



CRITICALLY ENDANGERED SPECIES IN INDIA: ENVIRONMENT

NEWS: On World Wildlife Day, a call to protect India's critically endangered species

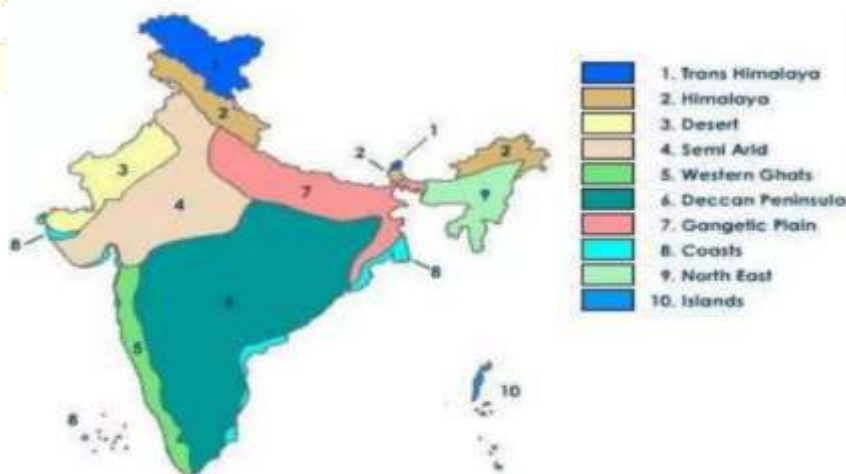
WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

India, with 2.4% of the world's land area, hosts 7-8% of global species, including critically endangered ones like the **Kashmir Stag** (Kashmir Valley) and **Great Indian Bustard** (Rajasthan). Challenges include habitat destruction and human-wildlife conflicts, highlighted on **World Wildlife Conservation Day** (December 4).

India's Biodiversity

- **Land Area:** India occupies only 2.4% of the world's land but houses **7-8% of global species**.
- **Species Diversity:** Includes **45,000 plant species** and **91,000 animal species**, making it one of the world's **megadiverse countries**.
- **Biodiversity Hotspots:** Four recognized globally:
 1. Himalayas
 2. Indo-Burma
 3. Western Ghats-Sri Lanka
 4. Sundaland (includes Nicobar Islands).

10 Biogeographic Zones of India





Importance of World Wildlife Conservation Day

- Observed on **December 4**, it highlights the **importance of protecting biodiversity** and reviews efforts to conserve **critically endangered species**.

Challenges to Conservation

- **Economic Growth and Population Pressure:** Increasing demand for land, timber, and resources leads to habitat destruction.
- **Human-Wildlife Conflicts:** Driven by shrinking habitats and expanding human settlements.

Critically Endangered Species in India

- As of 2022, **73 species** are classified as **critically endangered** (up from 47 in 2011, as per IUCN).

Key Examples:

1. Mammals

- **Kashmir Stag (Hangul):** Found in Kashmir Valley; threats include habitat loss and poaching.
- **Malabar Large-spotted Civet:** Endemic to the Western Ghats; population fragmented due to hunting and deforestation.
- **Andaman Shrew:** Native to the Andaman Islands; threatened by invasive species and deforestation.
- **Nicobar Shrew:** Restricted to the Nicobar Islands; vulnerable to habitat encroachment.
- **Namdapha Flying Squirrel:** Found only in Namdapha National Park, Arunachal Pradesh.

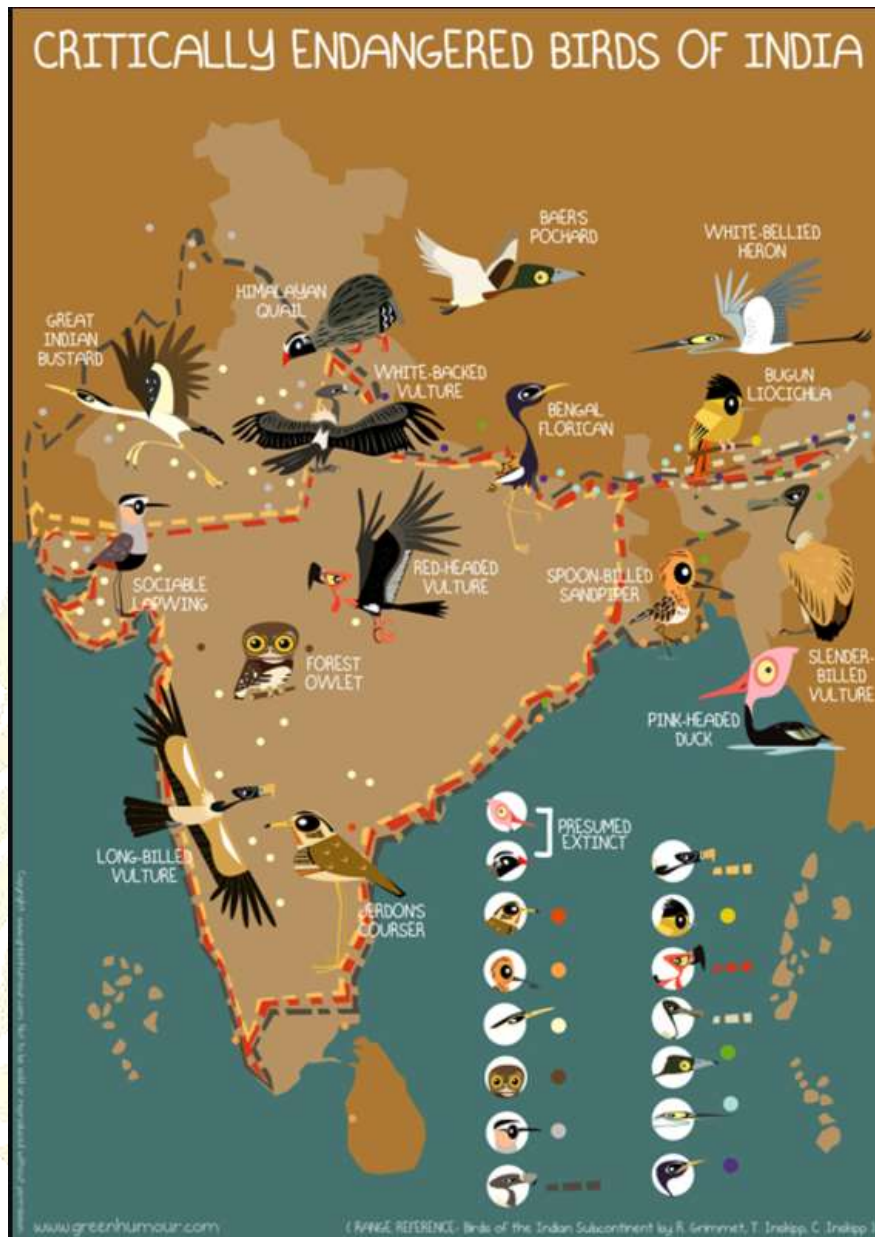
2. Birds

Great Indian Bustard: Found in Rajasthan and parts of Gujarat; population <150 individuals, threatened by agriculture and power lines.



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Source: [https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/a-call-to-protect-indias-critically-endangered-species/article68942627.ece#:~:text=World%20Wildlife%20Conservation%20Day%20\(December%204\)%20serves%20as%20an%20occasion,that%20find%20a%20home%20here.](https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/a-call-to-protect-indias-critically-endangered-species/article68942627.ece#:~:text=World%20Wildlife%20Conservation%20Day%20(December%204)%20serves%20as%20an%20occasion,that%20find%20a%20home%20here.)

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