

Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Biodiversity

Why in News?

The Forest Department has launched a comprehensive scientific wildlife census in the Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary (2026) to assess population dynamics and document movement corridors for key species, particularly focusing on large carnivores and under-recorded species like the red fox.

Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary

- **Location** - Situated in the Almora district (Kumaon region) of Uttarakhand. It lies atop a mountain in the Central Himalayan region.
- **Established** - 1988.
- **Objective** - Primarily established to conserve the shrinking broad-leaf oak (*Quercus*) forests of the Himalayas.
- **Historical Significance:**
 - **Chand Kings** - Served as the summer capital of the Chand rulers of Kumaon (11th-18th centuries).
 - **British Era** - Sir Henry Ramsay (Commissioner of Kumaon) established administrative centers here, including the **Khali Estate**.

Geographical Features

- **Topography** - Rugged terrain with deep gorges and ridges; altitude ranges from **900m to 2,500m**.
- **Zero Point (Jhandi Dhaar)** - The highest elevation point offering panoramic views of major Himalayan peaks: Nanda Devi, Kedarnath, Trisul, Panchachuli, and Shivling.
- **Flora** - Dominated by dense **Oak and Deodar** forests, along with **Rhododendrons** (which bloom ruby-red in spring). It hosts approximately 25 tree species and 24 bush species.

Biodiversity (Fauna)

- **Mammals** - Home to the Leopard (apex predator), **Himalayan Goral**, **Musk Deer** (State animal of Uttarakhand), Sumatran Serow, and Red Fox.
- **Avifauna** - An **Important Bird Area (IBA)** with over 200 species, including:
 - **Himalayan Monal** (State bird of Uttarakhand)
 - Kalij Pheasant
 - Koklass Pheasant
 - Eurasian Jay

Significance of the 2026 Census

- **Data Gap** - Aims to document "missing data" on smaller mammals like foxes and wild boars.

- **Corridor Mapping** - Identifying critical **movement corridors** for large carnivores (Leopards) to mitigate human-wildlife conflict.
- **Climate Indicator** - Monitoring high-altitude species helps in understanding the impact of climate change on the fragile Himalayan ecosystem.

Reference : [Times of India | IAS Parliament](#)

