Grandala Bird

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Why in News?

Recently, a rare 'Grandala' Electric-Blue Bird was spotted in Sainj Valley, Himachal Pradesh.

- Grandala is the only species within the genus Grandala.
- **Scientific name** - Grandala coelicolor.
- **Family –** Turdidae.
- **Size -** Medium-sized, measuring approximately 25-27 cm in length and weighing between 38-52 grams.
- **Plumage -** Males are a deep blue with black wings, while females are brownish with white stripes and a grey-blue rump.
- **Distinctive Features -** Males have a black throat patch. In flight, a white patch on the wing covers is visible.
- It has a clear sexual dichromatism or easy distinction between male and female birds.
- **Behaviour -** They are social and always seen in flocks.

  The sight of a flock of Grandalas in flight has been described as a "hypnotic effect" and compared to a tree "suddenly in bloom" when they alight on bare branches.

- **Habitat -** They prefer alpine and subalpine regions, including rocky outcrops, scrublands, and alpine meadows at elevations typically between 3,000 to 5,000 meters.
- They also inhabit fruit orchards and descend to lower elevations during winter.
- **Distribution -** Found primarily in the low to mid-altitudes of the Himalayas, including areas within India (Kashmir to Arunachal Pradesh), Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Tibet, and other parts of China.
- **Primary Diet -** Grandalas are arboreal insectivores, feeding on various insects, larvae, nymphs, caterpillars, moths, and seeds.
- **Breeding -** Building nests on cliff faces with materials like sticks, moss, and feathers.
- **Conservation status - IUCN** - Least Concern.



Reference

1. TIMESNOW| Rare Grandala species spotted in the Himalayas
2. TOI| Meet the electric blue bird of the Himalayas

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