



World Sparrow Day 2024

[Source: BS](#)

Why in News?

Every year, [World Sparrow Day](#) is observed on **March 20**, shedding light on the significance of sparrows in maintaining biodiversity and ecological balance.

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What are the Key Highlights of the World Sparrow Day 2024?

- **Theme:** In 2024, the theme for World Sparrow Day is **“Sparrows: Give them a tweet-**

chance!”, “I Love Sparrows” and “We Love Sparrows”.

- **History:** The inaugural World Sparrow Day took place on March 20, 2010. In India, it was initiated by the **Nature Forever Society**.
 - Founded by Mohammed Dilawar, an Indian conservationist, the society aimed to emphasize the importance of conserving [house sparrows](#) and other common birds.

What are the Key Facts About Sparrow?

- Sparrows are crucial for biodiversity and plant growth in ecosystems. They consume and excrete seeds, helping to disperse plant seeds and promote vegetation.
- **Threats:**
 - Sparrow populations are declining due to **habitat degradation, urbanization, and changes in agricultural practices**. The loss of nesting sites and foraging areas, as well as the decline in insect populations, are major factors.
 - This decline has wide-ranging effects, including potential increases in insect pests and threats to biodiversity.
- **Conservation:**
 - Efforts include urban greening projects and agroecological practices to create suitable habitats for sparrows.
- **Few Common Species Habitat and Distribution in India:**

Sparrow Species	Scientific Name	Habitat Preferences	Distribution in India
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Urban and rural areas	Widely distributed across India
Eurasian Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	Woodlands, parks, and gardens	Found in various regions across India, less common than house sparrows
White-throated Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia albicollis</i>	Northern regions, mountainous areas	Mainly in Jammu & Kashmir or Himachal Pradesh
Chestnut-shouldered Petronas	<i>Petronia xanthocollis</i>	Dry forests, scrublands	Inhabit regions like Rajasthan or Gujarat
Rufous Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i>	Wet regions, forests	Prefers areas such as Assam or West Bengal
Baya Weaver	<i>Ploceus philippinus</i>	Coastal areas, wetlands	Commonly seen in coastal regions like Goa or Kerala

Note

- House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) belongs to the **order Passeriformes** and the **family Passeridae**.
 - **It is the state bird of Bihar and Delhi** and is commonly found due to its proximity to human habitations.
 - **Its conservation status is Least Concern on the [IUCN Red List](#).**

Warning signs for bird species

A total of 142 bird species in India were found to be declining, while only 28 were increasing, in recent years (annual change over past eight years), according to the State of Indian Birds report 2023 released on Friday. A look at its findings. **By Jayashree Nandi**

THE MAJOR THREATS FACING INDIAN BIRDS

CLIMATE CRISIS

Timings of annual events (e.g. migration, nesting, insect emergence) become asynchronous.

For sedentary birds, dealing with climate change will require rapid adaptive changes.

Higher temperatures also cause birds to alter their behaviour, making them more likely to seek shade and spend less time foraging.

Bird species are shifting their ranges to higher latitudes (i.e., away from the tropics and towards the poles) and in mountains, to higher elevations.

DISEASE

Nearly 7% of globally threatened bird species have declined due to avian malaria.

Avian influenza outbreaks in 2020-2021 across India, caused mass mortality of wild birds.

ENERGY INFRA

Collision of birds with rotating wind turbine blades; Displacement of birds from the turbine area due to disturbance

URBANISATION

Urban habitats tend to be unsuitable for rare and specialist species, while promoting common species.

In central Delhi, fruiting trees offer resources for arboreal frugivorous birds such as Brown-headed Barbet and Yellow-footed Green Pigeon. But, urbanisation leads to a homogenisation of bird communities due to the increased abundance of birds adept at exploiting ecological niches.

CURRENT ANNUAL TREND

942 birds assessed (299 had insufficient data)

142 species declining (of which 64 seeing a rapid decline)

217 species stable (189) or increasing (28) in the last eight years

643 with sufficient data

28 Increasing
189 Stable
78 Declining
64 Declining rapidly
284 Trend inconclusive

HOW SPECIES ARE FARING

Certain groups of birds are faring particularly poorly, including open habitat species such as bustards and coursers; riverine sandbar-nesting birds; coastal shorebirds; open-country raptors; and a number of ducks, the report said.

- 14 species, including **Indian Roller**, recommended for IUCN Red List reassessment
- **Asian Koel** has increased in the past three decades
- Birds that live in **key habitats** like open ecosystems, rivers, and coasts have declined
- **Indian Peafowl** continues to thrive
- Raptors, migratory shorebirds, and ducks have **declined the most**

The Asian Koel (top) shows a dramatic increase since 2000.

Photo by Abhishek Das

Western Ghat endemic birds like the White-bellied Blue Flycatcher (above) are most severely impacted.

Photo by Albin Jacob

Read more: [State of India's Birds 2023 Report](#)

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims:

Q1. Which of the following is not a bird? (2022)

- (a) Golden Mahseer
- (b) Indian Nightjar
- (c) Spoonbill
- (d) White Ibis

Ans: (a)

Q2. Consider the following: (2018)

1. Birds
2. Dust blowing
3. Rain
4. Dust blowing Wind blowing

Which of the above spread plant diseases?

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 3 and 4 only
- (c) 1, 2 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Ans: (d)

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/world-sparrow-day-2024>

