

White-rumped Vulture

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Conservation

Why in News?

Recently, experts have reported stable vulture numbers in Wayanad despite reduced breeding, with invasive plants and human activity affecting nesting areas.

- **Scientific Name** - *Gyps bengalensis*.
- **Family** - Accipitridae.
- **Habitat** - Mostly plains with open areas, light woodland, villages and cities. Occasionally found in hilly regions.
- **Distribution** - Native to ***India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Pakistan, Myanmar, and Cambodia.***
- **Extinction** - Possibly extinct in Afghanistan, Iran, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam. Extinct in China and Malaysia
- **Key Identification - Size** - Medium-sized vulture (75-85 cm).
- **Adult** - Mostly black body feathers with a white ring of feathers around the neck (neck-ruff) and white feathers on the lower back (rump).
- Wings have silvery feathers, the head and neck are dark, and the bill is short, thick, and silver-colored.
- **Juvenile** - Brown body feathers with white streaks on wing and back feathers and soft down on the head and neck.



- **Behaviour** - Aggregates at carcasses and uses regular feeding sites. **Highly social, forms large flocks and communal roosts (gathers together to rest or sleep).**
- **Breeding** - Breeds in colonies in tall trees, often near human habitation.
- **Diet** - Obligate scavenger feeding on fresh and decaying carcasses (dead animals).
- **Conservation Status** -
 - **IUCN** - Critically Endangered.
 - **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972** - Schedule I
- **Threats** - Rapid population **decline due to Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)** such as diclofenac, aceclofenac, and ketoprofen used in livestock, causes kidney failure and visceral gout in vultures.
- **Other threats** - Habitat loss, deforestation, poisoning, electrocution, collisions, and reduced food availability from changes in livestock management.

Vultures of India

- There are **9 species** of vultures, five of which belong to the genus *Gyps*, and the remaining four are monotypic.
- Oriental White-backed Vulture - *G.bengalensis*
- The Long-billed Vulture - *G.indicus*
- Slender-billed Vulture - *G.tenuirostris*
- The Himalayan Vulture - *G.himalayensis*
- The Eurasian Griffon - *G.fulvus*
- Egyptian Vulture - *Neophron percnopterus*
- Red-headed Vulture - *Sarcogyps calvus*
- Cinereous Vulture - *Aegyptius monachus*
- Bearded Vulture (Lammergeier) - *Gypaetus barbatus*

References

1. [TH | White-rumped Vulture](#)
2. [IUCN | White-rumped Vulture](#)

