

Great Indian Hornbill

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About great Indian hornbill

- The great hornbill also known as the concave-casqued hornbill, great Indian hornbill or great pied hornbill, is one of the larger members of the hornbill family.
- **Scientific name:** Buceros Bicornis
- **Appearance & description:**
 - It can grow to a length of 4.5 feet (1.4m).
 - The body is covered with black feathers and the wing tips have a band of white feathers.
 - The tail, sometimes reaching up to 3 feet (7.6cm), is white with bands of black feathers across.
 - The neck of this bird is surrounded with circle of fur.
 - The bill is yellow and curved downward.
 - One distinct mark of the hornbills is their bright yellow and black casque on top of its massive bill, a helmet like head and is solid ivory.
 - Male hornbills have been known to indulge in aerial casque butting flights. Females are smaller than males and have blue instead of red eyes.
 - They usually have short legs, but have broad feet.
- **Distribution in the world:** They are found in the forests of the North eastern region of India, Bhutan, Nepal, Mainland Southeast Asia, Indonesian Island of Sumatra.
- **Distribution in India:** They are also found in a few forest areas in the Western Ghats and in the forests along the Himalayas.
- It is long-lived, living for nearly 50 years in captivity.
- They are known as the 'farmers of the forest' due to the role they play in dispersing the seeds of numerous fruit trees. They carry the seeds of the fruit they eat in

their droppings, thereby transporting the seeds elsewhere and helping the forest regenerate

- **Reproduction:**
 - Female hornbills build nests in hollows of large tree trunks and the opening is sealed with feces, wood bark, and dirt.
 - She remains imprisoned in her nest until the chicks are semi-developed relying on the male to bring her food.
 - During this period the female undergoes a complete moult.
- It will prey on small mammals, reptiles and birds.
- **IUCN status**– Vulnerable
- It is listed on Appendix I of **CITES**
- **State bird:** The great hornbill is the state bird of Chin State in Myanmar, and of Kerala and Arunachal Pradesh in India. Blyth's tragopan is the state bird of Nagaland.

Species of Hornbills in India

- Around nine hornbill species can be found in India, of which four are found in the Western Ghats:
 - Indian Grey Hornbill (endemic to India),
 - The Malabar Grey Hornbill (endemic to the Western Ghats),
 - Malabar Pied Hornbill (endemic to India and Sri Lanka) and
 - The widely distributed Great Hornbill.
- India also has one species that has one of the smallest ranges of any hornbill: the Narcondam Hornbill, found only on the island of Narcondam.