

Indian Skimmer

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India and Bangladesh submitted joint proposal to list Indian Skimmer (*Rynchops albicollis*) under Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS COP14).



[Ref: DTE]

About Indian skimmer:

- Also known as the **Indian scissors-bill** (*Rynchops albicollis*), it is one of the three species that belong to the **skimmer genus Rynchops** in the family Laridae.

Characteristics:

- **Length:** 40-43 cm
- **Coloration:** Black upperparts, white forehead, collar, and lower parts
- **Bill:** Long, thick, deep orange with a yellow tip; longer lower mandible
- **Flight Features:** White trailing-edge to wings, short forked tail with blackish central feathers
- **Non-breeders:** Duller with browner upper parts
- **Juveniles:** Dusky orange bill with a blackish tip, mottled brownish-grey crown and nape, pale buff fringing on scapulars and wing coverts

Habitat:

- Breeds colonially on **large, exposed sand-bars and islands**.
- Nests on sandy islands or open sand banks, often with other birds like **Terns**.
- **Breeding Season:** February to May.

Behavior:

- Feeds on **surface-dwelling fish, small crustaceans, and insect larvae**.

- Emit nasal **kap** or **kip** notes, especially in flight or when **disturbed**.

Threat:

- **Habitat degradation:** Fishing, transportation, domestic use, irrigation, and pollution are degrading rivers and lakes, reducing reproductive and foraging success.
- **Damming impact:** Damming of the Chambal River has led to dropping water levels, providing access to predators and livestock, and affecting the species at the National Chambal Sanctuary.
- **Disturbance:** Excessive disturbance from various activities is contributing to the decline of the species.
- **Predation:** House crows and domestic dogs are major predators, causing significant harm to breeding colonies.

Conservation Status:

- **IUCN Red List:** Endangered
- **IWPAA:** Schedule I