



# Pink Flamingos

Source: DTE

## Why in News?

Recently, [climate change](#) has altered water levels and salinity at **Tanzania's Lake Natron**, home to many pink [flamingos](#), making nesting more difficult and causing their population to decline due to [extreme weather](#) and human encroachment.

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## What are the Key Facts About Flamingos?

- **About:** It belongs to the **family *Phoenicopteridae***.
  - There are **six species** of flamingo namely the [Greater flamingo](#) (state bird of Gujarat), Chilean flamingo, Lesser flamingo, Caribbean flamingo, Andean flamingo, and Puna flamingo that inhabit lakes, mudflats, and shallow lagoons in the Americas, Africa, Asia, and Europe.
- **Distinctive Appearance:** Known for their **vibrant pink feathers**, flamingos have long legs and necks, webbed feet, and a distinctive downward-curving bill adapted for filter-feeding.
  - Flamingos' **habitats and food sources change by location and season, causing their colors to range** from dark or bright pink to orange, red, or pure white.
- **Adaptations:** Flamingos have adapted to **extreme environments** with high salinity and temperatures, where their predators are limited.
- **Ecological Role:** They play a crucial ecological role by maintaining the health of their habitats through their feeding activities, which affect **nutrient cycling** and [algae](#) populations.
- **Conservation Status:**

- [IUCN Red List](#):
  - Vulnerable: Andean flamingo
  - Near Threatened: Lesser flamingo, Puna flamingo, and Chilean flamingo
- [CITES](#): Appendix II
- [Wildlife Protection Act, 1972](#): Schedule II

## Lake Natron

- Lake Natron is a salt lake located on the border between **Tanzania and Kenya**, part of the eastern branch of the [Rift Valley](#).
  - The **Great Rift Valley** is a massive geological formation that stretches around 6,400 kilometers from **northern Syria** to **central Mozambique** in East Africa.
  - The valley is home to the **Jordan River**, which flows through the Jordan Valley and eventually **empties into the Dead Sea** on the border between Israel and Jordan.
- Lake Natron Basin was included in the [Ramsar List in 2001](#), recognizing Lake Natron as an internationally significant [wetland under Article 2](#) of the Ramsar Convention.
- It has a unique composition of warm waters and salt, caustic soda, and magnesite deposits.
- Lake Natron's alkaline waters support a **thriving ecosystem** of salt marshes, freshwater wetlands, flamingos and other wetland birds, tilapia and the algae on which large flocks of flamingos feed.



### UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

#### **Prelims:**

**Q. Consider the following fauna: (2023)**

1. Lion-tailed Macaque

2. Malabar Civet
3. Sambar Deer

**How many of the above are generally nocturnal or most active after sunset?**

- (a)** Only one
- (b)** Only two
- (c)** All three
- (d)** None

**Ans: (a)**

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