

## Ringed Eurasian Whimbrel & Tibetan Sand-Plover

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

### Why in News?

Recently, researchers recorded the resighting of a ringed Eurasian whimbrel in Kozhikode, Kerala, more than 6 years after it was first marked at the Kadalundi-Vallikkunnu Community Reserve.

### Key Highlights

- A Tibetan Sand-Plover (*Anarhynchus atrifrons* / *Charadrius atrifrons*), also banded in Mumbai previously, was recorded at Chavakkad beach, Thrissur now.

| Parameter        | Eurasian Whimbrel ( <i>Numenius phaeopus</i> )                                                                                                                                                                                               | Tibetan Sand-Plover ( <i>Anarhynchus atrifrons</i> )                                                                            |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Family           | Scolopacidae (Scolopacid waders / Curlews)                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Charadriidae (Plovers & Lapwings)                                                                                               |
| Markings         | Fitted with a unique black flag on its right leg (standard flag protocol for waders across the 5 southern Indian states) and a metal identification ring on its left leg.                                                                    | Photographed with <b>2 white leg flags</b> bearing the code 'HZN' on its right leg and a metal ring on its left leg.            |
| Habitat          | Intertidal mudflats, estuaries, and sandy beaches                                                                                                                                                                                            | Coastal shores, estuarine mudflats, high-altitude lakes                                                                         |
| Breeding Grounds | Arctic/Subarctic Europe and Northern Asia                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Tibetan Plateau and Trans-Himalayan high wetlands                                                                               |
| IUCN Status      | Least Concern (LC)                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Least Concern (LC)                                                                                                              |
| Significance     | Confirms site fidelity, demonstrating that migratory shorebirds return to specific wintering grounds along the Central Asian Flyway (CAF) after migrating to breeding grounds in northern Europe/Central Asia across multiple annual cycles. | Illustrates intra-country coastal movement pathways and stopover dynamics for waders migrating along India's western coastline. |

### Significance for Conservation

- **Validation of the Central Asian Flyway (CAF)** - Reinforces India's role as a vital wintering ground along the CAF, highlighting the ecological dependency of transboundary shorebirds on the Malabar coastline.
- **Role of Bird Tagging** - Demonstrates how leg-flagging and ringing by institutions like the BNHS track individual survival rates, longevity, migration routes, and wintering site persistence over long durations.
- **Importance of Protected Coastal Habitats** - Highlights the conservation value of sites like

the **Kadalundi-Vallikkunnu Community Reserve**, India's first community reserve declared specifically for wetland and shorebird protection as critical refuelling hubs for migratory waders.



## Reference

[The Hindu | Ringed Eurasian whimbrel](#)



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