

Ferruginous Pochard

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Conservation

Why in News?

A lone Ferruginous Pochard was found among a flock of Common Pochards at Amoor lake Chengalpattu, Tamil Nadu recently.

- **Scientific Name** - *Aythya nyroca*.
- It is commonly known as the *White-eyed Pochard* or *Ferruginous Duck*.
- It is a medium-sized diving duck known for its striking mahogany plumage and "shy" nature.
- **Key Identification** - The Ferruginous Pochard is often mistaken for the Tufted Duck or the Common Pochard, but a few specific markers set it apart:
- **Coloration**- Adults have a rich, dark chestnut (ferruginous) head, breast, and flanks.
- **The "White Eye"** - Breeding males have a distinct, piercing white iris, while females and juveniles have dark brown eyes.
- **Undertail** - It has a very prominent pure white undertail patch, which is a key field mark even when the bird is swimming.
- **In Flight** - Look for a broad, bright white wing stripe that extends almost to the wingtips, contrasting sharply with the dark upperparts.
- **Habitat** - Unlike many other diving ducks that prefer open water, the Ferruginous Pochard is a specialist of **shallow, heavily vegetated wetlands**.
- **Distribution** - Historically widespread across Eurasia and North Africa, it is now a species of conservation concern.
- **Behavior & Diet - Feeding** - They are **omnivorous**. While they are diving ducks, they also frequently "upend" (dabble) like mallards to reach aquatic plants, seeds, mollusks, and small fish.
- **Social Life** - They are generally less gregarious than other pochards, often seen in small groups or pairs, though they may join large mixed-

species flocks during winter.

- **Nesting** - They build concealed nests on the ground near water or even floating nests in thick reed beds.
- **Conservation Status** - IUCN - Near Threatened.
- **Threats** - Habitat Loss, Human Disturbance, Hybridization.



Reference

[The Hindu | Ferruginous Pochard](#)

