

Atapaka Bird Sanctuary

January 4, 2021

In news

Recently, the Atapaka Bird Sanctuary has been open for tourists

About the Atapaka Bird Sanctuary

- It is located in Kolleru lake on Krishna-West Godavari borders in Andhra Pradesh,
- It covers 673 square kilometers.
- It was established in November 1999, under the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972.
- The sanctuary protects part of the Kolleru Lake wetland, which gained Ramsar Convention for International importance in 2002.

About Kolleru lake

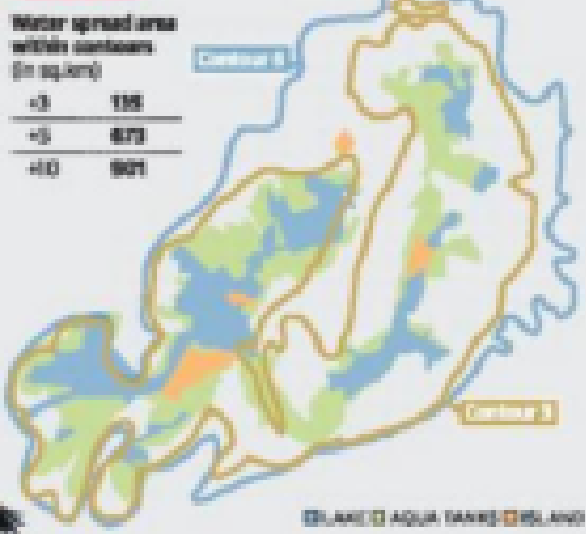
- Kolleru, one of the largest freshwater lakes in India, (it was designated a sanctuary in October 1999) is situated between the Krishna and West Godavari districts of the state.
- It also forms the largest shallow freshwater lake in Asia, 15 kilometers away from the Eluru and 65km from Rajamahendravaram.
- The catchment area of Kolleru is about 6,121sq km with a flow of 65,000 to 1.1 lakh cusecs of water into the lake.
- The lake drains out into the Bay of Bengal through the Upputeru drain, its only outlet.

How the lake shrank

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NOW



AN ELASTIC LAKE

The catchment area of Kolleru spreads over 6,121 sq km, of which 4,763 sq km is upland, and 1,358 sq km deltaic. The highlands of the Eastern Ghats situated 33-80 km from the lake to the north and the floodplains of the Krishna and Godavari encase its catchment. However, the lake lacks a definite boundary and has an irregular shoreline. In fact, its boundary depends on the rains and seasonal inflows and outflows. At the +10 contour, the water level spreads over 901 sq km. In summer it recedes down to +3 contour and 138 square km or even lower. Accordingly, the water storage also changes. In certain drought conditions the water spread falls as low as 10,000 acres (4000 hectares), getting limited to scattered fragments and pools towards the lower contours.

- The lake is fed directly by water from the seasonal Budameru and Tammileru, Ramileru, Gaderu and Bulusuvagu streams/rivers and is connected to the Krishna and Godavari irrigation systems by over 67 major and minor irrigation canals
- Kolleru lake contains numerous fertile islets called lankas; many of the small ones are submerged during floods.
- The origin of the unusual depression which forms the bed of the lake is unknown, but it was possibly the result of an earthquake.
- It was also identified as an “Important Bird Area” of India by the Bombay Natural History Society.
- Kolleru is one of the most important wetlands of India. The lake supports 200 species of birds, including the critically endangered Spoon-billed Sandpiper, (Kolleru committee report 2010).

- The lake serves as a foraging ground for resident as well as migratory birds. At present, 6,000 Spot-billed Pelicans, 5,000 Painted Storks and 5,000 Asian Openbills are estimated to be found in Kolleru. The lake also supports 63 species of fish.