Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary & Sabine's Gull

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Why in News?

A rare Arctic seabird, the Sabine's Gull, was spotted at Gujarat's Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary recently.

- Nalsarovar is a wetland situated in ***Gujarat.***
- It is among India's largest and ecologically significant wetland sanctuaries.
- In 1969, the Gujarat government declared as a bird sanctuary to primarily protect its bird population.
- The ***Ramsar Convention designation*** of Nalsarovar Bird Sanctuary in 2012 recognized its ecological importance as a wetland habitat for birds and other wildlife.
- It is home to numerous migratory and resident bird species such as flamingos, pelicans, ducks, and herons.

Sabine's Gull

- **Appearance** - It is a small and strikingly beautiful gull, notable for its sharp black hood, clean grey upperparts, white nape, and, most uniquely, its tri-colored wings marked in black, white, and grey.
- It is one of only two gull species with a black bill tipped with yellow and a forked, notched tail.
- **Breeding** - The species primarily breeds in the high-latitude Arctic regions of North America, Greenland, and Siberia, nesting near wet tundra areas.
- **Migration** - For winter, it migrates to tropical upwelling zones highly productive marine areas off the coasts of South America and western Africa.
- It does not typically pass through India during migration, making this sighting both rare and significant.
- Experts believe that the bird may have strayed from its usual migratory route.
- Such occurrences are of great interest and value to ornithologists and avian researchers.

Reference

Hindustan Times | Nalsarovar Wildlife Sanctuary