

# ON WORLD WILDLIFE DAY, A LIST OF SOME BIODIVERSITY HOTSPOTS OF ANDHRA PRADESH

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

Black buck photographed at Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary | Photo Credit: [Srikanth Manneपुरi](#)

*(170 kilometres from Visakhapatnam)*

The Godavari mangroves located in East Godavari District stand as the first line of defence against frequent cyclones and tidal surges that hit the state. But that is not their only use. Located in the Godavari estuary, the mangrove is ecologically diverse and supports a wide range of wildlife.

“These mangroves are home to several mammals and reptiles that include sea turtles and water monitor lizards. One can also spot Golden jackals, smooth-coated otters and the elusive fishing cats in these regions,” says Srikanth Mannipuri, a Kakinada-based wildlife photographer who has been documenting the animals of Andhra Pradesh for almost a decade.

The Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary, which is a part of the estuary of River Godavari, supports the growth of mangrove vegetation and nurtures over 200 species of birds.

“The 20-kilometre drive from Kakinada to the Sanctuary is an experience in itself. It takes you over bridges, vast paddy fields dotted with scattered hamlets and stretches of wild greenery. The sanctuary is a paradise for bird watchers. One can spot Pelicans, Painted Stork, Oriental White Ibis, and Indian Skimmers in this region. From end-November to mid-March, the area is abuzz with a variety of migratory birds,” he says.

The forest floor of these mangroves also supports creatures like mudskippers and yellow fiddler crabs.

*(230 kilometres from Visakhapatnam)*

The hour-long drive from Maredumilli to Chinturu via Rajahmundry-Bhadrachalam highway is another destination to explore the rich biodiversity of Andhra Pradesh.

A large part of the 50-kilometre stretch winds through Papikonda National Park and hence is a drive under dense canopies. The road passes by two waterfalls- Amruthdhar and Jalatarangini and is dotted with several viewpoints. “From here people can spot birds and animals wandering around in the forest. I have had the chance to see sambars, Indian bison, antelopes, wild boars while driving through this stretch,” says Srikanth.

If you are driving through this road anytime between December to March, there are high chances of getting a glimpse of migratory birds that come here from different parts of the country for a brief sojourn. “Birds like Indian pitta, Malabar Pied Hornbills, Crested Serpent Eagles and Thrushes can be spotted on this route,” he adds.

*(600 kilometres from Visakhapatnam)*

Once a home to the Great Indian Bustard whose sightings are rare now, the Rollapadu Bird Sanctuary is a rich land of avian delights like Indian rollers, mynas and eagles. Named after the

Rollapadu village, the sanctuary was set up to protect the grasslands of the region and conserve the Great Indian Bustard; it is now known for birds such as Barn owls, Brown Fish Owls, and Short-toed snake Eagles. The sanctuary is also a great place to spot Black Bucks.

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