



# Flamingos at Rajasthan's Sambhar Lake

## Why in News?

**Flamingos** traditionally migrate to **Sambhar Lake** between **November and March**, but in 2025, they stayed significantly longer owing to **abundant food supply and changing climate conditions** that created a more favorable habitat.

## Key Points

- **Significant Rise in Bird Population:**
  - A census conducted in January 2025 recorded over **1.04 lakh migratory birds** at Sambhar Lake, **including large numbers of Lesser and Greater Flamingos**—a substantial increase from 7,147 birds in 2024.
    - This reflects **better environmental conditions**, which have enhanced the lake's role as a **crucial resting and feeding ground** for migratory species.
  - India hosts over **250 migratory bird species annually**, with hotspots including **Chilika Lake, Khichan, and Bharatpur**.
- **Ecological Importance of Sambhar Lake:**
  - Sambhar Lake is a critical stopover along the **Central Asian Flyway**, one of the world's major bird migration routes.
  - It is a **saline wetland**, located in the **Nagaur and Jaipur districts of Rajasthan**, bordered by the **Aravalli hills**.
    - It is the source of most of Rajasthan's salt production.
  - It was **designated a Ramsar site in 1990** due to its ecological significance.

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## Flamingos



- **About:** It belongs to the family *Phoenicopteridae*.
  - There are **six species** of flamingo namely the [Greater flamingo](#) (state bird of Gujarat), Chilean flamingo, Lesser flamingo, Caribbean flamingo, Andean flamingo, and Puna flamingo that inhabit lakes, mudflats, and shallow lagoons in the Americas, Africa, Asia, and Europe.
- **Distinctive Appearance:** Known for their **vibrant pink feathers**, flamingos have long legs and necks, webbed feet, and a distinctive downward-curving bill adapted for filter-feeding.
  - Flamingos' **habitats and food sources change by location and season, causing their colors to range** from dark or bright pink to orange, red, or pure white.
- **Adaptations:** Flamingos have adapted to **extreme environments** with high salinity and temperatures, where their predators are limited.
- **Ecological Role:** They play a crucial ecological role by maintaining the health of their habitats through their feeding activities, which affect **nutrient cycling** and [algae](#) populations.
- **Conservation Status:**
  - [IUCN Red List:](#)
    - **Vulnerable:** Andean flamingo (Pink Flamingo)
    - **Near Threatened:** Lesser flamingo, Puna flamingo, and Chilean flamingo
  - [CITES:](#) Appendix II
  - [Wildlife Protection Act, 1972:](#) Schedule II