



Rare White Peacock

[Source: TH](#)

Recently, a rare [leucistic peacock](#) with **white feathers** was rescued in Coimbatore.

- The peacock's **white feathers** are due to **leucism**, a genetic condition that **prevents melanin** and other **pigments** from **being deposited on feathers** at normal levels which has resulted in **dark eyes, pink bill, and feet of peacock**.
 - White Peacock is not a different species of peacock.
- **Leucism: Leucism** is a genetic condition that results in **partial loss of pigmentation** in animals, leading to **white, pale, or patchy coloration** while retaining normal eye colour.
 - It is different from **albinism**, which involves a **complete lack of melanin** and often results in red or pink eyes.
 - Melanin is a **natural pigment** that **colours skin, hair, and eyes**, and shields them from **Ultra Violet (UV)** damage.
- **Peacock:**
 - **Peafowl** is the collective term for peacocks, with the male called a **peacock** and the female a **peahen**.
 - The **Indian peacock** (*Pavo cristatus*) is the **National Bird of India**, belongs to the **Phasianidae family**.
 - This family also includes pheasants, quails, partridges, and jungle fowl.
 - **Species of Peafowl:**
 - **Indian (Blue) Peacock:** Native to **India and Sri Lanka**.
 - **Green (Javanese) Peacock:** Found from **Myanmar to Java**.
 - **Protection Status:**
 - **IUCN:** Listed as **Least Concern**.
 - **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972:** Schedule I

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Indian peafowl (Pavo cristatus)

Largest peafowl and India's national bird; males have exquisite plumage

FAMILY: PHASIANIDAE

LIFESPAN: ~20 YEARS **WEIGHT: 2.7-6 KG**

WINGSPAN: 140-160 CM

LENGTH: ~213 CM (MALES); ~121 (FEMALES)

GEOGRAPHICAL RANGE Indian subcontinent

HABITAT Forests and shrublands

Neck and chest are iridescent blue

Long, strong, greyish-brown legs equipped for running

"mayyaw"

Iridescent green neck

Brown plumage

Both males and females have crest feathers

• Long train of 150-175 feathers, each ~1.2 m long

• Metallic green feathers with iridescent ocelli (eyespot) ringed with blue and bronze

• Males shed feathers after every mating season

AKA Common peafowl, blue peafowl, peacock (though used for both sexes, technically refers to males; females are peahens)

EAT Insects, worms, lizards, frogs, snakes, and termites. Also, flower buds and petals, grain, grass, and bamboo shoots

CALLS Emit various alarm and territorial calls. Distinct incessant screams of "may-yaw" heard in the monsoon

BREEDING

- Reach sexual maturity at three years, and males develop trains
- Breed between Apr-Sep (monsoon)
- Chicks have feathers and are mobile, and capable of flying in about a week
- Male and female chicks are identical for six months, after that, males start changing colour

COURTSHIP

- Males spread out train when courting females
- Train rattling – vibrate tail feathers at the end of the courtship display
- Females use crest feathers to sense vibrations from courting males

CONSERVATION STATUS
Least Concern on the IUCN Red List

THREATS:

- Predation
- Poaching
- Diseases
- Electrocution from flying into power lines
- Pesticide poisoning
- Destruction of their natural habitat

Read more: [Indian Peafowl](#)

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/rare-white-peacock>

