

Asian WaterBird Census 2023

January 18, 2023

In news— A birds survey was conducted in Alappuzha, Kerala and Soor sarovar(UP) as part of Asian WaterBird Census 2023.

Key findings-

- A shift in migration patterns of waterbirds appears to be taking place as revealed by a recent survey conducted in the northern parts of Alappuzha.
- It showed that the populations of some migratory waterbirds, especially duck species, visiting the region are falling.
- The survey jointly organised by the Social Forestry wing of the Forest department and Birders Ezhupunna, a birdwatching group, recorded 15,335 birds of 117 species. Last year, the survey sighted some 9,500 birds.
- The most shocking aspect was that duck species like Northern Shoveler, Common teal and Eurasian wigeon, sighted in the previous surveys, were totally missing this time around.
- Climate change has affected the number of birds visiting the region.
- The survey was also conducted at Soor Sarovar Wildlife Sanctuary and found that lesser migration of winter migratory water birds from far Central Asia and North Asia, including Russia and Siberia, was recorded this year in comparison to previous years.
- Agra Both Great White Pelicans and Dalmatian Pelicans arrived at Soor Sarovar Wildlife Sanctuary in a lesser number this year compared to the previous year.
- Soor Sarovar is one of 467 IBA Sites (Important Bird & Biodiversity Area) in India having rich birdlife diversity.

About the Asian Waterbird Census(AWC)-

- This citizen-science event takes place every January.
- The AWC is **an integral part of the global waterbird monitoring programme, the International Waterbird Census (IWC)**, coordinated by Wetlands International.
- It runs in parallel with other regional programmes of the International Waterbird Census in Africa, Europe, West Asia, the Neotropics and the Caribbean.
- **The AWC was initiated in 1987 in the Indian subcontinent** and since has grown rapidly to cover major regions of Asia, from Afghanistan eastwards to Japan, Southeast Asia and Australasia.
- The census thus covers the entire East Asian – Australasian Flyway and a large part of the Central Asian Flyway.

Wetlands International-

- It is the only global not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the conservation and restoration of wetlands.
- Its vision is a world where wetlands are treasured and nurtured for their beauty, the life they support and the resources they provide.
- It is dedicated to maintaining and restoring wetlands– for their environmental values as well as for the services they provide to people.
- It works through our network of offices, our partners and experts to achieve our goals. Most of our work is financed on a project basis by governments and private donors.
- It is also supported by government and NGO membership.