

145 BIRD SPECIES SPOTTED DURING THE FIRST BIRD FESTIVAL IN SUNDARBANS

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Biodiversity, Ecology, and Wildlife Related Issues

To enjoy additional benefits

CONNECT WITH US

February 10, 2023 09:43 pm | Updated 09:43 pm IST - Kolkata

COMMENTS

SHARE

READ LATER

Birders, wildlife enthusiasts and forest officials have sighted 145 different bird species during the first Sundarban Bird Festival. The first-ever festival was organised by the Sundarban Tiger Reserve (STR) division of West Bengal Forest Department, where six teams visited different areas inside the Sundarban Biosphere Reserve.

The species recorded during the Bird Festival included 78 forest birds and 42 species of waders, raptors etc. The two-day exercise which ended on Friday also recorded 12 species of raptors, six species of waterfowl and seven other bird species.

The total number of birds spotted during the exercise was 5,065. Two threatened bird species of the Sundarbans, Eurasian Curlew and Lesser Sand Plover, were also spotted. Birders were able to spot seven of the 12 species of kingfishers found in the Sundarbans. In terms of species diversity, Kalash 2 inside the STR yielded 98 species, followed by National Park West (70 species) and Malta 5 (71).

Deputy Field Director of Sundarban Tiger Reserve, Justine Jones, said that the first-ever Bird Festival has provided baseline data as far as the number of bird species in the Sundarbans is concerned. "We can carry out the same exercise in the years to come and the baseline data would provide us changes as far as bird species are concerned," he added.

According to Mr. Jones, sighting 145 species in a matter of two days is a good sign. A publication by Zoological Survey of India, (ZSI) in 2021, had recorded 428 bird species in the Sundarbans which is one-third of all the avian species found in the country.

Despite being home to so many species of birds the habitats face different threats including plantation activity along the *chars* (river islands) which disturbs the birds, and illegal activities along *chars* and uninhabited islands. The threats also include climate change and the use of destructive fishing nets in the Sundarbans.

The Sundarbans are part of the migratory routes of the Central Asian Flyway and experts have called for protection of winter-resting and bird-breeding habitats in the Sundarbans. There is also a need for increasing protection along non-forest areas for birds as well as creating small protected areas in the non-forest regions at critical locations for bird-breeding and migration, they added.

Amitava Majumdar, scientist of ZSI and one of the key authors of the publication *Birds of Sundarban Biosphere Reserve* which had documented 428 bird species, said that the Bird Festival was a unique citizen science initiative of documenting the avifauna. Dr. Majumdar, who was also part of the Bird Festival, said that bird spotting was done using boats and despite the constraints, “145 [species which were sighted] is a fairly good number”.

“People who visit the Sundarbans are primarily interested in sighting a tiger but the Bird Festival points out the rich faunal diversity of the ecosystem. The bird festival will also provide encouragement to forest officials about conservation of different species including birds,” he added.

COMMENTS

SHARE

[wildlife](#) / [nature](#)

BACK TO TOP

Comments have to be in English, and in full sentences. They cannot be abusive or personal. Please abide by our [community guidelines](#) for posting your comments.

We have migrated to a new commenting platform. If you are already a registered user of The Hindu and logged in, you may continue to engage with our articles. If you do not have an account please register and login to post comments. Users can access their older comments by logging into their accounts on Vuukle.

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](#)

© **Zuccess App** by [crackIAS.com](#)

Crack