

## Northern pintails

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

### Why in News?

*Northern pintails have arrived at the Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary, which is a popular winter destination for migratory birds from Siberia, Central Asia, and the Himalayas.*

- The Northern Pintail is probably one of the most numerous **duck species** in the world.
- **Scientific Name** - *Anas acuta*.
- **Habitat** - Freshwater wetlands, lakes, ponds, rivers, saltwater bays, tundra, prairies, flooded fields.
- **Distribution** - It is found across North America, Europe, and **Asia**, with many Siberian breeders crossing the Bering Strait to winter in North America.
- **Size**
  - **Male** - 64-74 cm.
  - **Female** - 21-23 (53-58 cm).
- **Appearance** - Elegant, slender duck with long neck and tail, slim and long-necked.
  - **Males** have a chocolate brown head with a white slash coming up the neck, a white breast, and a mostly grey body and long pointed tail.
  - **Females** are patterned in light brown, known by a pointed tail, a long neck, a grey bill, and more subdued colouration compared to males.



- Forages in wetlands and in fields on agricultural waste grains.
- **Diet** - Mostly eat seeds, insects, grains, molluscs, plant material, etc.

- **Behaviour** - They dabble in wetlands and fields, often mixing with other duck species in the nonbreeding season.
- **Conservation Status**
  - IUCN - Least Concern.
  - **Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972** - Schedule II.
- **Threats** - Habitat loss, climate change, vulnerable to wetland degradation, and also sensitive to lead poisoning and avian botulism.

## References

1. [The Hindu | A winter getaway in Assam's wetlands](#)
2. [All about Birds | Northern Pintail](#)
3. [Audubon Society | Northern Pintail](#)

