

Siberian Crane

April 5, 2021

In News: This year 2021, only five cranes arrived at Keoladeo National Park – and they were one month late. Last year 2020, the number was seven, compared to about 100 in the early 1970s.

About Siberian Crane

- The Siberian crane (*Leucogeranus leucogeranus*), also known as the Siberian white crane or the snow crane, is a bird of the family Gruidae, the cranes.
- They are distinctive among the cranes: adults are nearly all snowy white, except for their black primary feathers that are visible in flight, and with two breeding populations in the Arctic tundra of western and eastern Russia.
- The eastern populations migrate during winter to China, while the western population winters in Iran and (formerly) in Bharatpur, India.
- Among the cranes, they make the longest distance migrations.
- Their populations, particularly those in the western range, have declined dramatically in the 20th century due to hunting along their migration routes and habitat degradation.
- The world population was estimated in 2010 at about 3,200 birds, mostly belonging to the eastern population with about 95% of them wintering in the Poyang Lake basin in China, a habitat that may be altered by the Three Gorges Dam.
- They occur in three groups: the eastern group, which migrates from eastern Siberia to China, the central group, which migrates from western Siberia to India, and the western group, which migrate from western Russia to Iran.

- The height of an Adult Siberian crane is around 5 feet and weighted 6 kgs.

Siberian Crane Status

- IUCN: Critically Endangered
- Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972: Schedule-I
- India is a signatory to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)
- India has also signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with CMS on Conservation of Siberian Cranes and Raptors”.

Keoladeo National Park

- It is Located in Bharatpur district, the eastern part of Rajasthan.
- Nearly 30 sq.km which comprises many artificial and seasonal lagoons. Keoladeo attracts several migratory birds that make the region their breeding and wintering grounds.
- It is an UNESCO World Heritage and also a Ramsar site.
- The Siberian crane is one of the rare species that was spotted here till about the turn of the century.
- It is habitat for nearly 365 species of birds, including raptors and waterfowls.