

World's first-ever release of captive-bred slender-billed vultures

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Why in News?

Assam records world's first-ever release of captive-bred slender-billed vultures (Gyps tenuirostris).

- Five slender-billed vultures bred in captivity at the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS)'s conservation facility in Assam.
- These were released at the Jatayu Soft Release Centre in the Biswanath Division of Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve.
- The population of Gyps vultures in India has declined by 99% over the last 20 years due to the use of veterinary painkillers.
- Although the Centre banned four such drugs—diclofenac, aceclofenac, ketoprofen, and nimesulide—pesticide poisoning remains a threat to vultures in Assam.
- The slender-billed vulture is an Old-World vulture species native to sub-Himalayan regions and Southeast Asia.
- It is Critically Endangered since 2002 as the population on the Indian subcontinent has declined rapidly.
- It is used to be the Indian vulture, under the name of "long-billed vulture".
- But the Indian vulture is found only to the south of the Ganges and breeds on cliffs while the slender-billed vulture is found along and nests in trees.
- The slender-billed vulture is found in India from the Gangetic plain north, west to Himachal Pradesh, south potentially as far as northern Odisha, and east through Assam.
- They typically are sedentary birds, and do not tend to travel large distances nor migrate for any reason.
- Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), founded in 1883, is one of the largest non-governmental organisations in India engaged in conservation and biodiversity research.

- The Asian waterbird census is an annual exercise undertaken in India by Bombay Natural History Society in association with Wetlands International.
- The exercise is a part of 'International waterbird census', an international exercise.
- BNHS is the partner of BirdLife International in India.
- BirdLife International is a global partnership of non-governmental organizations that strives to conserve birds and their habitats.
- It is the official International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List authority for birds.
- BirdLife International has nine conservation programmes implemented across Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and Central Asia, the Middle East and the Pacific.
- It includes the Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas Programme, Marine Programme, Preventing Extinctions Programme, and Flyways Programme.
- Wetlands International is a global organisation that works to sustain and restore wetlands and their resources for people and biodiversity.
- It is an independent, not-for-profit, global organisation, supported by government and NGO membership from around the world.



Reference

[The Hindu | Captive-bred slender-billed vultures](#)



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