

# Kuno national park

April 16, 2021

- **State:** Madhya Pradesh
- The protected area was established in 1981 as a wildlife sanctuary with an area of 344.686 km<sup>2</sup> in the Sheopur and Morena districts.
- It was also known as Kuno-Palpur and Palpur-Kuno Wildlife Sanctuary.
- Received the status of national park in 2018.
- In the 1990s, it was selected as a possible site to implement the Asiatic Lion Reintroduction Project, which aimed at establishing a second lion population in India.
- It is underway to become a second home for Asiatic lions.

## Flora

- The vegetation of the protected area includes Anogeissus pendula forest and scrub, Boswellia and Butea forest, dry savanna forest and grassland and tropical riverine forest.
- The dominant tree species are Acacia catechu, Salai Boswellia serrata, Tendu Diospyros melanoxylon, Palash Butea monosperma, Dhok Anogeissus latifolia, Acacia leucophloea, Ziziphus mauritiana and Ziziphus xylopyrus.
- Prominent shrub species include Grewia flavescens, Helicteres isora, Hopbush viscosa, Vitex negundo.

## Fauna

- The main predators in the protected area are Indian leopard, jungle cat, sloth bear, dhole, Indian wolf, golden jackal, striped hyena and Bengal fox.
- Ungulates include chital, Sambar deer, nilgai, four-horned antelope, chinkara, blackbuck and wild boar.

- More than 1,900 feral zebu were estimated to occur in 2008, whereas density of wild ungulates was considered too low to sustain an introduced lion population at the time.

## **Birds**

- A total of 129 bird species were sighted during a survey in spring 2007.
- Indian white-backed vulture, long-billed vulture, red-headed vulture, Egyptian vulture, crested serpent-eagle, short-toed snake eagle Bonelli's eagle, white-eyed buzzard, changeable hawk-eagle, brown fish owl and spotted owlet are resident raptors.
- Western marsh-harrier, pied harrier, Montagu's harrier, steppe eagle, osprey, common kestrel, short-eared owl, Demoiselle crane and common crane are winter visitors.

## **Asiatic lion**

- Once distributed up to the state of West Bengal in east and Rewa in Madhya Pradesh, in central India.
- At present Gir National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary is the only abode of the Asiatic lion.
- Asiatic lions are slightly smaller than African lions. The lions face the usual threats of poaching and habitat fragmentation.
- They are Listed in Schedule I of Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972, in Appendix I of CITES and as Endangered on IUCN Red List.