

Rock Eagle Owl

Prelims: Current events of national and international relations | Species

Why in News?

Recently, quarrying was halted at Telangana quarry and visitors to the area were also restricted to ensure that the Rock Eagle owl's eggs are not disturbed before they hatch.

- It is a ***large horned owl species*** native to the Indian Subcontinent.
- **Scientific name** - *Bubo bengalensis*.
- **Common names** - Rock Eagle Owl, Indian Eagle Owl, Bengal Eagle Owl
- **Family** - Strigidae (true owls)
- **Habitat** - Rocky hills with bushes, earth banks, ravines, semi-deserts with rocks and bushes, old mango orchards near villages.
- **Distribution** - West Himalayas, Pakistan, India, Kashmir, Nepal, Assam, and Burma (Myanmar).

Features

- **Size** - Length: 50-56 cm
- **Weight** - Approximately 1100 g.
- **Appearance** -
 - A ***large owl***, splashed with brown and grey plumage, with a white throat patch that has small black stripes.
 - It is distinguished by its prominent "ear tufts" (feather tufts on its head, not actual ears) and large, deep yellow to orange-red eyes.
 - It is similar to the Eurasian Eagle-Owl but is smaller and has weaker streaking on its underparts.



- **Behavior** - This species is primarily **nocturnal** but may be seen moving about at dawn and dusk. They are usually observed in pairs.
- **Diet** - Primarily rats and mice, also birds (up to peafowl size), reptiles, frogs, crabs, and large insects.
- **Voice** - The male gives a deep double hoot, the female a higher version, and at the nest both make clucking or huwoo-huwoo sounds.
- **Conservation Status**
 - **IUCN** - Least Concern.
 - **CITES** - Appendix II.
 - **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972** - Schedule I.

References

1. [Hindustan Times | In Hyderabad, rock eagle owl hatch its eggs.](#)
2. [World of Owls | Rock Eagle Owl](#)
3. [Indian Express | Rock Eagle Owl](#)