



## Ganges River Dolphin

//

# GANGES RIVER DOLPHIN

(*Platanista gangetica gangetica*)

**National aquatic animal of India**

### Facts

- ✦ Can only live in freshwater; prefer deep water
- ✦ Essentially blind; hunts by emitting ultrasonic sound
- ✦ Can't breathe in water; must surface every 30-120 seconds for air
- ✦ Also called 'susu' because of sound they make while breathing

### Habitat & Distribution

- ✦ Distributed in Ganges and Brahmaputra River basins of India, Nepal and Bangladesh.
- ✦ Distribution range in India covers 7 states namely, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal.

### Protection Status

- ✦ **IUCN Red List:** Endangered
- ✦ **CITES:** Appendix I
- ✦ **Wildlife Protection Act 1972:** Schedule I

### Threats

- ✦ Habitat destruction
- ✦ Pollution
- ✦ Bycatch
- ✦ Climate Change
- ✦ Hunting

### Conservation Efforts

- ✦ **Project Dolphin (2021):** On lines of project Tiger
- ✦ **National Dolphin Research Centre (2021):** India's and Asia's First; in Patna University (Bihar)
- ✦ **Dedicated Dolphin Sanctuary:**
  - Vikramshila sanctuary (Bihar) – 1991
  - Hastinapur sanctuary (UP) – Proposed



Drishti IAS