



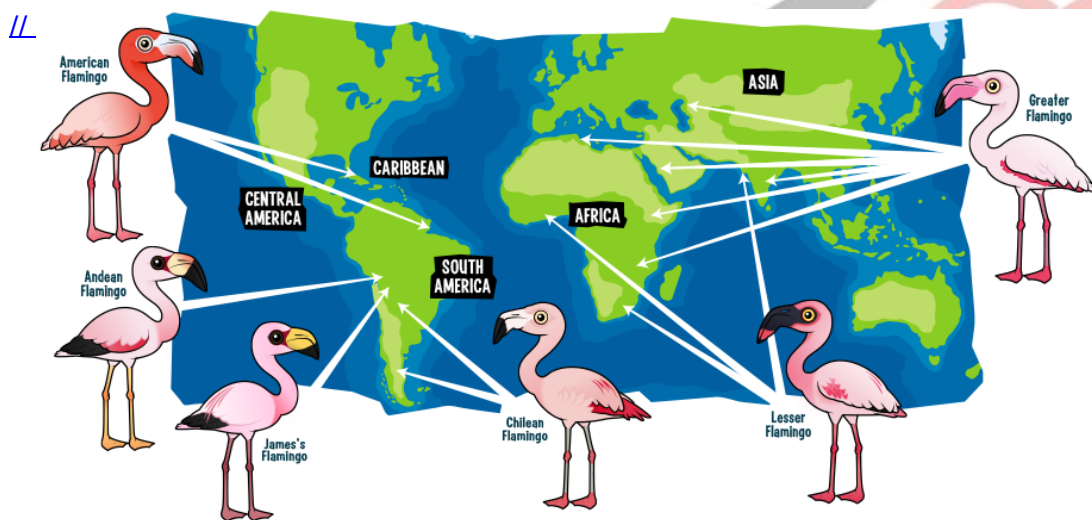
## Flamingos, Himalayan Ibex and Blue Sheep

[Source: IE](#)

### Why in News?

Recently, around 39 Flamingos were killed in a collision event with an aircraft landing at the Mumbai airport.

- Since flamingos are a protected species under the [Wildlife Protection Act \(1972\)](#), the rescuers handed over the carcasses of the flamingos to the forest department conducting the necropsy.



### What are the Key Facts About the Flamingos?

- There are 6 flamingo species found around the world namely American Flamingo, Andean Flamingo, Chilean Flamingo, Greater Flamingo, James's Flamingo, and Lesser Flamingo.
- Greater Flamingo:**
  - About:**
    - It is the **largest** and **most widespread** flamingo species.
    - These are the **state bird of Gujarat**.
    - They are categorised as "**least concern (LC)**" in the [IUCN Red List of Threatened Species](#).
    - These are found in various regions of **Africa**, the southeastern parts of **Asia** as well as **southern Europe**.
      - In Asia, their distribution range includes the **coastal areas of India** and Pakistan.
    - Northern populations** of these birds **often migrate to warm regions during winter** due to various reasons like scarcity of food, water-level changes, and competition within a single colony.
  - Characteristics:**



- These species form **monogamous pairs** which means each pair remains together for their entire lives.
- They get their **characteristic pink colour** from their diet of brine shrimps and algae available in the coastal wetlands. The flamingoes are the **indicators of a healthy coastal environment**.
- These **omnivorous species** feed on molluscs, crustaceans, insects, crabs, worms and small fishes. Their diet also consists of various plant materials such as algae, grass, decaying leaves, and shoots.
- These birds **prefer saltwater lagoons** in coastal areas. They also inhabit large alkaline and saline lakes.

▪ **Migration Pattern of Flamingo in India:**

- Experts note that nearly 100,000 to 150,000 flamingos **migrate from Gujarat** (including Kutch and Bhavnagar) and other scattered locations **to Mumbai** each **November** in **search of food**.
- Upon arrival, they establish themselves in the **Thane Creek area** (breeding grounds for Flamingos).

## Survey of Himalayan Ibex and Blue Sheep

- Wildlife authorities in **Himachal Pradesh's Lahaul & Spiti district** are conducting surveys to estimate the population of **blue sheep and Himalayan ibex, the main prey of snow leopards**.
- **Snow leopards**, classified as '**vulnerable**' under the **IUCN Red List** have been increasingly sighted due to the growing population of blue sheep and Himalayan ibex.

| Features                   |  <p><b>Himalayan Ibex</b></p>  |  <p><b>Blue Sheep (Bharal)</b></p>                               |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| <b>Characteristics</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recognized by its contoured horns and beards.</li> <li>▪ Males also tend to be larger in size and more muscular than females</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Solitary or in small groups of less than 20 animals which consist of almost entirely one sex.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Distribution</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inhabit upland slopes in a wide range throughout China, from Inner Mongolia to the Himalayas</li> </ul>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ India, Bhutan, China (Gansu, Ningxia, Sichuan, Tibet, Inner Mongolia), Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan</li> </ul> |
| <b>Conservation Status</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>IUCN Red List:</b> Least concerned</li> <li>▪ <b>Wildlife Protection Act 1972:</b> Schedule 1</li> </ul>                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>IUCN Red List:</b> Least Concern</li> <li>▪ <b>Wildlife Protection Act 1972:</b> Schedule 1</li> </ul>  |

## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

### 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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