



Photo: Bhumesht Bhat

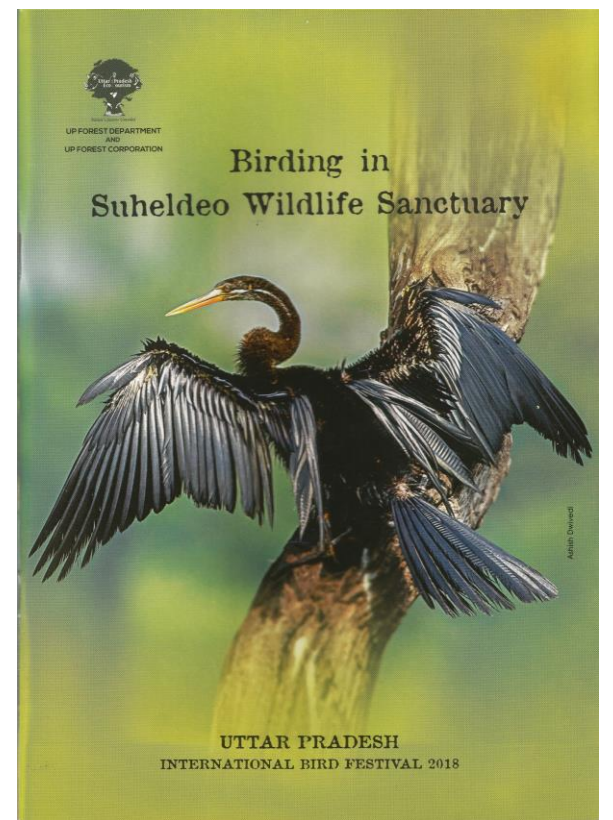


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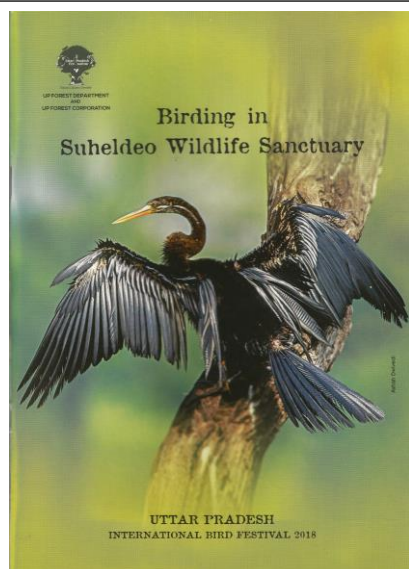
UTTAR PRADESH INTERNATIONAL BIRD FESTIVAL 2018



Birding in
Suheldeo Wildlife Sanctuary
(Feb. 11-12, 2018)

Niharika Singh
March 2018

Birding in Suheldev Wildlife Sanctuary (Feb. 11-12, 2018)
An Event of Uttar Pradesh International Bird Festival (2018)



In a bid to expand the birding horizon of the State, Uttar Pradesh Forest Corporation invited delegates of the third Uttar Pradesh International Bird Festival being held in Dudhwa National Park for Birding in Suheldeo Wildlife Sanctuary, on Feb. 11-12, 2018.

30 delegates, who included serious bird-watchers, photographers, travel-writers and researchers, from several states of India, visited the Sanctuary and explored several birding trails across multiple habitats - wetlands, forests, agricultural fields and Shivalik elevations.

Their collective reporting has yielded rich birding data which can go a long way in promoting national and international bird tourism, as well as strengthening bird conservation of globally critically endangered vultures and other threatened bird species in Uttar Pradesh.

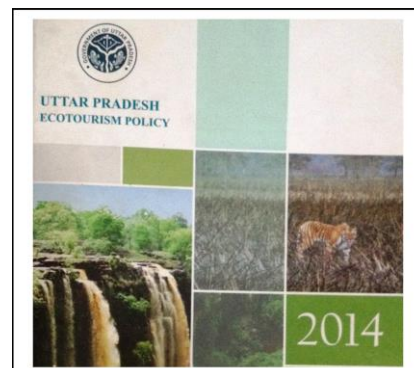
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ECOTOURISM IN UTTAR PRADESH

UTTAR PRADESH FOREST CORPORATION – NODAL AGENCY FOR ECOTOURISM IN UTTAR PRADESH

The Uttar Pradesh Ecotourism Policy, formulated in 2014, for promoting ‘responsible tourism’ in the State’s Protected Areas (national parks and sanctuaries), is implemented by **Uttar Pradesh Forest Corporation (UPFC)**. UPFC has developed nine ecotourism ‘circuits’, made up of clusters of Protected Areas (PAs), to “showcase wildlife, Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBA), tribal culture and natural landscapes in a manner which sensitizes visitors to the importance of forests as well elicits participation and benefits local communities”. These are:-



S. NO.	CIRCUIT	PROTECTED AREAS
1	WESTERN WILDLIFE CIRCUIT	AMANGARH, BIJNORE; SHIVALIK, SAHARANPUR; HASTINAPUR WLS
2	LION SAFARI AND RIVERINE CIRCUIT	TAJ NATURE WALK, AGRA; BEAR RESCUE CENTRE, AGRA; NATIONAL CHAMBAL SAFARI, ETAWAH; LION SAFARI, ETAWAH
3	TERAI TIGER CIRCUIT	CHUKA, PILIBHIT TIGER RESERVE; DUDHWA NATIONAL PARK; KATERNIAGHAT WLS; KISHANPUR WLS
4	BUNDHELKHAND ADVENTURE CIRCUIT	DEVGARH, LALITPUR; CHITRAKOOT ; KALINJAR, BANDA; MAHAVIR SWAMI WLS; VIDYASAGAR BIRD SANCTUARY
5	VINDHYA MOUNTAIN CIRCUIT	KAIMUR WLS; CHANDRAPRABHA WLS; HATHINALA, RENUKOOT; VIJAYGARH, SONBHADRA; CHUNAR/VINDHAM, MIRZAPUR
6.	WESTERN BIRD/WETLAND CIRCUIT	OKHLA BIRD SANCTUARY, SURAJPUR WETLAND, PATNA WLS, SARSAI NAWAR WETLAND, SAMAN WLS, MANIPUR; SUR SAROVAR BIRD SANCTUARY
7.	CENTRAL BIRD/WETLAND CIRCUIT	NAWABGANJ BIRD SANCTUARY, SANDI BIRD SANCTUARY, SAMASPUR BIRD SANCTUARY, LAKH BHAHOSI BIRD SANCTUARY
8.	GANGES BASIN CIRCUIT	NARORA, BULANDSHAHAR; KANNAUJ; BITHOOR, KANPUR;
9.	EASTERN WILDLIFE CIRCUIT	SUHELDEV WLS; SOHAGIBARWA WLS; PARVATI ARANGA BIRD SANCTUARY

UPFC facilitates ecotourism in the State through its website ‘upecotourism.com’. This enables prospective visitors can access information on ecotourism destinations being promoted by the Forest Department, as well as make online bookings and payments. In addition it organizes the annual Uttar Pradesh International Bird Festival – a mega-event intended to popularize the State as a bird-watching destination to a global audience.

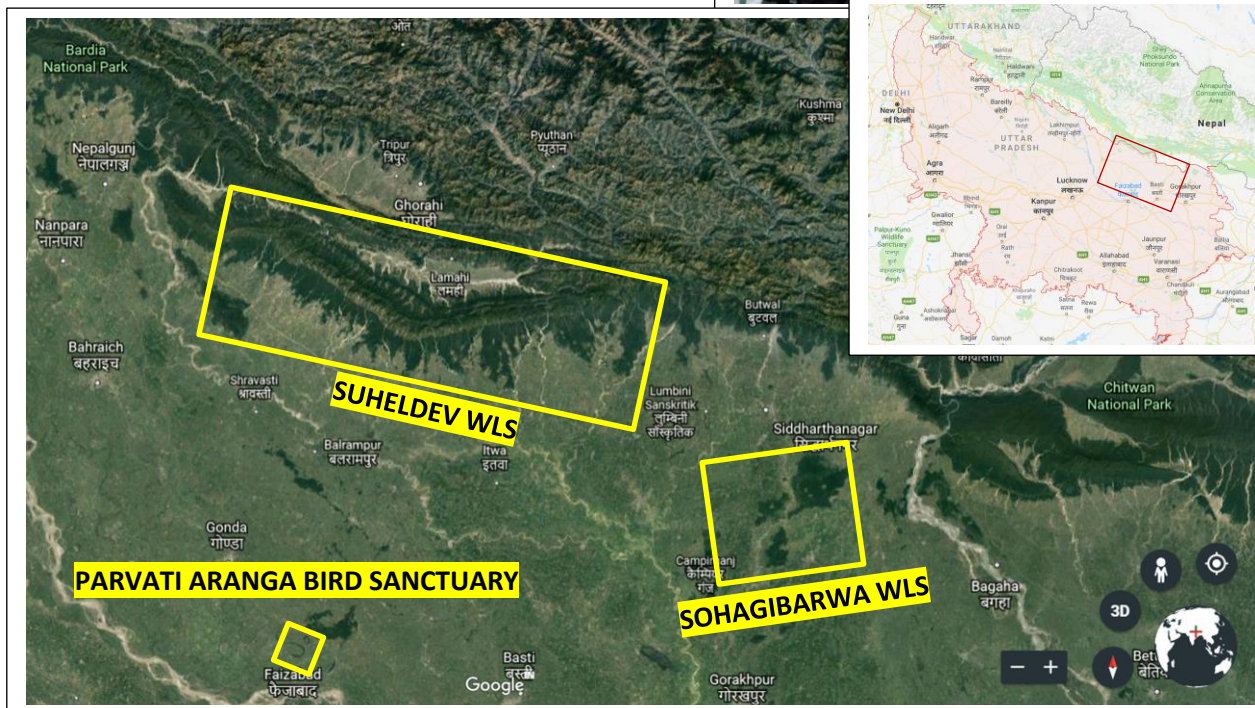
UPFC is expanding bird-watching opportunities in the State through the promotion of hitherto little known sanctuaries. **Birding in Suheldeo Wildlife Sanctuary on Feb. 11-12, 2018** on the margins of the Dudhwa International Bird Festival, was an attempt to showcase the excellent birding opportunities in one of the lesser known sanctuaries of the State.

EASTERN WILDLIFE CIRCUIT

The **Eastern Wildlife Circuit** of **UPFC** comprises of Suhelwa Forest Division, consisting of **Suheldeo Wildlife Sanctuary** in the districts of Balrampur and Shrawasti, **Parvati Aranga Bird Sanctuary** in Gonda as well **Sohagibarwa Wildlife Sanctuary** and Division in Maharajganj. Administered by respective Divisional Forest Officers (DFO), they fall under the jurisdiction of Chief of Conservator, Wildlife (East) Gonda.

Representative of the only Protected Bhabar tract in Uttar Pradesh and contiguous with the forests of Bardia-Banke National Park in Nepal, Suhelwa is a

Destination	Ongoing Activities	Online Booking
Western Wildlife Circuit		
Lion Safari & Riverine Circuit		
Terai Tiger Circuit		
Bundelkhand Adventure Circuit		
Vindhya Mountain Circuit		
Western Bird/Wetland Circuit		at Saras Auditorium on 5 Dec 2017
Central Bird / Wetland Circuit		
Ganges Basin Circuit		
Eastern Wildlife Circuit		
		Suhelwa Wildlife Sanctuary
		Sohagi Barwa Wildlife Sanctuary
		Parvati Arga Bird Sanctuary



promising tiger habitat of the Terai Arc Landscape (TAL) – a chain of forests on the foothills of the Himalayas, extending on both sides of the Indo-Nepal border, from Rajaji National Park in Uttarakhand, India to Parsa National Park in Nepal. Its 11 irrigation reservoirs are a magnet for migratory birds from both the Central Asian Flyway and the East Asian-Australian Flyway. It is home to 28 or 61% of U.P.'s 'threatened' bird species.

Classified as both an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA) and a data-deficient site by Birdlife International, Suheldeo Wildlife Sanctuary, located on Himalayan foothills, on the Indo-Nepal border, is as unexplored and under-birded site which often surprises and thrills bird-watchers with sighting of bird species hitherto unrecorded in the area.

Birding in Suheldev Wildlife Sanctuary (Feb. 11-12, 2018)
An Event of Uttar Pradesh International Bird Festival (2018)

IMPORTANT BIRD AND BIODIVERSITY AREA(S) (IBA) OF UTTAR PRADESH

The 25 designated Important Bird and Biodiversity Area(s) (IBA) in Uttar Pradesh, spread over multiple ecosystems - freshwater swamps, riverine systems, tropical grasslands, dry deciduous and evergreen forests, are indicative of the rich, diverse and globally significant birdlife found in the State. Of the 1200 species of birds recorded in India, Uttar Pradesh is home to approximately 500 species; of which 46 are globally threatened species.

S. NO.	I.B.A CODE	SITE NAME	AREA (SQ. KM.)	DISTRICT	HABITAT TYPE
1.	IN-UP-01	BAKHIRA WLS	28.94	SANT KABIR NAGAR	FRESHWATER SWAMP
2.	IN-UP-02	DUDHWA NP	490	LAKHINPUR KHERI	TROPICAL GRASSLAND
3.	IN-UP-03	HASTINAPUR WLS	2073	MUZAFFARNAGAR, MEERUT, GHAZIABAD, BIJNORE	TROPICAL DRY DECIDUOUS, TROPICAL SECONDARY SCRUB TROPICAL GRASSLAND
4	IN-UP-04	KATERNIAGHAT WLS	400.69	BAHRAICH	TROPICAL MOIST DECIDUOUS, RIVERINE VEGETATION, FRESHWATER SWAMP
5	IN-UP-05	KISHANPUR WLS	227	LAKHINPUR KHERI	TROPICAL DRY EVERGREEN FRESHWATER SWAMP TROPICAL GRASSLAND
6	IN-UP-06	KUDAIYYA MARSHLAND	3	MAINPURI	SEASONAL MARSH FRESHWATER SWAMP
7	IN-UP-07	KURRA JHEEL	2	ETAWAH, MAINPURI	FRESHWATER SWAMP
8	IN-UP-08	LAGGA-BAGGA	11.6	PILIBHIT	TROPICAL GRASSLAND TROPICAL DRY EVERGREEN FOREST
9	IN-UP-09	LAKHBAHOSI	80.24	FARRUKKHABAD	FRESHWATER SWAMP
10	IN-UP-10	NARORA	127	BULANDSHAHAR BADAUN	RIVERINE VEGETATION FRESHWATER SWAMP
11	IN-RJ-11	NATIONAL CHAMBAL WLS	52.00	KOTA, BUNDI	FRESHWATER SWAMP RIVERINE VEGETATION
12	IN-UP-12	NAWABGANJ WLS	2.25	UNNAO	FRESHWATER SWAMP
13	IN-UP-13	PARVATI ARANGA WLS	10.84	GONDA	FRESHWATER SWAMP
14	IN-UP-14	PATNA WLS	1.09	ETAH	FRESHWATER SWAMP
15	IN-UP-15	PAYAGPUR & SITADWAR COMPLEX	29.50	BAHRAICH	FRESHWATER SWAMP
16	IN-UP-16	SAMAN WLS	5.25	MAINPURI	FRESHWATER SWAMP
17	IN-UP-17	SAMASPUR WLS	7.99	RAIBAREILLY	FRESHWATER SWAMP
18	IN-UP-18	SANDI WLS	3.09	HARDOI	FRESHWATER SWAMP

Birding in Suheldev Wildlife Sanctuary (Feb. 11-12, 2018)
An Event of Uttar Pradesh International Bird Festival (2018)

19	IN-UP-19	SARSAI NAWAR LAKE	6.90	ETAWAH	FRESHWATER SWAMP
20	IN-UP-20	SAUJ LAKE	4.00	MAINPURI	FRESHWATER SWAMP
21	IN-UP-21	SHEIKHA JHEEL	2.50	ALIGARH	FRESHWATER SWAMP
22	IN-UP-22	SOHAGIBARWA WLS	428.20	MAHRAJGANJ	TROPICAL MOIST DECIDUOUS FOREST, FRESHWATER SWAMP
23	IN-UP-23	SUHELDEV WLS	452.47	BALRAMPUR, SHRAWASTI	TROPICAL MOIST DECIDUOUS FOREST
24	IN-UP-24	SUR SAROVAR WLS	4.03	AGRA	FRESHWATER SWAMP
25	IN-UP-25	SURHA TAAL WLS	34.32	BALLIA	FRESHWATER SWAMP

Most of the IBAs are in Protected Areas and have been incorporated by **UPFC** in its 'ecotourism circuits'. IBAs in National Chambal Sanctuary, covering a tri-state area, a portion of which is included in Lion Safari and Riverine Circuit and Dudhwa National Park, in Terai Tiger Circuit have been showcased by the Forest Department in the three Uttar Pradesh International Bird Festivals held so far. Forest Department proposes to move the venue of this mega-event to different PAs to enable bird/ecotourism to take root in all parts of the State.

UTTAR PRADESH INTERNATIONAL BIRD FESTIVAL

The Uttar Pradesh International Bird Festival, launched in 2015, is held annually in different parts of the State. Intended to popularize birding destinations of the State both in the country as well as among the international birding community, it has done a great deal to raise awareness about bird conservation across the State.



The tone and tenor for the Uttar Pradesh International Bird Festival was set in the first such event, held at National Chambal Sanctuary in Agra from Dec. 4-6, 2015. 80 Indian ornithologists and 25 international bird experts attended the event. During this period, Forest Divisions across the State conducted birding activity for students, mobilizing them to visit nearby bird habitats. The second Uttar Pradesh International Bird Festival, held at the same venue on Dec. 2-4, 2016, saw the participation of approximately 68 international delegates from 26 countries, several of whom were leading authors and scientists.

200 delegates from India and abroad were invited to the third Uttar Pradesh International Bird Festival held at Dudhwa National Park on Feb. 9-11, 2018. Talks by leading bird experts, birding safaris in and around Dudhwa National Park, home to over 350 bird species and a state-wide bird awareness drive marked this period. In addition a **Familiarization (FAM.) Trip** was organized to **Suheldev Wildlife Sanctuary** for creating awareness about this little known but important bird area, among interested delegates of the Dudhwa Bird Festival.

BIRDING IN SUHELDEO WILDLIFE SANCTUARY, FEB 11-12, 2018

FAM. TRIP FOR DELEGATES OF THIRD UTTAR PRADESH INTERNATIONAL BIRD FESTIVAL (2018)



Delegates at Dudhwa National Park 10.02.18

Photographers, bird-watchers, travel writers and bloggers were among the 26 delegates of the Dudhwa International Bird Festival, who visited Suheldeo Wildlife Sanctuary, as part of a one-day FAM (Familiarization) Trip organized by **Uttar Pradesh Forest Corporation**. It was intended to showcase the birding opportunities of the Sanctuary which according to **Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS)** is a 'first-class birding destination'.

Departing by bus, from Dudhwa National Park, at around 8.a.m on Feb.11, 2018, the concluding day of the Uttar Pradesh International Bird Festival, the delegates reached their tented campsite near Suhelwa Forest Rest House at around 2.p.m. First-time visitors, from far-off states such as New Delhi, Mumbai, Rajasthan, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Haryana and Chandigarh, they were very curious to learn about the Suheldeo Wildlife Sanctuary and its birding potential.



Delegates at Suhelwa Campsite 11.02.18



BUS ROUTE FROM DUDHWA NATIONAL PARK TO SUHELDEV WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

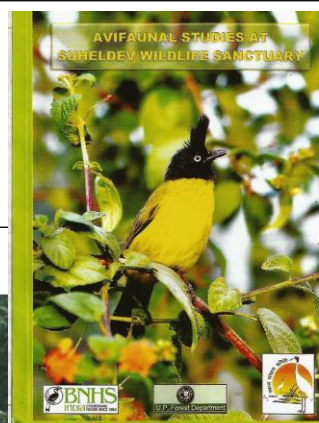
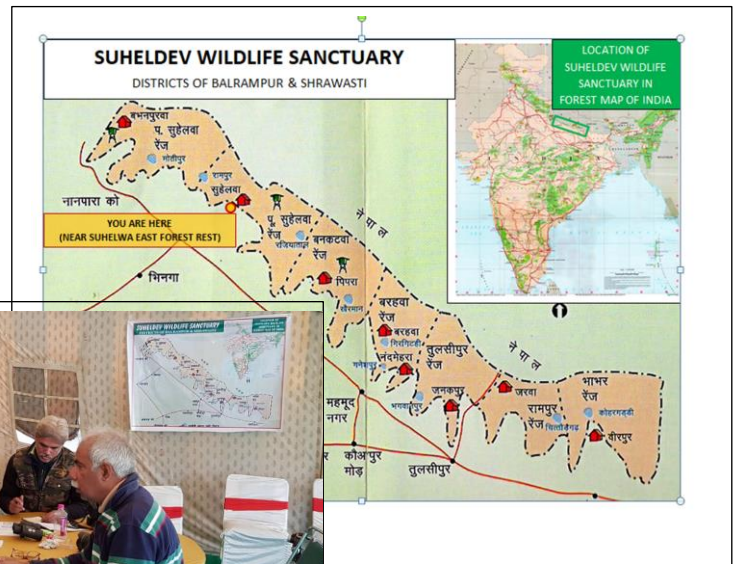
ORIENTATION OF DELEGATES

FEB. 11, 2018

Large location and trail maps were prominently displayed in the meal cum discussion area of the campsite. Information regarding the six birding trails to be explored was given along with the features of each trail. This helped to orient the delegates to their surroundings and gave them a deeper understanding of the area.

Recent reports of BNHS, WWF-India and WII were provided as reference and study

tools to focus the attention of delegates on the issues of animal and bird conservation being faced by the Sanctuary managers and local people.

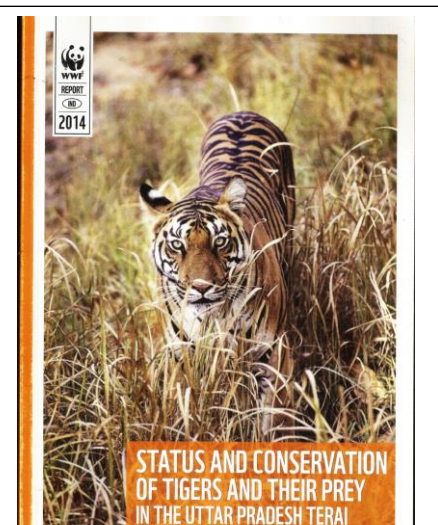
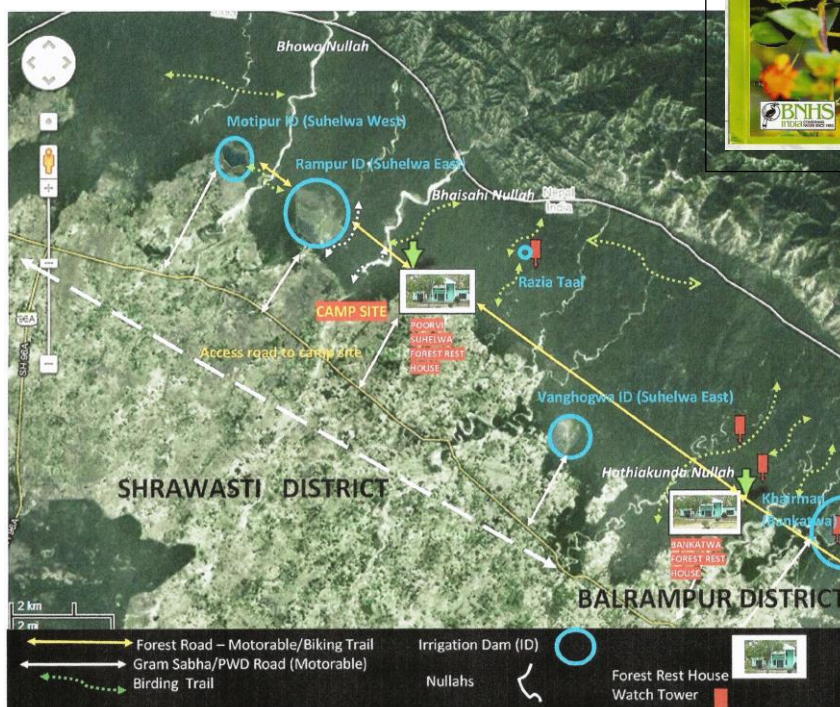


Significant findings of BNHS (2015) Report:

India has about 1200 bird species and Uttar Pradesh about 500. With nearly 300 birds species found in Suhelwa, it has approximately 60% of UP's and 25% of India's species.
 About 42 bird species faces serious threat in the State. Of these 26 species are found in Suhelwa. This represents 61% of UP's threatened species of birds. With approximately 60% of the State's birds, 61% of its threatened birds and 25% of the India's bird species...

IT QUALIFIES AS A FIRST CLASS BIRDING DESTINATION OF UTTAR PRADESH, NO LESS THAN DUDHWA OR ANY OTHER PARK OF INDIA

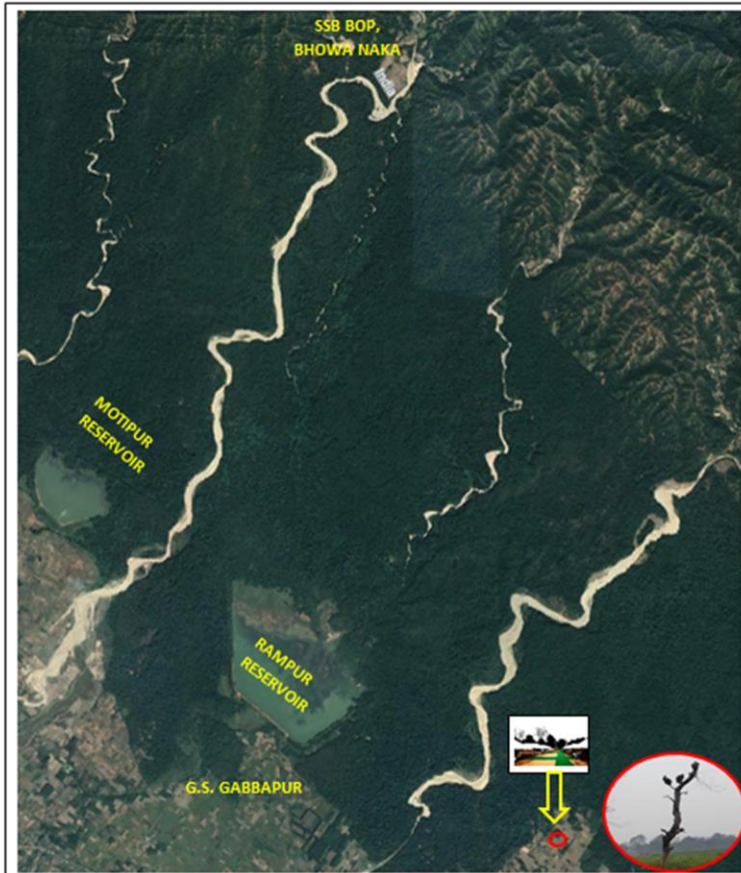
TRAIL MAP SHOWING DIFFERENT BIRD HABITATS OF AREA



RECCE OF AREA

FEB. 11, 2018

The delegates explored the birding areas in a 5-8 km. range of the campsite on their day of arrival. After lunching at the campsite, following their arrival from Dudhwa, the delegates were taken on recce trips in Suhelwa West and Suhelwa East ranges which covered several eBird designated hotspots.



Travelling in safari vehicles provided by UPFC, they visited forests in the vicinity of Motipur and Rampur Reservoirs and the SSB Border Outpost (BOP), near Bhowa Naka, on the Indo-Nepal border.



AREAS EXPLORED IN VICINITY OF CAMPSITE EXPLORED ON 11.2.18

Screenshot of three vulture species - Himalayan Vulture, Cinereous Vulture and White-rumped Vulture feeding on carrion
Courtesy: 'Photo essay: Avian Wonders of Suhelwa – a haven for bird lovers' by Rashmi Gopal Rao (15.3.18)



Several delegates photographed mixed flocks of vultures feeding on cattle carcass or roosting on trees.

Dr. Yogesh Parashar (left) belonging to Delhi Birders group generated the first eBird checklist of the event in which he recorded 62 bird species – 35 of which were water or shorebirds sighted at Rampur Reservoir. The checklist can be viewed on <https://ebird.org/india/hotspots/L3816942>.

EVENING CAMPSITE ACTIVITY

FEB. 11, 2018

Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) partnering with Uttar Pradesh Forest Department, organized the Uttar Pradesh International Bird Festival held at Dudhwa, as in the past. **Mr. Anshumali** of FICCI and his team managed the arrangements at Suhelwa campsite, with assistance from the District Administration of Shrawasti



Mr. Deepak Meena and Mr. Vijay Dhull interacting with delegates

Mr. Deepak Meena, District Magistrate, of Shrawasti, who had encouraged and supported **Birding in Suheldeo Wildlife Sanctuary**, since its inception participated enthusiastically in the evening activities along with Superintendent of Police, **Mr. Vijay Dhull**.



Dr. Rajat Bhargava, BNHS, speaking on birds of Suhelwa

Ornithologist, **Dr. Rajat Bhargava** of Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) chief researcher of the first scientific study of Suhelwa birds, entitled 'Avifaunal Studies at Suheldev Wildlife Sanctuary (2015)', pointed out that of the 298 species recorded in the Sanctuary, 29 species or 10% were listed under the 'threatened' category of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). This number represented 61% of Uttar Pradesh's threatened species and that the Sanctuary had a great role to play in the conservation of the State's threatened species. He stressed that protection of their habitat was of prime importance. He was supported by Chief Conservator of Forests (CCF), **Mr. Thomas Kuruvilla**, who also spoke of the need for budgetary

support and HR training for effective protection. Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) of Shrawasti District, outlined the measures being taken by the District Administration to check the veterinary use of Diclofenac, the primary cause for decline of vulture species across the globe. The delegates enjoyed the camp ambience and appreciated the concerted efforts taken to make **Birding in Suheldeo Wildlife Sanctuary** a memorable event.



Suhelwa campsite at night

MORNING BIRDING

FEB. 12, 2018



Rajendra Paswan, trail guide and EDC member escorts bird-watching party

The delegates formed teams of 4-6 persons and left the campsite by 7.am. on trails of their choice, for morning birding on Feb. 12, 2018. Safari vehicles requisitioned from Dudhwa and Katerniaghat and the skill and cooperation of the drivers added greatly to the birding experience of the delegates.

Delegates were provided with trail maps and requested to record bird sightings and locations. Signages marked the birding trails as well as the pick-up and drop-off points and other key locations. Villagers from hamlets bordering the Sanctuary were trained as trail and bird guides by Range Clerk, **Mr. K.B. Srivastava**, accompanied the birding teams, along with Forest Department staff.



Mr. Deepak Meena and Mr. Vijay Dhull on a birding expedition on 12.2.18

Mr. Deepak Meena and **Mr. Vijay Dhull** participated in the morning birding safari. They explored Bhowa and Rampur Bandha birding trails under the expert guidance of **Dr. Rajat Bhargawa**. Their party, accompanied by **Mr. Saurabh Sawant**, sighted 89 bird species during a trip lasting 2 hours and 46 minutes. Details of the birding trip, along with the bird checklist can be viewed on <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S42716271>.

The deep forest trail of Razia Tal was explored by **Mr. Satpal Singh Gandhi** and his team. They sighted 33 bird species, including the Spotted Forktail, a species absent in the updated 2018 BNHS checklist of 298 birds for Suhelwa.

Mr. Peeyush Sekhsaria and **Mr. Bhumesh Bhartiya** recorded 27 bird species on Hathiakuna-Pipra FRH trail, Bankatwa Range, including a Forest Wagtail – another addition to the BNHS list of 298 birds.



Peeyush Sekhsaria on the Hathiakuna-Pipra FRH Trail

MORNING BIRDING

FEB. 12, 2018



Dr. Satish Sharma and his team, which included Ms. Smita Goyal Gupta, Mr. Ram Mohan and Mr. Priyamvada Kumar, explored the Adbadwa Naka trail in Bankatwa Range. Approximately 44 bird species were spotted by them. These can be viewed on <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S42870504>

The Khairman Water Tower trail in Bankatwa Range, the furthest trail from the Campsite, which entailed a 20 km. drive through the forest was explored by, Mr. Sourajit Ghosal, Mr. Harish Chandra, Ms. Rashmi Gopal Rao and Ms. Precious Kamnei. They sighted 49 birds. Mr. Ghosal generated two checklists which can be viewed at <https://ebird.org/india/hotspot/L3817298> and <https://ebird.org/india/hotspot/L3816962>.

Dr. Yogesh Parashar has recorded 37 species on Feb.12, 2018 in the vicinity of Suhelwa Forest Rest House in East Suhelwa Range. His checklist can be viewed on <https://ebird.org/india/hotspot/L3817296>.



Trail Guide Niyamat Ali at the Khairman Watchtower Trail in Bankatwa Range

Birding in Suheldev Wildlife Sanctuary (Feb. 11-12, 2018)
An Event of Uttar Pradesh International Bird Festival (2018)

BIRD TRAIL SUMMARY

FEB.11-12, 2018



TRAIL DESC. <EBIRD HOTSPOT>	PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK EBIRD CHECKLIST FEB 11-12, 2018		PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK FEB 11-12, 2018	
	CHECKLIST	BIRD SPECIES	CHECKLIST	BIRD SPECIES
	TRAIL 1 BHOWA TRAIL	1(\$42716271) SAURABH SAWANT+	49	
TRAIL 2 RAMPUR BANDHA <SUHELWA (SUHELDEV) WLS—EAST SOHELWA FRH>	1(L3817296) YOGESH PARASHAR	37		
TRAIL 3 RAZIA TAAL			SATPAL GANDHI +	33
TRAIL 4 HATHIA K. - PIPRA FRH <SUHELWA (SUHELDEV) WLS –PIPRA FRH>	1(L3817298) SHOURAJIT GHOSAL+	61	PEEYUSH SEKHSARIA +	27
TRAIL 5 KHAIRMAN BANDHA <SUHELWA (SUHELDEV) WLS – KHAIRMAN RESERVOIR>	1(L3816962) SHOURAJIT GHOSAL+	8		
TRAIL 6 ADBADWA NAKA TRAIL	1(\$42870504) VOYAGES GOYAL	44		

PARTICIPANTS

FEB.11-12, 2018



ROW 1 (Seated) L-R

(1) PRIYANKA SINGH (2) RENUKA WALTER (3) RASHMI GOPAL RAO (4) PRECIOUS KAMEI (5) RAGINI PURI (6) NIHARIKA SINGH (7) KURUVILLA THOMAS (8) KANCHAN SRIVASTAVA (9) PARVEZ RUSTAM (8) SAURABH SAWANT (9) HARISH CHANDER (10) ANIL KUMAR SRIVASTAV (11) VIKRAM SINGH CHAUHAN (12) < DELEGATE>

ROW 2 (Standing) L-R

(1)MANDAR KULKARNI (2) PEEYUSH SEKHSARIA (3) <DELEGATE> (4) <DELEGATE> (5)JEEVRAKHAN YADAV (6) PRAKASH MEHTA (7) <DELEGATE> (8) SAURABH ARYA (9)RAJENDRA PRASAD (10) TILAK RAM ARYA (11) BHANU SRIVASTAVA (12) <FOREST DEP> (13)RAMANAND MAURAYA (14) <FOREST DEP> > (15) <FOREST DEP> > (16)

ROW 3 (Standing) L-R

(1) SMITA GOYAL GUPTA (2) <TRAIL GUIDE> (3) <FOREST DEP> (4) <FOREST DEP> (5) YOGESH PARASHAR (6) LALLU (6) <TRAIL GUIDE> (7) SIYARAM VERMA (8) DAYANAND (9) VIJAY KUMAR (10) <TRAIL GUIDE>

Delegates absent in Group Photograph

(1) SATPAL SINGH GANDHI (2) SOURAJIT GHOSAL (3) BHUMESH BHARTI (4) SATISH KUMAR SHARMA



MR. SATPAL SINGH GANDHI AND DELEGATES AT A MEAL-TIME DISCUSSION



MR. DEEPAK MEENA AND MR. VIJAY DHULL, INTERACT WITH MR. VIKRAM SINGH CHAUHAN AND OTHERS



MR. SOURAJIT GHOSAL IN DISCUSSION WITH MR. KURUVILLA THOMAS, CCF WILDLIFE (EAST) GONDA, MR. PEEYUSH SEKHSARIA AND MR. BHUMESH BHARTI (ALL SEATED)

OUTCOME

INCORPORATION OF BIRDING IN SUHELDEO WILDLIFE SANCTUARY IN THE UTTAR PRADESH INTERNATIONAL BIRD FAIR

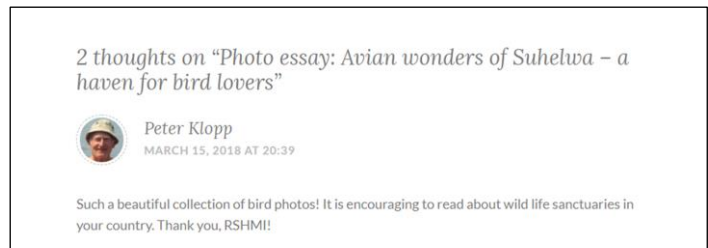
1. Awareness of birding opportunities in Suheldeo Wildlife Sanctuary to birding community in India and abroad

a. Distribution of booklet '**Birding in Suheldeo Wildlife Sanctuary**' to over 100 delegates of Uttar Pradesh International Bird Festival at Dudhwa National Park.

A condensed compilation of report on the avifaunal diversity of the Sanctuary based on research done by Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), this information booklet, was published and distributed by UP Forest Corporation. It helped in spreading awareness of Suheldeo Wildlife Sanctuary to the participants of the Dudhwa Bird Fair and motivated a section of the birding community to participate in Birding in Suheldeo Wildlife Sanctuary, Feb. 11-12, 2018.

b. Around 30 professional photographers, travel bloggers and writers, bird-watchers and other interested persons from across the country visited Suhelwa Wildlife Sanctuary. Images being shared by them on social media has generated an interest in the Sanctuary, which was previously absent.

c. Travel articles and blogs on the area have evoked appreciation for Suhelwa Wildlife Sanctuary from nature lovers across the world.



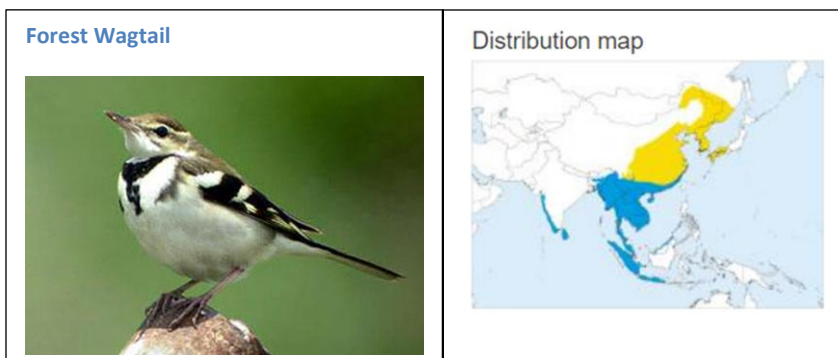
PUMPKINS, MUSTARD FIELDS, COWS, CALVES AND FACES OF SUHELWA – A PHOTO ESSAY (23.2.18)

<http://rashminotes.com/2018/03/15/photo-essay-avian-wonders-of-suhelwa-a-haven-for-bird-lovers/>

PHOTO ESSAY: AVIAN WONDERS OF SUHELWA – A HAVEN FOR BIRD LOVERS (15.2.18)

<https://www.renuka-voyagerforlife.com/2018/02/pumpkins-mustard-fields-cows-calves-faces-suhelwa-photo-essay.html>

2. Creation of birding data for Suhelwa Wildlife Sanctuary
 - a. **Birding in Suheldeo Wildlife Sanctuary** helped in data collection for this area, designated as an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA) as well as a Data Deficient Site by Birdlife International.
 - b. Birding data was generated almost overnight for this ‘under-birded’ area as several hotspots were visited and bird checklists posted on eBird – the online database created by Cornell Lab of Ornithology which provides scientists, researchers and amateur naturalists world-wide, real-time data about bird distribution.
 - c. Birding events and observations by individual birders in Suhelwa has yielded new birding data and records.
- 150 Amur Falcons in Suhelwa East Range in Nov. 2013 – a bird which breeds in south-eastern Siberia and Northern China before migrating in large flocks across India and over the Arabian Sea to winter in Southern Africa. Its sighting in Suhelwa Wildlife Sanctuary by BNHS researchers was the first record of the bird in Uttar Pradesh
- Falcated Teal in Bhagwanpur Reservoir, District Shrawasti in Jan 2017- a migratory duck which breeds in Eastern Asia and is uncommon in the west of Assam. Its sighting in Suhelwa was a first record for the State
- Black-headed Grebe in Rampur Reservoir, District Shrawasti in Jan 2017- recorded in Uttar Pradesh only a few times previously.
- Black capped Kingfisher in Bhisahi Nullah in Jan 2017 – a bird of coastal India.
- Spotted Forktail in Razia Taal, Feb. 2018 - bird which breeds between 1200 to 3600 meters in the Himalayas and descends to 600 meters in the winters
- Hume’s Leaf Warbler, Suhelwa East Range, Feb. 2018 – a common bird of mountain woodlands at altitudes of 3500 meters and found in Hindu Kush ranges and to its north-east – it winters in India. Its first record in Suhelwa was generated by the UP Bird Festival participants.
- Yellow Breasted Bunting –a critically endangered species seen in large flocks of over 200 birds in successive years near Jarwa– the latest in March 2018



- Forest Wagtail, – a bird which breeds in East Asia and winters in NE and SW India. That Suhelwa truly is a ‘first-class birding site’ was clearly brought out in the birding event of Feb 11-12, 2018

3. Protection of Suheldeo Wildlife Sanctuary by local villagers

Ten villagers, from forest-fringe villages, were trained as trail and bird guides for **Birding in Suheldeo Wildlife Sanctuary, Feb 11-12, 2017**. Drawn mostly from Eco development Committees (EDC), set up by the Forest Department, under the JICA funded scheme, they



EDC Members trained as trail guides through funding provided by District Magistrate, Shrawasti

were paid a modest stipend by Shrawasti District Administration, to train as trail and bird guides.

Subsequent to the event, the EDC members have been working proactively for the protection of forests and wildlife.



12. First Information contents (प्रथम सूचना तथ्य):

नकल तहरीर हिन्दी वादी सेवा मे श्रीमान प्रभारी निरीक्षक महोदय सिरसिया श्रावस्ती महोदय निवेदन है कि प्रार्थी विजय कुमार S/O रामदुलारे सा0 सेमरा दा0 गब्बापुर थाना सिरसिया जनपद श्रावस्ती का निवासी हूँ। प्रार्थी को पूर्वी सुहेलवा रेन्ज वन्य जीव विहार सुहेलवा रेन्ज बलरामपुर मे वर्ड गाइड (पर्यटन) के रूप मे घयनित किया गया है। प्रार्थी को दिनांक 20.2.2018 को समय शाम करीब 05 बजे रामपुर बन्धा (गब्बापुर) सुहेलवा रेन्ज मे स्थिति तालाब मे मुखबिर से सूचना मे कि बाँध मे स्थिति तालाब मे आस पास को लोग मछली का शिकार कर रहे है पूर्वी सुहेलवा के वन कर्मो को प्रार्थी ने सूचन देकर रामपुर बन्धा पहुंचा तो देखा कि बंशी, मनगाठू, गठेरी, पंचम पुत्रगण फूले निवासी गण रामपुर दा0 गब्बापुर थाना सिरसिया मछली का शिकार कर रहे थे। प्रार्थी ने मना किया तो भद्दी -2 गाली गलोज देते हुए जान से मारने की धमकी देते गोली से मारने की भी धमकी दी है। सूचना पर वन कर्मो दो लोगो ने मछली का जाल भी बरामद कर रेन्ज कार्यालय सुहेलवा रेन्ज लाये है। अतः सूचना को आया हूँ मेरी रिपोर्ट लिखकर आवश्यक कार्यवाही करने की कृपा की जाय। नि0अ0 विजय कुमार प्रार्थी विजय कुमार S/O रामदुलारे (वर्ड गाइड पूर्वी सुहेलवा रेन्ज) ग्राम सेमरा दा0 गब्बापुर थाना सिरसिया जिला श्रावस्ती दि0 22.2.2018 मो0 7752842098 सेवा मे श्रीमान थानाध्यक्ष सिरसिया सेवा मे आवश्यक कार्यवाही करने की संस्तुति की जाती है। हस्ताक्षर अपठनीय 22.2.18 (राजेन्द्र प्रसाद)उ0व0 नोट:- अपराध का विवरण का0 अभिषेक कुमार त्रिपाठी द्वारा अक्षरशः कम्प्युटरकृत किया गया

Vijay, (above) EDC member from Gabbapur filed a F.I.R. against persons fishing in Rampur Reservoir on Feb. 20, 2018 – ten days after the birding event in Suhelwa.



Siyram Yadav (left) and **Baliram** (right) EDC members from Midkiya cooperated in uncovering large-scale felling of khair (*Acacia catechu*) and teak (*Tectona grandis*) in the Sanctuary area.

4. Involving local persons in community-based ecotourism

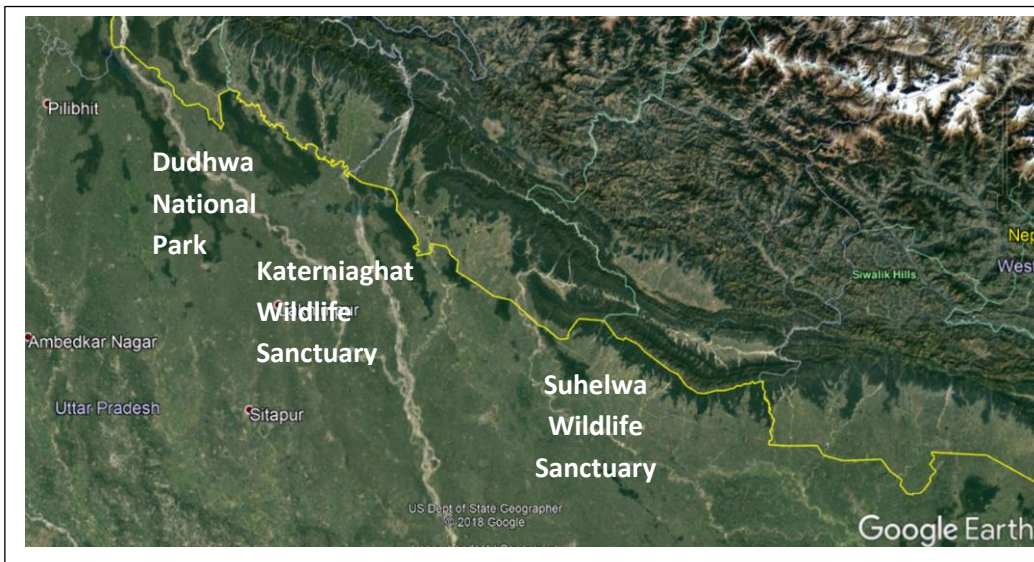
Local persons can play a big role in protecting wildlife/birdlife and habitat of Suhelwa Wildlife Sanctuary. In recognition of this District Administration of Shrawasti is planning to develop village-level based ecotourism, in which they are its main beneficiaries and have a stake in



Ranjinder Paswan, EDC Member and Trail Guide



5. Birding in Suheldeo Wildlife Sanctuary – balanced bird tourism



The rich birding experience of delegates during the two-day birding event has demonstrated its rich birding potential. The forest department and interested persons should now feel

confident in developing it as a birding hub. Developing lesser known yet potentially promising birding areas like Suhelwa will reduce pressure on ‘honey-pot’ areas like Dudhwa National Park and Katerniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary, by distributing tourists to lesser-visited places (Suhelwa and Sohagibarwa). This will bring the benefits of bird tourism to a larger population while preventing degradation of key wildlife areas.