FLAMINGO FESTIVAL: ENVIRONMENT

NEWS: Flamingo Festival to begin from January 18 in Tirupati district

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS:

The Flamingo Festival 2025 at Sullurpeta, Andhra Pradesh, showcases migratory flamingos to promote eco-tourism, biodiversity conservation, and local cultural heritage. Flamingos, known for their striking pink coloration and ecological role, play a crucial part in maintaining wetland ecosystems.

Flamingo Festival 2025

Location:

• Sullurpeta, situated near Pulicat Lake in Andhra Pradesh, a significant habitat for migratory flamingos.

Objective:

Promote eco-tourism, foster awareness about biodiversity conservation, and support local development.

Attractions:

- Birdwatching sessions highlighting flamingos and other migratory birds.
- Cultural programs, traditional arts, and crafts showcasing local heritage.
- Ecological tours and community-based activities.

Flamingos:

1. Distinctive Characteristics

Coloration:

• Flamingos are known for their iconic pink or reddish hues derived from carotenoid pigments in their diet, primarily algae, plankton, and crustaceans.

2. Habitat and Range

Geographical Distribution:

• Found across tropical and subtropical regions, including Africa, Asia, and the Americas.

Preferred Habitats:

• Shallow saline and alkaline lakes, estuaries, and mudflats.

3. Social and Migratory Behavior

Social Nature:

• Flamingos are highly social birds, forming colonies that can number in the thousands.

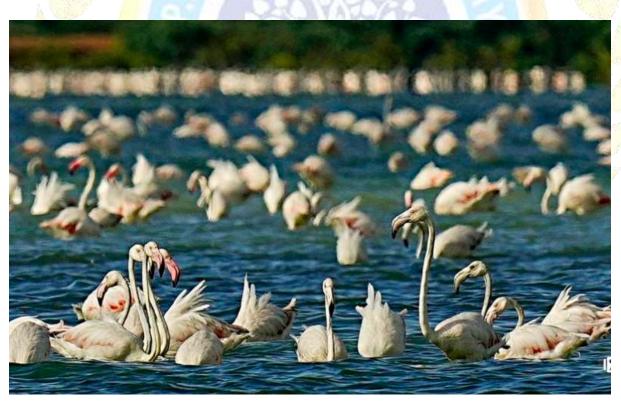
Migration to India:

 During winter, flamingos migrate to Indian wetlands such as Pulicat Lake and Rann of Kutch for feeding and breeding.

4. Feeding Mechanism

Specialized Adaptations:

• Flamingos possess unique, inverted beaks that allow them to filter-feed on small organisms, including algae, diatoms, and small invertebrates from the water.



Ecological and Conservation Significance

1. Ecological Role



- Flamingos help regulate algae and small invertebrate populations in wetlands, maintaining ecological balance.
- Their presence supports wetland health, benefiting other aquatic species and biodiversity.

2. Conservation Status

Six Flamingo Species and Their IUCN Red List Status:

- 1. Greater Flamingo (Phoenicopterus roseus) Least Concern
- 2. Chilean Flamingo (Phoenicopterus chilensis) Near Threatened
- 3. American Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*) Least Concern
- 4. Lesser Flamingo (Phoeniconaias minor) Near Threatened
- 5. Andean Flamingo (Phoenicoparrus andinus) Vulnerable
- 6. James's Flamingo (Puna Flamingo) (Phoenicoparrus jamesi) Near Threatened

Flamingo Status in India:

- Greater Flamingo:
 - Migrates to India from Israel, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.
 - Designated as the **State Bird of Gujarat**.
- Lesser Flamingo:
 - Migrates from Siberia to Mumbai, passing through the Rann of Kutch in Gujarat.

3. Threats to Flamingos

Habitat Destruction:

• Urbanization and industrial projects impacting wetlands.

Pollution:

• Contamination of feeding grounds from agricultural runoff and industrial effluents.

Climate Change:

• Altered migratory patterns and reduced availability of suitable habitats.

Source: https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/andhra-pradesh/flamingo-festival-to-begin-from-january-18-in-tirupati-district/article69075681.ece