

## Black-necked crane

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The Wildlife Institute of India and the Zoological Survey of India have been carrying out assessment of the black-necked cranes.

- In Ladakh, the survey revealed a population size of **approximately 66-69 individuals**, offering crucial insights into the species' status in the region.



### **About Black-necked Crane:**

- The black-necked crane (*Grus nigricollis*) is a **medium-sized crane in Asia** that breeds on the Tibetan Plateau and remote parts of India and Bhutan.
- **Features:**
  - It is **whitish-gray**, with a **black head**, red crown patch, **black upper neck** and legs, and white patch to the rear of the eye.
  - The **tail is black** and makes it easy to distinguish at a distance from the similar looking common crane which has grey tail.
  - Both sexes are similar

### **Habitat:**

- The black-necked crane summers mainly in the **high altitude Tibetan Plateau**.
- The breeding areas are **alpine meadows, lakeside** and riverine marshes and river valleys.
- Wintering areas tend to be in **sheltered valleys or lower altitudes**.
- The largest populations are in **China** with smaller numbers extending into Vietnam, Bhutan and India.

### **Protective Measures**

- It is revered in **Buddhist traditions** and **culturally protected** across much of its range.
- A festival in Bhutan celebrates the bird while the Indian union territory of **Ladakh has designated it as the state bird**.

### **Legal Protection:**

- Black-necked Crane listed in **Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972**, receiving the highest degree of protection.
- Listed in Appendix I of the **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)** and the **Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species**.

#### Protected Areas:

- Important habitats, including **Changthang Sanctuary in Ladakh**, designated as Protected Areas.
- **Tso Kar Wetlands Complex**, a vital foraging and breeding ground, declared a Ramsar Site in December 2020.

#### National Wildlife Action Plan:

- The National Wildlife Action Plan (2017-2031) **prioritizes the conservation of threatened species**, addressing human-wildlife conflict, and preserving ecosystems.