

A rare species of duck Sadangman sighted in Manipur

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In news— A rare species of duck, **Greater Scaup, locally known as Sadangman**, was recently sighted in Loktak lake in Manipur's Bishnupur district after a gap of over 90 years.

About the Greater Scaup-

- The Greater Scaup is **a medium-sized diving duck species that belongs to the family of Anatidae.**
- The greater scaup (*Aythya marila*), just scaup in Europe or, colloquially, "bluebill" in North America, is a **mid-sized diving duck, larger than the closely related lesser scaup.**
- The genus name *Aythya* is derived from the Ancient Greek *aithuia* which refers to a seabird mentioned by Aristotle and others and is thought to refer to a duck, auklet or other seabird. The species name *marila* is from the Greek word for charcoal embers or coal dust.
- It is distributed in North America, Canada, Europe, and Japan.
- Drake greater scaup are larger and have more rounded heads than the females; they have a bright blue bill and yellow eyes.
- Greater scaup populations have been declining since the 1980s; however, they are still listed as a species of **least concern on the IUCN Red List.**
- While there is no record of Greater Scaup roosting widely in Manipur during the British period, there are records of Captain L Gamble of Gurkha Rifles and Indian Civil Service officer JP Mills gunning down the ducks on January 25, 1925, and in December 1927.
- At present, several whistling ducks and coots are also roosting in Loktak lake.

About Loktak Lake-

- The **largest freshwater lake in Northeast India**, the pristine Loktak Lake((ancient supervolcanic caldera)) is located about 40 kilometres south of Imphal in Manipur.
- The etymology of Loktak is Lok = “stream” and tak = “the end” in Meitei language (Manipuri language).
- The **lake is known for its floating circular swamps, which are called phumdis in the local tongue.**
- These swamps look almost like islands and are a mass of soil, organic matter and vegetation.
- The lake **houses the only floating national park in the world, the Keibul Lamjao National Park**, which is the last refuge of the endangered brow-antlered deer or **sangai, Manipur’s state animal.**
- In addition, the lake shelters about 230 species of aquatic plants, 100 types of birds and 400 species of fauna like barking deer, sambar and Indian python.

Further reading: <https://journalsofindia.com/loktak-lake-2/>