Lesser Florican

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

Why in news?

Justice P.S. Narasimha reviews the anthropocentric bias of inter-generational equity, arguing it may be inadequate for conservation of the dying species of the Great Indian Bustard and the Lesser Florican.

- Lesser Florican is a bustard species ***endemic*** to the Indian subcontinent, is the smallest in the bustard family.
- **Scientific name –** Sypheotides indicus.
- Locally, the bird is known as Kharmor (grass peacock) in Gujarat and Khar titar (grass pheasant) in Rajasthan.
- **Family –** Otididae.
- **Habitat –** It prefers open, ***semi-arid grasslands***, often near agricultural fields, and in on-breeding months, it can inhabit wooded lands and scrublands, along with grasslands.
- **Distribution –** It has a widespread presence in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh.
- **Diet –** Being ***omnivorous***, their diet ranges from small insects and critters to herbs and shoots.
- **Characteristics –**
  - They are usually solitary and shy & males and females look different.
  - **Appearance** - Males are smaller, lighter, and have striking black-and-white feathers with decorative black head plumes.
  - Females are larger, brownish, and blend into grassy habitats thanks to their dull, camouflaged coloring.

- **Conservation status**
  - **IUCN** - Critically Endangered.
  - **Wild life Protection Act, 1972 –**Schedule-I.
- **Threats –** Habitat loss & degradation, invasive species, hunting, collisions with power lines, etc.

References

1. The Hindu | Justice P.S. Narasimha reviews on endanger species
2. Birdlife | Lesser Florican
3. Wildlife SOS | Lesser Florican

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