

# Keoladeo National Park

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## About Keoladeo National Park

- **State:** Rajasthan
- Keoladeo National Park formerly known as the Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary in Bharatpur, Rajasthan.
- India is a famous avifauna sanctuary that hosts thousands of birds, especially during the winter season.
- Over 350 species of birds are known to be resident.
- It was declared a protected sanctuary in 1971. It is also a World Heritage Site.
- Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary is located in the Indian state of Rajasthan and has an area of about 29 km<sup>2</sup> out of which one-third is wetland. It was a duck shooting ground where the Maharaja of Bharatpur shot ducks and he retained the shooting rights till 1972. It became a bird sanctuary in the year 1976 and then became a Ramsar site and a National Park in the year 1981. Finally, it gained the status of a World Heritage Site in the year 1985.
- Keoladeo Ghana National Park is a man-made and man-managed wetland and one of the national parks of India.
- These diverse habitats are home to 366 bird species, 379 floral species, 50 species of fish, 13 species of snakes, 5 species of lizards, 7 amphibian species, 7 turtle species and a variety of other invertebrates.
- Every year thousands of migratory waterfowl visit the park for wintering and breeding. The sanctuary is one of the richest bird areas in the world and is known for nesting resident birds and visiting migratory birds including water birds.
- The rare Siberian cranes used to winter in this park but this central population is now extinct.
- According to founder of the World Wildlife Fund Peter

Scott, Keoladeo National Park is one of the world's best bird areas.

## Geography

- One third of the Keoladeo National Park is wetland with mounds, dykes and open water with or without submerged or emergent plants.
- The uplands have grasslands with tall grass species together with scattered trees and shrubs present in varying density.

## Climate

- Mean relative humidity varied from 62% in March to 83.3% in December.
- The mean annual precipitation is 662 millimeters (mm), with rain falling on an average of 36 days per year. During 1988 only 395mm of rain fell during 32 wet days.

## Flora

- In an area characterized by sparse vegetation, the park is the only spot which has dense vegetation and trees.
- The principal vegetation types are tropical dry deciduous forests intermixed with dry grasslands. Where the forest has degraded, the greater part of the area is covered with shrubs and medium-sized trees.
- Scrublands are dominated by ber and kair.
- The open woodland is mostly babul with a small amount of kandi and ber. Scrublands are dominated by ber and kair.
- Pилоo (*Salvadora oleoides* and *Salvadora persica*) also present in the park and happens to be virtually the only woody plants found in areas of saline soil.
- Invasive species, the mesquite *Prosopis juliflora* and specimens of the asteraceae genus *Cineraria*.

## Fauna

- Macro invertebrates such as worms, insects, and mollusks, though more abundant in variety and numbers than any other group of organisms, are present mostly in aquatic habitats.
- They are food for many fish and birds, as well as some animal species, and hence, constitute a major link in the food chain and functioning of the ecosystem.
- Land insects are in abundance and have a positive effect on the breeding of land birds.