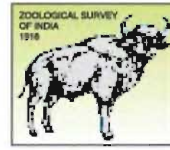




जहाँ है हरियाली !  
वहाँ है खुशहाली ॥



सत्यमेव जयते



# NATIONAL AND STATE ANIMALS OF INDIA



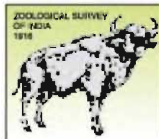
K. VENKATARAMAN  
A. CHATTOPADHYAY  
J. K. DE

ZOOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA  
KOLKATA



# National and State Animals of India

**K. Venkataraman  
A. Chattopadhyay  
J. K. De**



**Zoological Survey of India  
Kolkata**

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Every attempt has been taken to provide informations as appropriate as possible; however some discrepancies might have got intruded evading our notice, the learned readers are requested to intimate the publisher of the same, if any, for necessary improvement in the next edition of this volume.

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# ASSAM

Assam is the gateway state to the other Northeastern states of India. Situated between 90-96 degree East Longitude and 24-28 degree North Latitude, Assam is bordered in the North and East by the Kingdom of Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh. Along the south lie Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram. Meghalaya lies to her South-West, Bengal and Bangladesh to her West. It is having an area of 78,438 km<sup>2</sup> with a population of 31,169,272 (Census, 2011), and a forest cover of 34.45% of its geographical area.



অসম চৰকাৰ



GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM

## State Animal

**Indian One Horned Rhinoceros.** Scientific name *Rhinoceros unicornis* Linnaeus 1758. Common name is Great one Horned Rhinoceros (Eng.). Gainda ( Hindi) and Gor ( Assamese).

**Salient features:** It is a largest terrestrial mammal next to elephant. Length from snout to tip of the tail is 3.9 m approx., height at shoulder is 1.8 m approx., and length of horn varies from 30 to 60 cm. and weight is about 1650 kg in male and weight of horn varies from 2



to 2.5 kg. It is a odd-toed ungulate. Indian Rhino is in possession of one dermal stout horn on its snout with strong and strong limbs. Its head is boat shaped. The snout and skin are folded into very prominent large shields behind and before shoulders, in front of thigh and on buttock. Only tails and ears posses hairs. Coat colour is blackish grey. Horn is a mass of agglutinated or compressed hairs made up of keratin fibres forming a hard cemented mass. The horn is basically for defensive purpose and not connected with the skeleton.

**Distribution:** They are presently found in West Bengal and Assam in India, though they were recorded throughout Indo- Gangetic plains along the base of Himalayan ranges. Also found in the protected areas of Terai of Nepal.

**Habit and habitat:** They are both diurnal and nocturnal. It is a habit of all rhino of a particular area defecating in a fixed place. Normally they lead a solitary life, but in some cases, several individuals may occupy the same area. They can be seen up to an altitude of 200m and each rhino needs approximately 501 to 2000 sq km. Their life span in wild is recorded as about 70 years.

**Threats and protections:** They prefer the alluvial plain grasslands of the Terai and Brahmaputra basin. It is under threat of floods, human interference, grazing, hunting, trade corridor loss, low breeding rate, transmission of foot and mouth diseases from domestic cattle etc. Its horn, tail, body parts, hooves, urine, blood etc. are demand in national and international market. Rhinoceros is protected under Indian Wildlife (P) Act, 1972 as Schedule I, Part I. Categorized as Vulnerable in IUCN Red List (2012.1). It has been included in Appendix-I of CITES.

## State Bird

**White Winged Wood Duck.** Scientific name: *Asarcornis scutulata* (Müller, 1842). It is known as 'Deo Hans'(Spirit Duck) in Assamese, due to its ghost like call.

**Salient features:** This is one of the largest species of duck. Length is 66–81 cm (26–32 in) and wingspan is 116–153 cm (46–60 in). Males weigh 2.95–3.9 kg (6.5–8.6 lb), while females weigh 1.95–3.05 kg (4.3–6.7 lb). The most noticeable feature on adult birds is a dark body contrasting with a whitish head and neck. Males have mostly dull yellowish bill, blackish mottling on head and upper neck, white lesser



and median coverts and inner edges of tertials and bluish-grey secondaries. Females are smaller and usually have more densely mottled head and upper neck.

**Distribution:** In India, the duck is found only in the northeastern part of the country with main concentration in eastern Assam and adjacent areas of Arunachal Pradesh.

**Habit and habitat:** They are known to feed only at night. Its diet consists of seeds, aquatic plants, grain, rice, snails, small fish and insects. It inhabits stagnant or slow-flowing natural and artificial wetlands, within or adjacent to evergreen, deciduous or swamp forests, on which it depends for roosting and nesting, usually in tree-holes. Although lowlands provide optimum habitat, it occurs especially on sluggish perennial rivers and pools.

**Threats and protections:** It is threatened due to habitat loss, small population size, and hunting for food. In India, the key protected areas for the White-winged Duck are Dibru-Saikhowa National Park, Dihing-Patkai Wildlife Sanctuary, Nameri National Park and Namdapha National Park. It is protected under Indian Wildlife (P) Act, 1972 as Schedule I and categorized as Endangered in IUCN Red List (2012.1). It is listed in Appendix I of CITES.