



## Discovery of Prehistoric Ostrich Nest

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Recently, archaeologists have discovered a **41,000-year-old ostrich nest** in Prakasam, Andhra Pradesh.

- This provides crucial insights into the **extinction of megafauna** (animals weighing **more than 50 kg**) in India.
- **Earlier Evidences of Ostriches in India:**
  - Ostrich fossils were first reported in **1884** from the **Dhok Pathan deposits** in the **Upper Siwalik Hills, Pakistan**.
    - The discovery of ostrich fossils in the Himalayas indicates the region had **drier, cooler periods in the past** due to **weaker Indian monsoons**, unlike peninsular India during the Pleistocene.
  - Later, **ostrich eggshell beads and engravings** dating back to **50,000-40,000 years ago** were found at an **Upper Palaeolithic site in Patne, Maharashtra** in 1989.
  - In 2017, evidence showed that **ostriches existed in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat 25,000 years ago**.
- **Ostriches (*Struthio camelus*):**
  - [IUCN Status](#): Least Concern
  - **Largest Living Birds: 2-2.8 metres** tall, weight **90-160 kg**
  - **Flightless** birds, exceptional runners with speeds up to 43 mph.
  - Native to **African savannas and deserts** (Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya, South Africa)
  - Live in **small herds** (fewer than a dozen), **led by males** who primarily mate with the leading female.

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