

Bird atlas by Kerala

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In news– Kerala has got its first ever scientific bird atlas recently.

About the Kerala Bird Atlas (KBA)-

- It is the **first-of-its-kind state-level bird atlas in India** (Mysore city Bird Atlas is on from 2014).
- It **offers authentic, consistent and comparable data through random sampling** from the geographical terrain split into nearly 4000 grids.
- It is **arguably Asia's largest bird atlas in terms of geographical extent**, sampling effort and species coverage derived from the aggregation of 25,000 checklists.
- **Survey for KBA** was conducted as a citizen science-driven exercise **jointly by the Kerala Agriculture University, Bird Count India involving 1000 volunteers** and supported by the Kerala Forest Department.
- KBA was prepared based on systematic surveys held twice over 60 days a year during the wet (July to September) and dry (January to March) seasons between 2015 and 2020.
- Volunteers were deployed across all 14 districts armed with technological tools like **Locus Free, an Android GPS application and eBird platform** for seamless conduct of the survey and documentation.
- **A similar exercise will take place between 2025 and 2030** giving an insight into the changes in the decade since the first KBA.
- It **was found that the species count was higher during the dry season than in the wet season** while species richness and evenness were higher in the northern and central districts than in the southern districts.
- **Most of the endemics were concentrated in the Western**

Ghats while the threatened species were mostly along the coasts.

- Among the species, **White-cheeked Barbet and House Crow with 13,855 and 12,380 occurrence records topped the chart** compared to 20 other species, which had just single occurrence records.