelihoods of people living in, and adjoining the fringes of wetlands depend partially or entirely on wetland ecosystem services.





Photograph of the flood basin

Migratory Waterfowl congregation at Hygam wetland



Photograph of the flood basin.



Photograph of the wetland channel.

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Pics of Shallabugh Wetland





Panoramic view of Shallabugh Wetland

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END

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