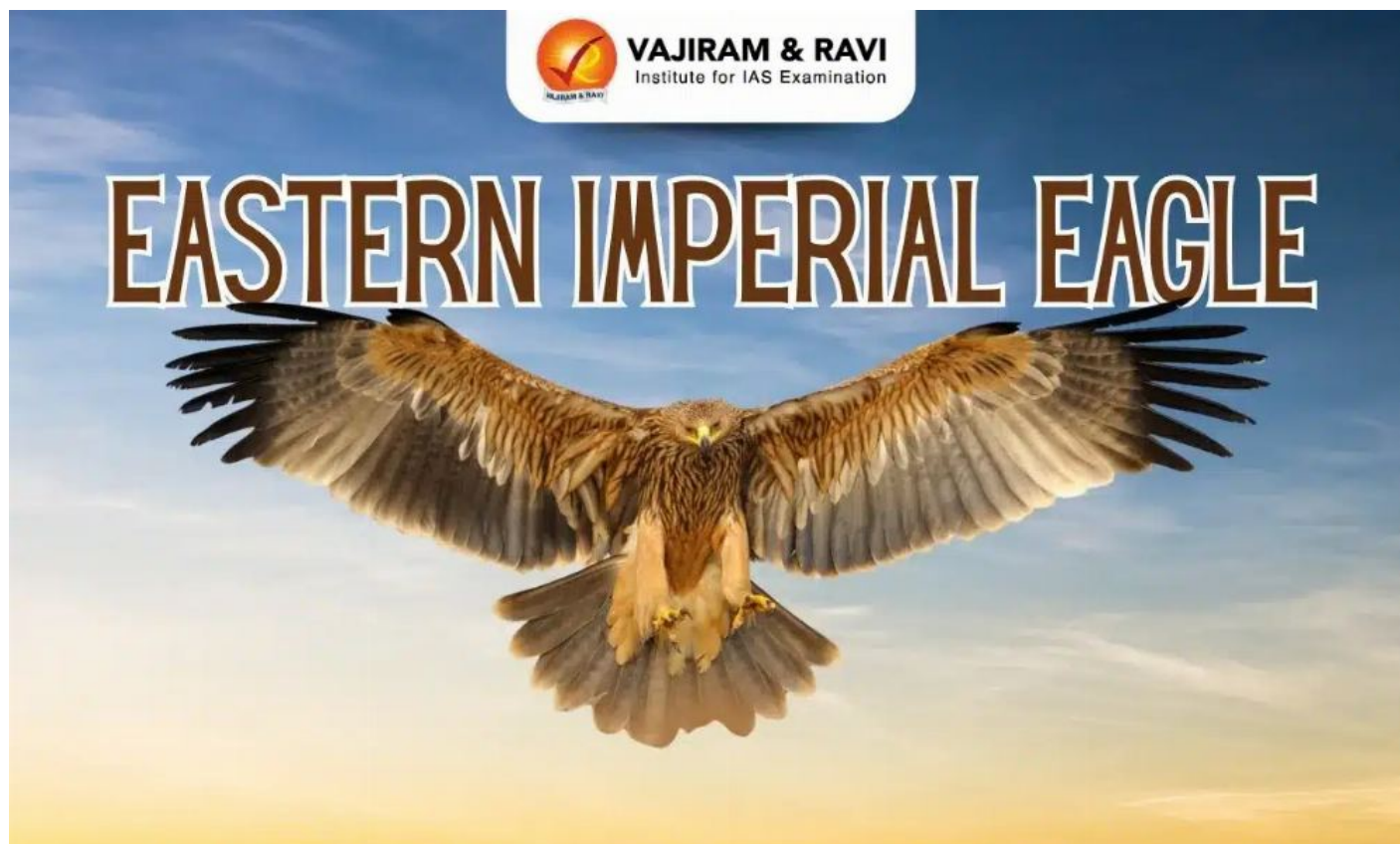


Eastern Imperial Eagle

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Eastern Imperial Eagle

Wildlife enthusiasts recently confirmed the presence of an Eastern Imperial Eagle visiting the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR) during the winter migratory season.

About Eastern Imperial Eagle

- It is a **large bird of prey**.
- Scientific Name: *Aquila heliaca*

Eastern Imperial Eagle Distribution

- It breeds in **southeastern Europe** and extensively through **West and Central Asia**.
- Most populations are **migratory and winter in northeastern Africa, the Middle East and South and East Asia**.
- **Like all eagles**, the eastern imperial eagle is a member of the **family Accipitridae**. Furthermore, its **well feathered legs** mark it as a member of the **subfamily Aquilinae**.

Eastern Imperial Eagle Features

- It is the **second largest eagle** to reside **in Europe**. It can grow to a length of about 0.92 meters.
- It can have a wingspan approaching 2.14 meters and have a mass of about 3.6 kilograms.
- The species displays **reverse sexual dimorphism**, as do most birds of prey, in which **males are usually smaller** than the females.
- **Adults** are **black-brown** in color. They have a **pale golden crown and nape** and a **grey base that extends to the tail**.
- Like other eagles, they have **strong legs and feet**. Their **feet include long, curved talons** that they **use to seize, kill, and carry their prey**.
- **Average lifespan: 56 years**

Eastern Imperial Eagle Conservation Status

It is classified as '**Vulnerable**' under the IUCN Red List.

Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (MTR)

- It is located in the Nilgiris District of **Tamil Nadu**, spread over 321 sq. km. at the **tri-junction** of three states, viz., **Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu**.
- It lies on the northeastern and northwestern **slopes of the Nilgiri hills**, which is a part of the **Western Ghats**.
- It is part of the **Nilgiris Biosphere Reserve**, the **first biosphere reserve in India**.
- The name **Mudumalai** means "**the ancient hill range**". Indeed, it is as **old as 65 million years, when the Western Ghats were formed**.
- **Habitat**: A variety of habitats ranging from **tropical evergreen forest, moist deciduous forest, moist teak forest, dry teak forest, secondary grasslands, and swamps** are found here.
- **River**: The **Moyar River** runs through the reserve.
- The **Oscar-winning 'Elephant Whisperers'** was filmed at the **Theppakadu Elephant Camp**, located inside the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve.
- **Flora**:
 - It has **tall grasses**, commonly referred to as "**Elephant Grass**", **bamboo** of the giant variety, and valuable **timber species like teak, rosewood**, etc.
 - It has **wild relatives of cultivated plants**, viz., **wild rice, ginger**, turmeric, cinnamon, etc.
 - The habitat also has **swampy areas (Vayals) and grasslands**.
- **Fauna**:
 - The faunal assemblage includes: **elephant, gaur, sambar, four-horned antelope**, spotted deer, barking deer, blackbuck, wild pig, mouse deer, and predators like tigers, leopards, and wild dogs.
 - Around **8% of the total bird species in India** can be found in the region.

Source: **TH**