

# 75 RAMSAR SITES IN 75TH YEAR OF INDEPENDENCE

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

PM Shri [@narendramodi](#) 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 75<sup>th</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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

2.

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.

Hygam Wetland Conservation Reserve

801.82

Jammu and Kashmir

11.

Shallbugh Wetland Conservation Reserve

1675

**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**

1

1981

2

**26**

(1981 to 2013)

633871

2

1990

4

3

2002

13

4

2005

6

5

2012

1

6

2019

11

**49**

(2014 to 2022)

692807

7

2020

5

8

2021

14

9

2022

19

**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 “Tampara” 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.



Heronry birds, Yashwant Sagar



Lotus farming, Yashwant Sagar





Panoramic view of Yashwant Sagar

## 5. Chitrangudi Bird Sanctuary

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.



CHITHIRANKUDI BIRD SANCTUARY WETLAND COMPLEX



CHITHIRANKUDI WETLAND COMPLEX-FLOCKS OF BAR HEADED GOOSE



**Chitrangudi Bird Sanctuary**

## **6. Suchindram Theroor Wetland Complex**

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 Spot-billed 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 birds. The wetland supports IUCN RedList vulnerable avian species like *Sterna aurantia* (River Tern).



Black winged stilt



Black Ibis



Spot-billed pelican nesting site



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

Shallabugh 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

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## HS

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11. Shallbugh Wetland Conservation Reserve	
	1675
<b>Total area of 11 sites</b>	
	<b>76316</b>

**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

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1981

2

**26**

(1981 to 2013)

633871

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4

3

2002

13

4

2005

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6

2019

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(2014 to 2022)

692807

7

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**Total**

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Birds above the wetland



Wetland surface

Adjacent vegetation

## 2. Hirakud Reservoir

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Hirakud Reservoir



Migratory Birds



Waterbirds \_ Hirakud Reservoir



Landscape

### 3. Ansupa Lake

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A view of Ansupa Lake



A view of Ansupa Lake



Migratory ducks in Ansupa Lake

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Heronry birds, Yashwant Sagar



Lotus farming, Yashwant Sagar



Panoramic view of Yashwant Sagar

## 5. Chitrangudi Bird Sanctuary

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.





CHITHIRANKUDI BIRD SANCTUARY WETLAND COMPLEX



CHITHIRANKUDI WETLAND COMPLEX-FLOCKS OF BAR HEADED GOOSE



CHITHIRANKUDI WETLAND COMPLEX -RELEASE OF FINGERLINGS



### Chitrangudi Bird Sanctuary

#### 6. Suchindram Theroor Wetland Complex

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 Konadankulam. 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

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Panoramic View of Vaduvur Bird Sanctuary



Black headed Ibis nest



Nesting Site



Panoramic view of the sanctuary

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Black winged stilt



Black Ibis



Spot-billed pelican nesting site



Kanjirankulam Bird Sanctuary

## 9. Thane Creek

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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.

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Pics of Shallabugh Wetland



Panoramic view of Shallabugh Wetland

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