

## National Parks in Karnataka, Wildlife Sanctuaries, Ramsar Sites

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# NATIONAL PARKS IN KARNATAKA

Karnataka, located in southern India, is home to **five prominent national parks**: Bandipur, Nagarhole, Anshi, Bannerghatta, and Kudremukh. Each park features **distinct ecosystems**, from dense forests to rich wildlife habitats, playing a crucial role in **biodiversity conservation** and maintaining the ecological balance of the region. The detailed description of all the five National Parks in Karnataka along with wildlife sanctuaries and Ramsar sites is discussed below.

### 5 National Parks in Karnataka

Karnataka is home to **five well-known national parks** that showcase the state's ecological diversity and natural heritage. From the dense forests of the **Western Ghats** to dry deciduous landscapes, these parks support a wide range of flora and fauna. They are crucial for **protecting endangered species** and promoting sustainable wildlife conservation. The details about 5 National Parks in Karnataka have been shared below.

#### 1. Anshi National Park and Dandeli-Anshi (Kali) Tiger Reserve

Anshi National Park, located in the Uttara Kannada district of Karnataka, lies along the banks of the Kali River in the **Western Ghats**. It is part of the Dandeli Wildlife Sanctuary and together they were declared a Project Tiger Tiger Reserve, now renamed as Kali Tiger Reserve.

- **Vegetation:** Deciduous forest and montane rainforest.
- **Major Flora:** Cinnamon, bamboo, eucalyptus.
- **Major Fauna:** Bengal tiger (EN), elephants (EN), black panther (VU), wild boars, bonnet macaque, Malabar civet, Malabar giant squirrel.
- **Major Avifauna:** Adjutant stork, great hornbill.

The reserve plays a significant role in preserving endangered species and supporting ecological connectivity in the Western Ghats.

## 2. Bandipur National Park and Tiger Reserve

Bandipur National Park is located in Chamarnajagar district of Karnataka and was established as a tiger reserve under **Project Tiger in 1973**. It forms part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, along with Nagarhole National Park, Mudumalai National Park (Tamil Nadu), and Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary (Kerala).

- **Vegetation:** Dry and moist deciduous forests with shrubs.
- **Major Flora:** Teak, rosewood, sandalwood, clumping bamboo, Indian laurel, kadam tree.
- **Major Fauna:** Tigers, Indian elephants, gaurs, sloth bears, chausings, dholes, chital, sambar, gray langurs.
- **Threats:** Wildlife fatalities due to speeding vehicles, habitat fragmentation, deforestation, invasive species (Lantana, Parthenium), and disease transmission from cattle.

## 3. Bannerghatta National Park

Located near Bangalore, Bannerghatta National Park is an important part of an elephant wildlife corridor connecting Biligirirangana Hills and Sathyamangalam forests.

- **Vegetation:** Moist deciduous forest and scrubland.
- **Major Flora:** Sandalwood, bamboo, eucalyptus.
- **Major Fauna:** Elephants, Bengal tiger, leopard, gaur, sloth bear, Indian gazelle, spotted deer, bonnet macaque.
- **Major Avifauna:** Flamingo, pelican.
- **Threats:** Illegal granite mining near critical elephant corridors.

## 4. Kudremukh National Park

Kudremukh National Park, in Chikkamagaluru district, derives its name from Kudremukh Peak (1,892 m), which resembles a horse's face. The Tunga and Bhadra Rivers flow through the park.

- **Vegetation:** Semi-evergreen and moist deciduous forests, shola grasslands.

- **Major Fauna:** Malabar civets, lion-tailed macaques (EN), Malabar giant squirrels, chevrotain, bonnet macaque.
- **Threats:** Iron ore mining, tourism, and construction activities.

## 5. Nagarahole (Rajiv Gandhi) National Park and Tiger Reserve

Located in the foothills of the Western Ghats, Nagarahole is part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve. The Nagarahole River joins the Kabini River, which separates Nagarahole from Bandipur National Park.

- **Vegetation:** Moist and dry deciduous forests, bamboo, swamp forests.
- **Major Flora:** Teak, rosewood, sandalwood, silver oak.
- **Major Fauna:** Bengal tiger, leopard, Indian elephant, gaur, chital, chausingha, marsh crocodile.
- **Special Notes:** The park is home to the indigenous **Jenu Kuruba tribe**. Rare black panther sightings have been documented.
- **Threats:** Tourism, forest fragmentation, poaching.

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## Wildlife Sanctuaries of Karnataka

Karnataka is home to numerous **wildlife sanctuaries** that protect a wide range of flora and fauna across diverse habitats, including forests, grasslands, and riverine **ecosystems**. These sanctuaries play a vital role in **conserving endangered species** and supporting ecological balance. They also serve as important sites for **research, eco-tourism, and environmental education**.

### Bhimgad Wildlife Sanctuary

Located in Belgaum district, near Jamboti Village, it is contiguous with **Madei, Bhagwan Mahaveer, Mollem National Park, and Dandeli Wildlife Sanctuary**.

- **Unique Feature:** Barapede caves, breeding site of **Wroughton's free-tailed bat**.

### Brahmagiri Wildlife Sanctuary

In Kodagu district, it is contiguous with Kerala's Aralam Wildlife Sanctuary.

- **Major Fauna:** Lion-tailed macaque (EN), Malabar giant squirrel, Nilgiri marten.

### Bukkapatna Wildlife Sanctuary

Located in Sira Taluk, Tumakuru district.

- **Specialty:** Second chinkara sanctuary in Karnataka, also houses four-horned and blackbuck antelopes.

### Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary

Spans Mandya, Chamarajanagar, and Ramanagar districts.

- **Fauna:** Tigers, elephants, Malabar giant squirrels, grizzled giant squirrels, mugger crocodiles.

### Daroji Sloth Bear Sanctuary

Located in Ballari district, Asia’s first sloth bear sanctuary.

### Gudekote Sloth Bear Wildlife Sanctuary

South of Daroji, protects sloth bears and includes prehistoric sites, rock paintings, and temples.

### Other Sanctuaries

- **Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary:** Largest bird sanctuary in Karnataka; migratory birds from Siberia and Latin America.
- **Ramadevara Betta Vulture Sanctuary:** India’s first vulture sanctuary; houses critically endangered species.
- **Sharavathi Valley Wildlife Sanctuary:** Encompasses Jog Falls and Linganamakki Reservoir.
- **Yadahalli Chinkara Sanctuary:** Protects Indian gazelle; first chinkara sanctuary in Karnataka.
- **Adichunchanagiri Peacock Sanctuary:** Focus on peacock conservation.
- **Melkote Temple Wildlife Sanctuary:** Protects Grey Wolf habitat.

### Ramsar Sites of Karnataka

Karnataka is home to four Ramsar Sites, wetlands of international importance, that play a crucial role in conserving the state’s aquatic ecosystems. These include **Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary, Ankasamudra Bird Conservation Reserve, Magadi Kere Conservation Reserve, and Aghanashini Estuary.**

#### The Four Ramsar Sites of Karnataka:

1. **Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary:** Situated near Srirangapatna on the Kaveri River, it is known as Karnataka’s ‘Pakshi Kashi’ due to its rich bird diversity and was the state’s first Ramsar site.
2. **Ankasamudra Bird Conservation Reserve:** A human-made irrigation tank in Vijayanagara district, it supports **biodiversity** including species like Painted Storks and Black-headed Ibises.
3. **Magadi Kere Conservation Reserve:** Located near Gadag, this human-made wetland is an important wintering ground for migratory waterfowl such as the Bar-headed Goose.
4. **Aghanashini Estuary:** Where the Aghanashini River meets the Arabian Sea, this estuarine system is rich in mangroves and supports a variety of fish and bird species.

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