

## Indian Scops Owl

*Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Conservation*

### Why in News?

*Recently, The Rare Indian scops owl spotted near Karnataka's Daroji sanctuary, the first recorded sighting of the species in this region.*

|                 |                          |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Scientific name | Otus bakkamoena          |
| Common name     | Indian Scops Owl         |
| Family          | Strigidae (typical owls) |
| Genus           | Otus (scops owls)        |

- It is a nocturnal bird, known for its distinct ear-like tufts and exceptional camouflage.
- It is a small-sized owl species that blends effortlessly into its surroundings.
- **Distribution** - Found across **India**, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, and parts of Pakistan.
- **Habitat** - Prefers open woodlands, gardens, urban areas, and groves, often near human habitation.
- **Identification Features**
  - **Size** - Approximately 20 to 25 cm in length.
  - **Color** - Greyish-brown or rufous, with heavy streaks that provide excellent camouflage against tree bark.
  - **Eyes** - Bright orange or yellow, depending on the subspecies.

- **Ear tufts** - Prominent and upright, giving it the classic “scops owl” look.
- The bird was detected by its distinctive call a giveaway to its otherwise hidden presence.



- **Behavior - Nocturnal**- Active after dusk; roosts in tree hollows or dense foliage during the day.
- **Diet** - Insects (beetles, moths, grasshoppers), small lizards, and occasionally small rodents.
- **Conservation Status**
  - **IUCN Red List** - Least Concern.
- **Threats** - Habitat loss and pesticide use.

## Daroji Sloth Bear Sanctuary

- The Daroji Sloth Bear Sanctuary is located in the Ballari district of Karnataka, India.
- It is the ***first Sloth Bear Sanctuary in India and Asia***, declared exclusively for the protection and conservation of the Sloth Bear.
- **Habitat & Ecology** - Scrub-forest with dry deciduous vegetation, lots of boulders, hillocks, caves and rocky outcrops—ideal for the sloth bears.
- Sloth bears often emerge in *the late afternoon* from caves to feed on fruits, honey, termites.
- **Other fauna** - Apart from the sloth bears, you can find leopards, hyenas, wild boars, pangolins, star tortoises, monitor lizards.
- Birdlife is also rich and several butterflies have been noted.

## Reference

[New Indian Express | Indian scops owl](#)

