

17– 10 – 2024

News: Great white pelicans

- Along with Siberian cranes and flamingos, Great white pelicans are increasingly avoiding Indian wetlands due to habitat destruction.

Flamingo

- There are 6 flamingo species found around the world namely American Flamingo, Andean Flamingo, Chilean Flamingo, Greater Flamingo, James's Flamingo, and Lesser Flamingo.
- Greater Flamingo is the largest and most widespread flamingo species.
- These are the state bird of Gujarat.
- They are categorised as "least concern (LC)" in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.
- These are found in various regions of Africa, the southeastern parts of Asia as well as southern Europe.
- In Asia, their distribution range includes the coastal areas of India and Pakistan.

- Northern populations of these birds often migrate to warm regions during winter due to various reasons like scarcity of food, water-level changes, and competition within a single colony.

Characteristics

- These species form monogamous pairs which mean each pair remains together for their entire lives.
- They get their characteristic pink colour from their diet of brine shrimps and algae available in the coastal wetlands. The flamingoes are the indicators of a healthy coastal environment.
- These omnivorous species feed on molluscs, crustaceans, insects, crabs, worms and small fishes. Their diet also consists of various plant materials such as algae, grass, decaying leaves, and shoots.
- These birds prefer saltwater lagoons in coastal areas. They also inhabit large alkaline and saline lakes.

Migration Pattern of Flamingo in India

- Experts note that nearly 100,000 to 150,000 flamingos migrate from Gujarat (including Kutch and Bhavnagar) and other scattered locations to Mumbai each November in search of food.
- Upon arrival, they establish themselves in the Thane Creek area (breeding grounds for Flamingos).