

ZOOLOGICAL SURVEY OF PAKISTAN

MINISTRY OF CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATION

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news etter.

**WELCOME TO THE
LATEST EDITION OF
OUR NEWSLETTER**

THIS EDITION PRESENTS AN OVERVIEW OF SURVEYS, RESEARCH ACTIVITIES, AND WORKSHOPS CONDUCTED BY THE ZOOLOGICAL SURVEY OF PAKISTAN FROM OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2025, SHOWCASING ONGOING EFFORTS TOWARD BIODIVERSITY DOCUMENTATION, CONSERVATION, AND CAPACITY BUILDING.

VOLUME II

THIS NEWSLETTER SERVES AS A PLATFORM TO:

- Share updates on ZSP's ongoing research and conservation initiatives
- Highlight scientific achievements and capacity-building efforts
- Promote awareness of biodiversity conservation and wildlife research in Pakistan



ZOOLOGICAL SURVEY OF PAKISTAN

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Biodiversity Assessment of Margalla Hills National Park

Introduction

This survey is a joint effort by the Zoological Survey of Pakistan (ZSP) and the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board (IWMB) under the Ministry of Climate Change. ZSP, as the national organization for biodiversity research, and IWMB, responsible for the conservation of Margalla Hills National Park, are working together to conduct a comprehensive one-year biodiversity survey. This collaboration combines scientific expertise, field experience, and logistical support to better understand and protect the park's wildlife.



White-cheeked Bulbul
(*Pycnonotus leucotis*)



Objectives of the Study

- To develop a baseline record of plant and animal species in Margalla Hills National Park.
- To understand species distribution, habitat use, and the impact of human activities.
- To identify key habitats, important species, and major threats for better conservation planning.
- To periodically assess water quality in streams, ponds, and springs to ensure healthy aquatic ecosystems.



Musk mallow (*abelmoschus moschatus*)

About Margalla Hills National Park

The MHNP is located at the foothills of the Himalayan range and is the most accessible park in Pakistan due to its close proximity to the country's capital, Islamabad. The Park is located in the north of the Federal Capital of Islamabad, at 33°48'N, 73°10'E. It is spread over an area of about 15,800 hectares. It was declared a national park to conserve the natural resources and protect the wildlife from anthropogenic impacts. MHNP has a distinct altitudinal range and lies at the junction of Potohar Plateau and northern mountainous region of Pakistan. The topography of the area is rugged, varying in elevation comprising mainly steep slopes and gullies, where the rock structure is basically limestone. Natural springs and rainfall play an important role for streams in the MHNP.



Yellow throated marten (*Martes flavigula*)

Workshops & Meetings

Workshop on Wildlife Damages During Monsoon and Floods

Zoological Survey of Pakistan (ZSP) participated in a workshop on damages to wildlife during the monsoon and heavy floods of 2022 and 2025, held at RDF Jamshoro in October 2025. The workshop focused on assessing impacts on wildlife and discussing strategies for mitigation, rescue, and future preparedness.



ZSP Visit to Pakistan Museum of Natural History (PMNH) Islamabad

In November 2025, officers from the Zoological Survey of Pakistan (ZSP), Islamabad, visited the Pakistan Museum of Natural History to assess the zoological specimens handed over by ZSP under the 2010 MoU and conducted a thorough examination of the collection under the directions of the Additional Secretary, Ministry of Climate Change & Environmental Coordination. This visit aimed to ensure proper documentation and management of the specimens and strengthen collaboration between ZSP and PMNH.



Steering Committee Meeting Punjab Wildlife Census Project

Zoological Survey of Pakistan (ZSP) participated in the Steering Committee Meeting for the Punjab Wildlife Census Project held on 24 November 2025. The meeting reviewed progress, methodology, and coordination among stakeholders for effective implementation of the wildlife census across Punjab.



WWF-Pakistan Indus River Dolphin Event

The Director, Zoological Survey of Pakistan (ZSP), participated in the 25-Year Celebration of WWF-Pakistan's Indus River Dolphin Conservation and International River Dolphin Day held on 4 December 2025 in Islamabad. The Honorable Federal Minister Dr. Musadiq Malik was the chief guest of the event. The event highlighted national efforts for the conservation of the Indus River Dolphin and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to biodiversity conservation and sustainable water management.



Seminar on Water Security and Urban Resilience

Zoological Survey of Pakistan (ZSP) attended a seminar on Water Security and Urban Resilience held in Islamabad on 18th December 2025 at Ramada Hotel, organized by the Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Islamabad Water. The seminar emphasized sustainable water management, climate resilience, and urban planning challenges in the context of climate change.



Participation in Bid Evaluation under Green Pakistan Programme

In December 2025, the Zoological Survey of Pakistan (ZSP) participated in the evaluation of bid documents under the Green Pakistan Programme. The department provided technical support in reviewing proposals related to the establishment of Botanical Evaluation, contributing its expertise to ensure transparency, quality, and alignment with project objectives. This participation reflects ZSP's continued role in supporting national environmental initiatives through technical and professional input.



National Validation Discussion on Revised NBSAP (2025–2030)

The Zoological Survey of Pakistan (ZSP) participated in the National Validation Discussion on the revised National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP 2025–2030) and the preparation of Pakistan's 7th National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), held on 30th December 2025 in Islamabad. The discussion was organized by the Ministry of Climate Change & Environmental Coordination in collaboration with UNDP under the GEF-supported global NBSAP revision programme. ZSP contributed technical inputs to support alignment of national biodiversity priorities with the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and strengthen evidence-based biodiversity planning and reporting.



During October–December 2025, the Zoological Survey of Pakistan (ZSP) actively contributed to key national initiatives related to biodiversity conservation, wildlife management, and environmental planning. ZSP participated in technical evaluations under the Green Pakistan Programme, national biodiversity policy processes including the revision of Pakistan's NBSAP and preparation of the 7th National Report to CBD, and inter-agency coordination forums and workshops on wildlife impacts, water security, and urban resilience. These engagements reflect ZSP's central role in providing scientific expertise, evidence-based inputs, and institutional support for informed decision-making and effective biodiversity governance in Pakistan.

SURVEYS

Oct – Dec 2025

Punjab Urial Population Survey Salt Range

The Zoological Survey of Pakistan (ZSP) conducted a comprehensive population survey of the Punjab Urial (*Ovis vignei punjabiensis*) from 8th October 2025 to 22nd October 2025, across the Salt Range, covering the districts of Chakwal, Jhelum, Mianwali, Khushab, and Talagang. The survey aimed to assess population status, distribution, and habitat use of this important wild sheep species. During the survey, a total of **5,989** Punjab Urial individuals were recorded across various protected areas, community-based conservancies, reserve forests, and potential habitats.

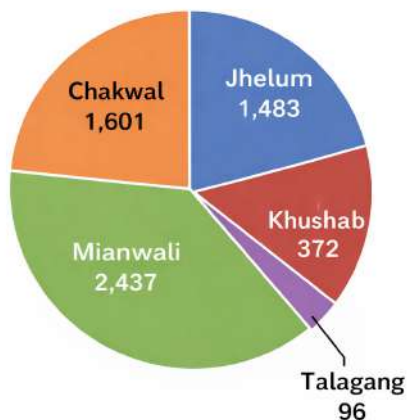
The highest population density was recorded in Kalabagh Community-Based Conservancy (Mianwali), reflecting effective protection and habitat management. The findings provide a strong scientific baseline for future conservation planning, habitat protection, and sustainable management of the Punjab Urial in the Salt Range.

District-wise estimated population recorded:

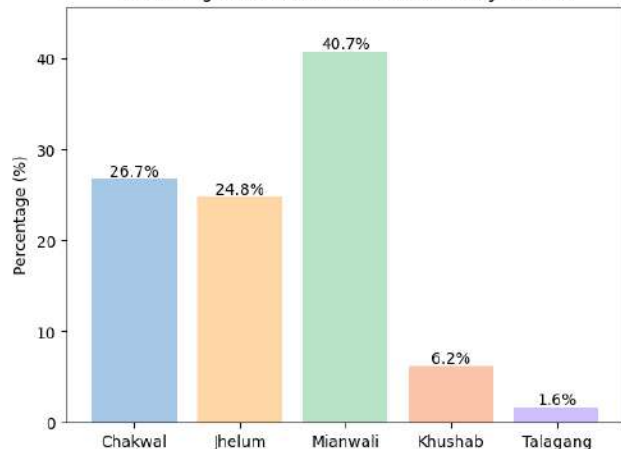
District	Individuals
Chakwal	1,601
Jhelum	1,483
Mianwali	2,437
Khushab	372
Talagang	96



Punjab Urial Population Results



Percentage Distribution of Individuals by District



Rut Season Survey of Kashmir Markhor (*Capra falconeri cashmirensis*) in the Chitral Wildlife Division and Chitral Gol National Park

Rut season population surveys of the Kashmir Markhor were conducted from 22nd to 26th December 2025 using the vantage point count method, which is well suited to the terrain of Chitral Wildlife Division. The surveys were jointly undertaken by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Wildlife Department in collaboration with WWF-Pakistan, Zoological Survey of Pakistan, Pakistan Forest Institute, Snow Leopard Foundation, and Pakistan Museum of Natural History. Preliminary findings indicate that the Markhor population has remained stable compared to the previous census of 2,669 individuals recorded in 2024.

The sustained conservation outcomes reflect the effective collaboration between government institutions and local communities. To further strengthen conservation measures, it is recommended that livestock grazing and fuelwood collection, particularly during the rutting season, be effectively regulated and monitored to minimize disturbance, prevent disease transmission, and reduce potential human–wildlife conflicts.

Kashmir Markhor (*Capra falconeri cashmirensis*)



Asian Water Bird Census Punjab 2025

The Asian Waterbird Census (AWC) is conducted annually across Asia to monitor populations of migratory and resident waterbirds. In Pakistan, the Zoological Survey of Pakistan (ZSP) has been carrying out the Mid-Winter Waterbirds Census, including waterfowl, since 1982 in compliance with the Ramsar Convention and the Convention on Migratory Birds. These censuses are conducted in collaboration with provincial wildlife departments and play an important role in raising awareness among local communities about migratory birds and wetland ecosystems.

The key objectives of the survey are to study the population dynamics of migratory ducks, geese, waders, and resident waterbirds, assess population trends, and develop recommendations for the conservation of species and their habitats.

The survey was carried out in Punjab during December. Major wetlands surveyed included Namal Lake, Chashma Barrage, Jinnah Barrage, Kallar Kahar Lake, Uchali Wetland Complex (Uchali Lake, Khabeki, and Jhallar Lake), Head Marala, Rasul Barrage, and Head Qadirabad.

Mallard duck (Anas platyrhynchos)

Findings:

- Namal Lake has largely been converted into grazing land, and no migratory waterbirds were recorded during the survey.
- Wetland showed low water levels at the time of the survey.
- Khabeki, Jhallar and Uchali Lake exhibited low water levels, potentially affecting waterbird habitat quality.



Bar headed goose (Anser indicus)



Northern Shoveler (Spatula clypeata)



Purple Heron (Ardea purpurea)



OONGOING ACTIVITIES

Biodiversity Assessment of Margalla Hills national Park Islamabad

This survey is a collaborative initiative between the Zoological Survey of Pakistan (ZSP) and the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board (IWMB) under the Ministry of Climate Change to conduct a one-year comprehensive biodiversity assessment of Margalla Hills National Park, combining scientific expertise and field experience to support wildlife conservation.

Development of Dashboard for Digitalization of Biodiversity Data

The development of a digital dashboard for biodiversity data aims to streamline the collection, storage, analysis, and visualization of biodiversity information. This initiative will support the digitalization of species records, survey data, and ecological indicators, enabling timely access to reliable data for researchers, policymakers, and conservation managers. The dashboard will enhance data-driven decision-making, improve inter-agency data sharing, and strengthen monitoring and reporting of biodiversity trends at national and sub-national levels.

Asian Water Bird Census Punjab 2026

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