

Indian Skimmer or Indian scissor bill

August 1, 2020

Recently the Asian Waterfowl Census-2020 has documented the diversity of fauna in the Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary and its surroundings in the Godavari estuary. the Census has recorded 26,734 birds of 96 species, including 47 migratory species Indian Skimmer is one of them

About Indian Skimmer or Indian scissor bill

- **IUCN status: Vulnerable**
- **Distribution:**
- More widespread in winter, the Indian skimmer is found in the coastal estuaries of western and eastern India.
- The National Chambal Sanctuary in India is one of few places where a significant Indian Skimmer population breeds. Elsewhere, it is limited to a handful of nesting colonies on the rivers Mahanadi, Ganga and Son.
- It occurs primarily on larger, sandy, lowland rivers, around lakes and adjacent marshes and, in the non-breeding season, in estuaries and coasts.

Characteristics, Habitat and Behavior:

- The Indian skimmer grows to a length of 40-43 cm.
- It has black upperparts, white forehead, collar and lower parts, long, thick, deep orange bill with a yellow tip and longer lower mandible.
- In-flight, it has a white trailing edge to wing and a short-forked tail with blackish central feathers.
- It breeds colonially on large, exposed sand-bars and islands.
- Colonies of mating pairs can be observed nesting on sandy islands or open sandbanks, often accompanied by other birds like Terns during the breeding season,

between February and May.

- **Food:** It feeds on surface-dwelling fish, small crustaceans and insect larvae.
- It emits a nasal kap or kip notes, particularly in flight and when disturbed.

Major threats

- Habitat degradation
- Excessive and widespread increases in the disturbance.
- Predation by corvids like House crows (*Corvus splendens*), presence of stray and domestic dogs