

NATURE AND YOU – MIGRATORY BIRDS



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Context

Migratory birds are **welcome visitors** who have a **good impact on the environment**. Every year, birds from **29 nations** fly to India. During **September and October**, enormous flocks of birds arrive in the country, signalling the start of migration. For successful broods, migratory birds **require nesting sites and enough food**. **Reduced area under water bodies, wetlands, natural grasslands, and woods, as well as increased habitat degradation** over the last decade, have proven to be serious hurdles for them. Biodiversity has been lost due to **overexploitation, inappropriate use of natural resources, population boom, increasing weather variability, and climate change**.

Migratory Bird's significance

- Migratory birds play a **number of important and necessary roles in the ecosystems** in which they live and move.
- By **devouring insects and other organisms** that affect the environment and agriculture, such birds rearing broods end up working **as pest control agents**.
- The absence of birds has resulted in disasters such as **locust attacks**.
- Migratory birds aid in **seed dissemination**, resulting in the **preservation of biodiversity** along their migration pathways.
- **Ducks can carry fish eggs to new water bodies in their intestines**.
- **Bird guano**, often known as guano, is **high in nitrogen and serves as an organic fertilizer** as its eggs are rich in **calcium and other minerals**.
- Migratory birds can have an **ecological influence** since they serve as **both prey and predator** in ecosystems.

- The presence of migratory birds can be used to assess the state of the environment in a certain area.

Threats to these migratory birds

- Their eggs are poached and hunted in numerous places of the world where they move through or live.
- Locals who are ignorant of the advantages that migrating birds give frequently engage in behaviours that endanger the birds' existence.
- To appease their palates, affluent individuals engage in bird hunting with little regard for the environmental ramifications.
- When one partner dies, the other dies, and the brood dies from malnutrition, impacting the entire family of birds and future generations.
- Along with the loss of water bodies and natural habitats, the disappearance of secondary habitats in the vicinity of towns and villages, where smaller flocks frequently seek sanctuary, is a serious issue.
- Increasing nighttime illumination has a negative impact on migration by confounding the birds.
- The life cycle and migration of birds are jeopardised by environmental degradation and rising pollution levels.
- Poor hatching and brood loss are caused by heavy contamination of water sources and the presence of huge concentrations of pesticides.
- Birds can become ill as a result of eating fish and insects that have high amounts of heavy metals and poisons.
- Food supply becomes an issue as a result of greater encroachment and human involvement, as well as increased fishing, and birds may die of malnutrition.

Way forward

- Monitoring and enumeration of illnesses, as well as long-term monitoring programmes to examine bird movement trends.
- Educating students, youth, and the general public about the importance of bird migrations and their consequences.
- Obtaining local support for migratory bird breeding and conservation.
- During the migratory season, fishing should be minimised, abandoned, or prohibited in estuaries, rivers, and other bodies of water.
- Farmers using sustainable organic agriculture techniques to assure chemical-free water and a pesticide-free prey base.
- People must preserve the long-term viability of landscapes and ecosystem services that support migratory bird habitat, species, and populations.
- Wetlands, meadows, natural habitats, and forests with native species are being conserved to assist birds roost and lay nests.
- Single-use plastics are banned, and single-use plastics are not dumped in aquatic bodies.
- Specific laws, regulations, actions, and treaties among nations, as well as rigorous adherence, are needed to assist migratory bird conservation.
- Drones and other modern technology can be used to follow poachers in regions where birds congregate.
- Keeping night lighting to a minimum along migratory routes.

- Promoting eco-clubs and citizen initiatives to raise awareness of migrating birds and their natural habitats, as well as conservation and preservation.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CZUUTey2LvQ&feature=emb_imp_woyt