



Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary

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Recently, due to the anthrax, two Asiatic Water Buffaloes died in the Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary.

Asiatic Water Buffalo

- The Asiatic Wild Water Buffalo is scientifically known as **Bubalus Arnee** is known to be found **in the Central Indian Forests** and is mostly restricted to the states of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.
 - Recently, it was found in the forests of Maharashtra after which the Maharashtra Government declared the **Kolamarka forest area** as a conservation reserve for the Asiatic Wild Buffalo.
 - Asiatic buffalo has the **widest horn span** among all bovids found globally.
 - The wild buffalo is mainly found in the alluvial grasslands, marshes, swamps and river valleys. They are generally found in areas that have plenty of water holes and resources.
- The Asiatic wild buffaloes are of enormous **economic significance** as they are the direct ancestors of all the breeds of the domestic buffaloes.

However, over time their **population** has **decreased** at an alarming rate because of various reasons such as poaching, loss of habitat and breeding with domestic buffaloes.



- **Protection Status:**

- It has been listed as an endangered species by the **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)**.
- It is listed under Schedule-1 of the **Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972**.
- It is included in **CITES Appendix-III** and is legally protected in Bhutan, India, Nepal, and Thailand.
- Wild Water Buffalo is believed to be **extinct** in Bangladesh, Peninsular Malaysia, and on the islands of Sumatra, Java, and Borneo.

- **Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary** has the **highest density** of **one-horned rhinos** in the world and **second highest concentration** in Assam after **Kaziranga National Park**.

It is often called ‘**Mini Kaziranga**’ due to similar landscape and vegetation.

- The wildlife sanctuary is home to **endangered one-horned rhinoceros** and the other mammals such as **Leopard, Leopard cat, Fishing cat, Jungle cat, Feral Buffalo, Wild pigs, Chinese pangolins, etc.**
- About 72% of Pobitora Sanctuary consists of **wet savannah** of *Arundo donax* and *Saccharum*. The remaining area is covered by water bodies.

Water hyacinth (an invasive aquatic plant) is a major problem to the area especially to waterfowl, as it forms thick mats on the water surface.

- There are **5 national parks** in Assam namely,
 - Dibru-Saikhowa National Park,
 - Kaziranga National Park,
 - Manas National Park,
 - Nameri National Park,
 - Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park.

Anthrax

- It is a serious **infectious disease** that is caused by a **bacteria** known as *Bacillus anthracis*.
- Although it is rare but it can sometimes become **fatal** for humans if they get infected with anthrax when they come in contact with infected animals or contaminated animal products.

- It is characterized by symptoms like blisters on the skin, chest pain, vomiting, diarrhea, and fever.

Source: TH