



Marbled Duck

Why in News?

Recently, bird enthusiasts were thrilled to spot a **marbled duck**, a rare winter migrant, at [Sultanpur National Park](#). Last recorded sighting of this species in Sultanpur was in 1990.

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Key Points

- **Physical Characteristics:**
 - **Medium-sized** duck with **grey-white plumage**.
 - Distinguished by a **large head and light eye patches**.
 - **Feeds on fish and aquatic plants**.
- **Global Conservation Status:**
 - Classified as "**vulnerable**" globally by the [International Union for Conservation of Nature \(IUCN\)](#).
 - Population decline attributed to habitat destruction and hunting.
- **Geographic Range and Habits:**
 - Native to Europe, where it breeds during the summer months.
 - Known to breed in three distinct regions: the [eastern Mediterranean, western](#)

Mediterranean, and Iran.

- Prefers lowland, shallow freshwater habitats for breeding.

▪ **Occurrence in India:**

- Rarely spotted in Delhi-NCR; last recorded at **Bhindawas wetland in 2022.**
- Limited sightings in Haryana, with records in Gurgaon during the 2000s.
- Previous observations include Gujarat and Rajasthan.

Sultanpur National Park

▪ **About:**

- Sultanpur National Park is a bird paradise for bird watchers. It is famous for its **migratory as well as resident birds.**
 - Migratory birds start arriving in the park in September. Birds use the park as a resting place till the following March-April.
 - During **summer** and **monsoon** months the park is inhabited by many local bird species.
- In April 1971, the **Sultanpur Jheel** inside the park (an area of 1.21 sq. Km.) was accorded **Sanctuary status** under section 8 of the **Punjab Wildlife Preservation Act, 1959.**
- The status of the park was upgraded to **National Park** under the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972** in July 1991.

▪ **Location:**

- It is **situated in Gurgaon district of Haryana.** The distance of the park is around 50 Km from Delhi and 15km from Gurgaon.

▪ **Important Fauna at the Park:**

- **Mammals:** **Blackbuck, Nilgai, Hog deer, Sambar, Leopard** etc.
- **Birds:** **Siberian Cranes, Greater Flamingo, Demoiselle Crane** etc.