



Asian Waterbird Census

Why in News?

Volunteers at [the Asan Wetland](#) in Dehradun district, Uttarakhand, identified **5,225 birds across 117 different species** during a **bird counting campaign**.

Key Points

- **About the Event:**
 - The bird counting campaign was organized by a team of 35 participants, divided into five groups.
 - It aimed to monitor both **domestic and migratory bird populations** in the Asan Wetland.
 - The teams conducted a comprehensive bird count at locations including **Asan Lake, the Yamuna and Asan rivers, the Shivalik mountain range**, and nearby protected forests.
- **Survey and Methodology:**
 - More than 150 volunteers and forest staff surveyed 23 sites following a pre-determined protocol to **count waterbirds and document other bird species**.
 - Observers also recorded the behaviors and activities of birds in and around the marshes and wetlands.
- **Citizen Science Initiative:**
 - **The Asian Waterbird Census** occurred simultaneously at **23 wetland sites** across Uttarakhand.
 - The initiative was supported by the [Uttarakhand Forest Department](#) and involved various [non-governmental organizations \(NGOs\)](#).

Asan Conservation Reserve

- **About:**
 - The Asan Conservation Reserve spans **444 hectares** along the Asan River, extending to its confluence with [the Yamuna River](#) in Dehradun district.
 - The **Asan Barrage, built in 1967**, led to siltation above the dam, creating **bird-friendly habitats**.
- **Biodiversity and Species:**
 - The reserve is home to 330 species of birds, including the critically endangered [red-headed vulture](#), [white-rumped vulture](#), and **Baer's pochard**.
 - The site records over 1% of the biogeographical populations of the **red-crested pochard and ruddy shelduck**.
 - Non-avian species present include 49 fish species, with the endangered **Putitor mahseer** among them.

