



DUNLIN: ENVIRONMENT/ SPECIES

NEWS: Dunlin, a Near Threatened species, spotted during Kerala Bird Race

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

The Dunlin, a small shorebird recently upgraded to **Near Threatened** by the IUCN, was among 192 species recorded during the Kochi Bird Race 2024. The event, coordinated by the Cochin Natural History Society, also highlighted a decline in individual bird counts compared to 2023.

Dunlin Spotted in Kochi Bird Race

Key Observation:

- Dunlin, a small shorebird with a distinctive droopy bill, was among 192 avian species recorded during the Kochi edition of the Kerala Bird Race.
- Spotted at **Puthuvype Beach**.



Conservation Status Update:

- The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species upgraded the Dunlin's status to **Near Threatened (2024)** from **Least Concern (2023)** due to increasing threats to its survival.
- Known for its preference for mudflats and beaches, the bird is often found in large flocks.

Highlights of the Kerala Bird Race (Kochi Edition)

Annual Bird Count:



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- A total of **4,885 individual birds** were recorded, significantly lower than **8,639 birds** counted in 2023.
- While the number of species recorded increased slightly to **192 species** compared to **187 in 2023**, the drop in individual bird numbers prompted discussion among birders.

Interpretation of Results:

- Experts emphasized the need for **long-term observations** to determine population trends.
- A single event's data cannot definitively indicate broader trends in bird populations.

Organizers and Coverage:

- The event was coordinated by the **Cochin Natural History Society**, in collaboration with the **Kerala Agricultural University (Forestry College)** and the **State Forest and Wildlife Department**.
- Birding teams surveyed **around 100 locations** in Kochi and central Kerala, with **25 teams** participating.

Prominent Avian Species Spotted

Notable Species:

- Red Avadavat
- Blue-faced Malkoha
- Banded Bay Cuckoo
- Broad-billed Sandpiper
- Little Stint
- Eurasian Sparrow Hawk
- Spot-bellied Eagle-Owl

Rare Sightings:

- Mongolian Short-toed Lark
- Rosy Starling
- Tickell's Blue Flycatcher
- Richard's Pipit
- Tree Pipit
- Brown Fish Owl

Significance of the Event

- The annual bird race provides **critical insights into bird diversity** and the status of avian populations in the region.
- Collaboration between **citizen scientists, academic institutions, and forest departments** fosters conservation awareness and engagement.



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Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Kochi/dunlin-a-near-threatened-species-spotted-during-kerala-bird-race/article68906263.ece>



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