



# Great Indian Bustards

## Why in News?

Researchers spotted 12 [Great Indian Bustards \(GIBs\)](#) at [Desert National Park \(DNP\)](#) in Rajasthan. This provides a **major boost to efforts to conserve** one of India's most critically endangered species.

## Key Points

- **GIB Population Status:**
  - The GIB is **critically endangered**, with **only 173 birds remaining**.
  - Of these, 128 are found in the wild, and the remaining birds are bred in captivity.
  - Besides Rajasthan, the species is **also found in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka**.
- **Conservation Efforts:**
  - The GIB was listed as "**critically endangered**" by the [IUCN Red List](#) in 2011 due to hunting, habitat loss, and fragmentation.
  - In response, **Rajasthan launched a Rs 12.90 crore project in 2013 to conserve the species**, focusing on protecting its habitat and improving breeding conditions.
    - The **project has led to the successful breeding of 45 chicks** in two locations, Sam and Ramdevra.
- **Habitat Protection and Breeding:**
  - The birds spotted were born in the wild, mostly females aged three to four years, with some males up to one year old.
  - Efforts to protect their habitat include **improving grasslands and fencing areas to shield the birds from predators** such as [desert foxes](#), [cats](#), and [mongooses](#).
- **Milestone in Conservation:**
  - In 2018, [the Wildlife Institute of India](#), along with the Rajasthan government and the Forest Department, established [the National Conservation Breeding Centre in Jaisalmer](#).
    - In **October 2024**, Rajasthan achieved a milestone when a GIB chick successfully hatched through artificial insemination.

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▪ **About:**

- The **Great Indian Bustard (*Ardeotis nigricaps*)**, the **State bird of Rajasthan**, is considered India's most critically endangered bird.
- It is **considered the flagship grassland species**, representing the health of the grassland ecology.

▪ **Protection Status:**

- **IUCN Red List: Critically Endangered**
- **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES): Appendix 1**
- **Convention on Migratory Species (CMS): Appendix I**
- **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972: Schedule I**

## **Desert National Park**

- It is situated in **Jaisalmer & Barmer Districts of Rajasthan**.
- Great Indian Bustards, **Rajasthan State animal- Chinkara** and **State tree- khejri** and **State flower- Rohida** are found naturally at this park.
- It was declared a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** in **1980** and **National Park** in **1992**.