

Key Facts about Gangetic Dolphin

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Gangetic Dolphin Latest News

The first ever estimate of Gangetic dolphins, the only riverine dolphins in India, has found 6,327 of them in the river Ganga and its tributaries.

About Gangetic Dolphin

- It is a **freshwater species** and **one of the few river dolphins** found in the world.
- It inhabits the **Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna** and **Karnaphuli-Sangu river systems** of **Nepal, India, and Bangladesh**.
- **Common Names:** Blind dolphin, Ganges dolphin, Ganges **susu**, hihu, side-swimming dolphin, South Asian River Dolphin
- Scientific name: *Platanista gangetica*
- As an indicator of the health of the freshwater ecosystem, the Ganges River Dolphin has been recognized by the government of India as its **National Aquatic Animal**.

Gangetic Dolphin Features

- A long, **thin snout**, rounded belly, **stocky body**, and **large flippers** are characteristics of the Ganges River dolphin.
- It weighs up to 150 kg.
- The calves are chocolate brown at birth and become **grayish brown in adulthood** with a smooth and hairless skin.
- Females are larger than males. The maximum size of a female is 2.67 m and of a male 2.12 m.
- It feeds majorly on fishes and is **usually found in counter-current systems** of the main river channel.
- Its **eyes lack lens**, and as a result, this species is also referred to as the “**blind dolphin**”.
- They have a **highly developed bio-sonar system** that facilitates them **to hunt** for fish even in murky waters.
- They **emit an ultrasonic sound** which **reaches the prey**. The dolphin then **registers this image in its mind** and subsequently catches hold of its prey.
- Being a mammal, the Ganges River dolphin **cannot breathe in the water** and must surface every 30-120 seconds.
- **Because of the sound it produces** when breathing, the animal is popularly **referred to as the ‘Susu’**.

Gangetic Dolphin Conservation Status

- **IUCN: Endangered**
- Wildlife (Protection) Act: Schedule-I
- CITES: Appendix I

Gangetic Dolphin FAQs

Q1. Where is Gangetic Dolphin found in India?

Ans. The distribution range of the Ganges river dolphins in India covers seven states namely, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal.

Q2. Which is the National Aquatic Animal of India?

Ans. Gangetic Dolphin

Q3. What is the IUCN status of Gangetic Dolphin?

Ans. Endangered

Source: **TH**

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