

Wildlife Conservation in UP

Uttar Pradesh, one of the largest states in India, is also the most populous state in the country. It also holds the distinction of the most populous subdivisions, in the world. Located in the Indo-Gangetic plains, with an area of 240, 928 sq.km, it is home to a wide variety of wild animals and plants. It is an ode to the resilience, benevolence, tolerance and conservation consciousness of the people of the state that such diverse plant and animal population continue to co-exist with humans and their domestic animals.

The climatically, agric-diverse Terai low-lands,, Hilly Vindhyas, ravenous Chambal/Bundelkhand and Indo-Gangetic plains areas harbor, a widely varied fauna and flora. For strengthening the conservation efforts of the rich fauna and flora, the state has declared a new sanctuary, the Pilibhit Wild Life Sanctuary, spread over an area of 603 sq km., in 2014. With this, the total area under the protected area network, has risen to 6,317 sq.km., which is about 2.62% of the geographical area of the State. The list of protected areas is as under:-

Sl. No	NP/WLS	Establishment year	Area in Sq. Km.	District
1-	Dudhwa National Park	1977	490	Lakhimpur Kheri
2-	Chandraprabha Bird Sanctuary	1957	78	Chandauli
3-	Kishanpur WLS	1972	227	Lakhimpur Kheri
4-	Katerniaghat WLS	1976	400	Bahraich
5-	Ranipur WLS	1977	230	Chitrakoot
6-	Mahavir Swami WLS	1977	5	Lalitpur
7-	National Chambal WLS	1979	635	Agra, Etawah
8-	Kaimur WLS	1982	501	Mirzapur
9-	Hastinapur WLS	1986	2073	Muzzafarnagar, Meerut, Bijnore, Jyotiba Phule Nagar, Ghaziabad
10-	Sohagibarwa WLS	1987	428	Maharajganj

11-	Suhailwa WLS	1988	452	Shrawasti, Balrampur
12-	Kachhua WLS	1989	07 km	Varanasi
13-	Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary	1984	02	Unnao
14-	Samaspur Bird Sanctuary	1987	08	Raibareilly
15-	Lakhabhosi Bird Sanctuary	1988	80	Kannauj
16-	Sandi Bird Sanctuary	1990	03	Hardoi
17-	Bakhira Bird Sanctuary	1990	29	Saint Kabir Nagar
18-	Okhla Bird Sanctuary	1990	04	Gautambudhanagar
19-	Saman WLS	1990	05	Mainpuri
20-	Paarvati Arga WLS	1990	11	Gonda
21-	Vijay Sagar WLS	1990	03	Mahoba
22-	Patna	1990	01	Etah
23-	Jai Prakash Narain WLS	1991	34	Balia
24-	Soor Sarovar WLS	1991	04	Agra
25-	Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar Bird Sanctuary	2003	04	Pratapgarh
26-	Pilibhit Wildlife Sanctuary	2014	603	Pilibhit
	Total		6310 ha & 07 km	

The green thumb of the government became prominently visible, when the decision to declare about 110 sq.km. as buffer of Dudhwa Tiger Reserve was taken in 20-07-2012. Similarly, an area of about 80 sq. km. in Amangarh Range of Bijnore Forest Division has been declared a buffer zone, to Corbett Tiger Reserve in 21-07-2012.

Besides the existing Dudhwa Tiger Reserve, the state government has established the Pilibhit Tiger Reserve, in Pilibhit.

An 80 km. stretch of River Ganga, from Braj Ghat to Narora, is the only “Ramsar Site” in the state.

An elephant reserve, covering an area of 744.09 sq. km. has been notified in Saharanpur and Bijnore Districts.

Some unique features of wildlife in Uttar Pradesh

- Population of 3040 of Swamp Deers, the largest number of the subspecies in the world.
- More than 1200 Swamp Deers in Jhaadi Taal, which is the single largest population of Swamp Deer, in the world.
- A large population of 4733 Hog Deer exists in Dudhwa Tiger Reserve. It is one of the largest populations of Hog Deer in India.
- Rhino re-introduction is one of the most successful wildlife rehabilitation projects in the country. The population of Rhino has reached 32 today.
- As per the All India Tiger Census 2010-11, the tiger population estimated in the State is 118+18 which is 4th highest in the country. Presently census is in progress. Saras census is being conducted bi-annually. Their number has been recorded at almost 12000.

Other Important Activates in Wildlife Wing

1- Wild Release Programme

- a. Wild release of leopards, in Suhailwa on 19-07-2012 & 22-04-2013 and in Shivalik on 05-03-2014.
- b. Wild release of 25 Chital from Lucknow Zoo in Tikari Forest, Gonda and 10 in Nawabganj Deer Park, Unnao.
- c. Wild release of about 100 Cheetals in Suhailwa Wild life Sanctuary Balrampur, 80 in Sohagibarwa Wildlife Sanctuary & 63 in Tikari Forest, Gonda.
- d. Wild release of Bear in Suhailwa on August 2013.

2- Handling of Wild animals

- a. Man-eater case of Bijnore Tiger.
- b. Safe dispersing of man-eater tiger in Kheri. The tiger was captured and released in forests of Dudhwa National Park.
- c. Safe cover provided to tigress with 3 cubs, in Pilibhit.
- d. Capture of leopard in Meerut City and its release in the wild.
- e. Prompt payment of compensation to dependants of those killed, or to persons who have been hurt, or have lost livestock, to attack by dangerous wild animals.

3- Training of officers and field staff in wildlife management

- a. Training on different topics related to wildlife management were organised for field staff in Dudhwa Tiger Reserve.
 - b. Intensive training programme in Wildlife sector was started under direction of Hon'ble Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh, from 15-01-2014 at FTI Kanpur. Trainings were organised for officers and field staff.
 - c. Specialised Training on tranquilization & immobilization was organised for front line staff at Gharial Breeding Centre, Kukrail Forest, Lucknow. 43 front line staff of different field units was trained.
- 4- Zoo vets were appointed, for handling recalcitrant animals in Lucknow & Kanpur Zoo.
 - 5- All Wetlands, identified by district Wetland Communities have been recorded in revenue records of concerned district.
 - 6- First well organized census of the Gangetic Dolphin, an endangered species, was done in 2012.

Sarus Protection Society

During its previous regime, the Government headed by Samajwadi party had being instrumental in the creation of Sarus Protection Society with the core objective of study, ecology and support to activities that would ensure survival of the Sarus in perpetuity. During the last two year a large number of activities have been taken up to further the cause of Sarus Conservation. Special projects have been funded by the society for improving the habitat in favor of Sarus and in promoting Sarus Conservation consciousness across the state.

To measure the effectiveness of the efforts been made, Sarus census has been made biannual according to the count done in 2013. The sarus number have gone upto almost 12000.

The Sarus Protection Society is supporting extensive educational programs in all the areas of U.P. which are rich in wetlands.

Tiger Protection Society

The Tiger Protection Society was also established during the previous regime of the Samajwadi Party Government. The primary objectives of the Society include the study and management of various aspects of Tiger, Tiger-Human interface and implementation of methods to ensure survival of this critically endangered species while also mitigating human-animal conflicts.

In the last two years the society funds have been spent on training & skill upgradation of Forest Department staff in managing the animal-human interface. Some frontline staff have been given specialized training in handling of tranquilizing equipment and in the furtherance of meeting the larger objectives of establishing rapid response team. Some critical equipment such as camera traps, tranquilizing guns, immobilizing drugs, cages, other essential field kit have been procured and distributed to frontline staff. Efforts are also on to provide specialized wildlife training veterinarians of the State Animal Husbandry Department at the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun. In the management of wild animals with special emphasis on large cats including Tiger.

The society has also been instrumental in providing immediate relief to those unfortunate persons who have been heart by wild animals or to the dependants of those killed by tiger.

In the past two years the society has supported the conservation of tiger habitat in Sohelwa and Sohagibarwa Wildlife Sanctuaries.

A data cell has been established recently at departmental forest headquarter, Lucknow to store all available data regarding tigers.