

# Keibul Lamjao National Park

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## About Keibul Lamjao National Park

- **State:** Manipur
- **Area:** Spread across 40 sq.km.,
- The Park is the only floating national park in the world.
- In the 1950s, it was believed that the brow-antlered deer (*Rucervus eldii eldii*) had become extinct in the country. However, it was subsequently re-discovered in Manipur.
- By 1975 only a dozen or so animals remained, and that too on a floating marsh (called phumdis) in Manipur's Loktak Lake.
- Phum or phumdi is a mat of organic matter in which reeds and grasses grow, often up to 15ft or more. It is subdivided into phumdi arupa (sinking) and phumdi ataoba (floating)
- Brow-antlered deer, now found only in Keibul Lamjao National Park.
- Based on this, the marshland located on the southern end of the Lake was marked and named Keibul Lamjao National Park.

## Brow-antlered Deer (*Rucervus Eldii Eldii*)

- The brow-antlered deer, or sangai, is the state animal.
- Marked by a small tail, the animal's coat is a dark reddish brown during winter months and it becomes a much lighter shade in summer.
- Native to Cambodia, China, India, Laos and Myanmar, these animals were earlier spread widely across habitats in south and south-east Asia.
- The deer's habitat has varied from shrubland and grassland to dry forests and marshland, depending on the

country they're found in.

- In India, these animals are found only in Manipur's famed Loktak lake, in a marshland located within the boundaries of Keibul Lamjao National Park.
- The brow-antlered deer usually consumes grass.
- It was during the British Raj that indiscriminate hunting first led to the extermination of the sangai from most areas.
- In 1951, it was reported extinct, but British tea planter and naturalist Edward Pritchard Gee rediscovered it in 1953.
- While globally habitat loss has been a grave concern in the conservation of this deer, hunting is an additional threat in Manipur.
- While the habitats have been encroached for grazing, cultivation, and fish farming, the animals are highly threatened by a hydro-electric project in the lake.

**Additional Link:** <https://journalsofindia.com/loktak-lake/>