

## Gokul Jalashay Site Information

Gokul Jalashay is a natural inland permanent oxbow lake spread over an area of 448 hectare and located at 25.625486 N, 84.290270 E in Buxar district of Bihar. The wetland is situated on the southern edge of the Ganges which makes its way into the wetland. The river Dharmavati joins the Gokul Jalashay near Gaighat. Gokul Jalashay is a representative of extensive floodplain wetland regime formed in the Indo-gangetic plains by the complex fluvial processes of the tributaries of River Ganges. River Ganga has shifted its course 8-10 km north and at some places 3-4 km towards Uttar Pradesh during 1952-53 leaving this oxbow segment known as Gokul Jalashay. Gokul Jalashay spreads across Chakki, Gaighat, Balua, Dallupur, Sanphi, Chandrapura, Udhura, Mahuar and Nainijor villages.

## Global Significance of the Wetland

The Gokul Jalashay is an important stopover for migratory waterbirds in the Central Asian Flyway. The agricultural fields in the surrounding areas of wetland are an important habitat for Blackbuck (*Antilope cervicapra*), a schedule I species. Many other wild animals like Spotted Deer (*Axis axis*), Wild Boar (*Sus scrofa*), Mongoose (*Herpestidae*), Golden Jackal (*Canis aureus*) and snakes like Cobra (*Naja naja*), Indian Python (*Python molurus*), Russel's Viper (*Daboia russelii*), Sand Boa (*Eryx conicus*), Rat Snake (*Pantherophis obsoletus*) and Checkered Keelback (*Xenochrophis piscator*) are also found in the area. The wetland is also a source of Kamal (*Nelumbo nucifera*) Crab (*Paratelphusa spinigera*) and edible mollusc (*Pila globosa*). The waterbirds *Anas acuta* (Northern Pintail), *Podiceps cristatus* (Great Crested Grebe), *Mareca penelope* (Eurasian Wigeon), *Aythya ferina* (Common Pochard), *Mareca strepera* (Gadwall), *Circus aeruginosus* (Eurasian Marsh Harrier), *Fulica atra* (Eurasian Coot), *Turdus unicolor* (Tickell's Thrush), *Anser indicus* (Bar-headed Goose) are commonly found in the Winter season.

## National and Regional Significance of Wetland

The rich fisheries and agriculture in the wetland system are the main source of livelihoods of 1000 households of the 36 surrounding 36 villages who are engaged in harvesting fish, bivalves and aquatic plants for use as food, fodder and fuel wood. The wetland stores water and regulate overall hydrological regimes that is important for ensuring water security in the region. The wetland plays a critical role in groundwater recharge, flood control and erosion control.

## This wetland fulfils the following Ramsar site criteria for designation as Ramsar site under Ramsar Convention

Criterion 1: Representative, rare or unique natural or near-natural wetland types

Criterion 2: Rare species and threatened ecological communities

Criterion 4: Support during critical life cycle stage or in adverse conditions