

Great Indian Bustard

[UPSC Notes]

Project Great Indian Bustard

The Project Great Indian Bustard was mainly taken up to protect the endangered species. Following are the initiatives of the Government to preserve the species in India.

- The Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has kept GIB under the species recovery programme.
- The MoEFCC has also founded a program called 'Habitat Improvement and Conservation Breeding of Great Indian Bustard-An Integrated Approach'.
- The objective is to create a confined population of Great Indian Bustards and release the chicks in the wild, thereby causing their population to increase.

Rajasthan government has established the 'Great Indian Bustard Project' to construct breeding chambers for the bird. The Government also developed infrastructure to decrease human pressure on the going-to-be-extinct species habitats.

The listed actions need to be undertaken to improve the status of the Great Indian Bustard and safeguard the species.

- The field staff must do intensive patrolling.
- Establishing a local intelligence network.
- Constructing checkpoints and obstacles in key areas
- Establishing a flying squad under the command of a range officer or higher.
- Consolidating the current wireless network
- Habitat conservation by designating certain bird-exclusive zones impermeable to human interference and limiting anthropogenic pressures.
- Enriching the habitat by introducing plants like *Lasiurus Sindicus* (Sewan grass) and adding amenities like water gazellers.
- Farmer and local incentive programs for information sharing and species conservation.
- Involving locals in ecotourism and eco-development initiatives.

Great Indian Bustard Characteristics & Habitat

When preparing for the Great Indian Bustard UPSC Topic, you should know everything about the bird's characteristics, habitat, features, and more. Read the below points to understand the basic details.

Great Indian Bustard Habitat:

- The bird originally belonged to the Indian subcontinent.
- It is mainly discovered in Desert National park (Rajasthan), Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and even in some parts of Pakistan.

Great Indian Bustard Characteristics:

- GIB are tall and heavy birds with long legs and extended necks.
- They may stand up to 1.2 metres (4 feet) high.

- The heaviest Great Indian Bustard has weighed around 15 kg (33 pounds).
- The colour of their feathers distinguishes their gender.
- These birds are omnivores and feed on arthropods, worms, small mammals, small reptiles, etc.

Types Of Great Indian Bustard Species Present in India

Great Indian Bustard, Lesser and Bengal Florican are the popular species of this bird discovered in India.

Lesser Florican (Scientific name - *Sypheotides Indicus*)

- The Lesser Florican bustard is native to India.
- These are majorly found in the northwest and central parts of India.
- The species is almost similar to the Bengal florican.

Bengal Florican (Scientific name - *Houbaropsis Bengalensis*)

- Bengal Florican, or Bengal bustard, is another species from the Indian subcontinent.
- Roundabout 1,500 of their population live in Assam, Uttar Pradesh, and Arunachal Pradesh.

Great Indian Bustard Protection Status

Recently, in a protected area of southern Punjab's Cholistan in Pakistan, a team of hunters killed two Great Indian Bustards. This region has a very similar habitat to Rajasthan's Desert National Park, where most of the bird's population has been found.

Desert National Park is situated near the towns of Jaisalmer and Barmer and was reported to be a National Park in 1981 to safeguard the habitat of this endangered bird species. After the news of the killing of these birds came into the limelight in Pakistan (sharing a border with Rajasthan), the Government has shared concerns about damage to the desert ecosystem and Great Indian Bustard Protection Status.

Preservation Status:

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| Initiative | Great Indian Bustard Protection Status |
| International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List | Critically Endangered |
| Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 | Schedule 1 |
| Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) | Appendix I |
| Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) | Appendix 1 |

Great Indian Bustard National Park

The Great Indian Bustard is a species of bird that is critically endangered and seen in the arid grasslands of India. The GIB has been protected under Wildlife Protection Act 1972 in India, and here we will mention the top 5 Great Indian Bustard national parks and their location.

The Great Indian Bustard bird was on the top of the list to become the national bird of India. The Government is now taking measures and building projects to save the endangered species and recover its population.

| Great Indian bustard national park names | Location (India) |
|--|------------------|
| Desert National Park | Rajasthan |
| Kutch Bustard Sanctuary | Gujarat |
| Great Indian Bustard Sanctuary | Maharashtra |
| Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary | Andhra Pradesh |
| Gaga Wildlife Sanctuary | Gujarat |
| Karera and Ghatigaon Sanctuary Sanctuary | Madhya Pradesh |