



Mandarin Duck

Why in News

Recently, **Mandarin ducks** have been sighted in the **Maguri-Motapung beel in Assam's Tinsukia district** after a century.

Key Points

- **Scientific Name:** *Aix galericulata*
- **Discovery**



- Mandarin duck was **first identified by Swedish** botanist, physician and zoologist **Carl Linnaeus in 1758.**
- **Characteristics:**
 - It is **considered the most beautiful duck** in the world.
 - **Male mandarins** have elaborate plumage (feathers) with orange plumes on their cheeks, orange 'sails' on their back, and pale orange sides; **females are dull in comparison**, with grey heads, brown backs and white eyestripe.
- **Diet:**
 - These birds may feed on seeds, acorns, small fruit, insects, snails, and small fish.
- **Habitat:**
 - These birds **inhabit temperate forests near wetlands** including rivers, streams, bogs, marshes, swamps, and freshwater lakes.
 - It is **native to East Asia** but has established **populations in Western Europe and America too.**
 - It breeds in **Russia, Korea, Japan and northeastern parts of China.**
- **Presence in India:**
 - The duck **rarely visits India** as it does not fall in its usual migratory route.
 - It was **recorded in 1902 in the Dibru river** in the Rongagora area in Tinsukia (Assam).
 - More recently, it was sighted in **Manipur's Loktak Lake** in 2013, and in **Saatvoini Beel** in **Manas National Park** and Tiger Reserve in Assam's Baksa district in 2014.
- **Status on IUCN Red List :** Least Concern.

▪ Maguri-Motapung Beel:

- The Maguri Motapung wetland, an Important Bird Area as declared by the [Bombay Natural History Society](#) is located close to the [Dibru Saikhowa National Park](#) in Upper Assam.
- In May 2020, the Beel was adversely affected by a [blowout and fire at an Oil India Limited-owned](#) gas well.
 - The resulting oil spill killed a number of fish, snakes as well as an endangered Gangetic dolphin.

[Source: IE](#)

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