

Asian waterBird Census-2021

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In news

Asian Waterbird Census-2021 will start from January 5 and 6 in Andhra Pradesh

About Asian Waterbird Census-2021

- It takes place every January.
- This citizen-science event is a part of the global International Waterbird Census (IWC) that supports the conservation and management of wetlands and waterbirds worldwide
- The annual census will be done by the Forest Department with technical support from the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) and Wetland International as part of the Asian Waterbird Census-2021
- The prime objective of the census is to assess the status of the wetlands and water birds, apart from documenting the migratory birds and its habitats.
- The documentation of the water birds will be useful to design the conservation plans by the Forest Department in addition to help assess the threats.

Areas covered under AWC in Andhra Pradesh

The Rajamahendravaram Wildlife Management Division of the Andhra Pradesh Forest Department will conduct a two-day waterbird census in the Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary and adjoining areas in the Godavari estuary, Kolleru Lake including Atapaka Bird Sanctuary and Krishna Wildlife Sanctuary in Krishna estuary in the State

The census will also be covering Important Bird Areas (IBA) adjoining the three sanctuaries in the State

Wetlands International

It is a global organisation that works to sustain and restore wetlands and their resources for people and biodiversity.

It has a head office in Ede, the Netherlands.

It is an independent, not-for-profit, global organisation, supported by government and NGO membership from around the world.

It was founded in 1937 as the International Wildfowl Inquiry and the organisation was focused on the protection of waterbirds. Later, the name became International Waterfowl & Wetlands Research Bureau (IWRB). The scope became wider; besides waterbirds, the organisation was also working on the protection of wetland areas.

The NGO works in over 100 countries and at different scales to tackle problems affecting wetlands. With the support of dozens of governmental, NGO and corporate donors and partners, it supports about 80 projects

Wetlands International's work ranges from research and community-based field projects to advocacy and engagement with governments, corporate and international policy fora and conventions. Wetlands International works through partnerships and is supported by contributions from an extensive specialist expert network and thousands of volunteers.

International Waterbird Census (IWC)

IWC is coordinated by Wetlands International

The IWC is a monitoring programme operating in 143 countries to collect information on the numbers of waterbirds at wetland sites. There are 5 separate regional schemes of the IWC that represent the major flyways of the world:

1. Africa-Eurasia(AEWC)
2. Asia-Pacific(AWC)
3. Caribbean(CWC)
4. Neotropics(CNAA)

5. Central America(CCAA)

The IWC supports many aspects of the work we do to conserve waterbirds and the wetlands they depend upon – from conservation status assessments; to the identification, designation and monitoring of important sites; and providing the international context for managing species at a national or local level.

What sites and species are counted under the IWC?

All types of natural and man-made wetlands, including: rivers, lakes, reservoirs, ponds, freshwater swamps, mangroves, mudflats, coral reefs, rice fields and sewage farms that are covered by the Ramsar Convention.

The species counted include all types of waterbirds regularly encountered at wetlands, including: grebes, cormorants, pelicans, herons, egrets, storks, ibises, spoonbills, flamingos, ducks, geese, swans, cranes, rails, jacanas, shorebirds, gulls, terns and skimmers.

In addition raptors, kingfishers and other birds largely dependent on food resources in these habitats are often reported.

Who contributes to the IWC?

The major contributors to waterbird monitoring are volunteer birdwatchers who participate because they find counting birds enjoyable and rewarding. Many thousands of volunteers join the count every year, making it one of the largest citizen science programmes in the world. In most countries the census is coordinated professionally, and in many countries professionals also carry out much of the fieldwork (although often on a voluntary basis).