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**News:** Spot billed pelicans dying en masse in Andhra Pradesh

- A nematode infestation has led to mass mortality of spot billed pelicans (*Pelicanus philippensis*) at Telineelapuram Important Bird Area (IBA) in Naupada swamp of Srikakulam district in Andhra Pradesh.
- Over 150 spot billed pelicans have succumbed to the infestation since December, according to Forest officials, with 21 birds dying in the past 72 hours alone.

## **Spot Billed Pelican**

- The **spot-billed or grey pelican** is a **member of the pelican family**.
- It breeds in **southern Asia from southern Iran across India east to Indonesia**.
- It is a bird of **large inland and coastal waters, especially large lake**.
- At a distance they are difficult to differentiate from other pelicans in the region although it **is smaller but at close range the spots on the upper mandible, the lack of bright colours and the greyer plumage are distinctive**.
- In some areas these birds nest in large colonies close to human habitations.
- The IUCN Status of Spot Billed Pelican is **Near Threatened (NT)**.
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