

# Andaman Boobook

Deep in the verdant jungles of the Andaman Islands, a creature of mystical beauty lurks in the shadows. With feathers as dark as the ebony sky at midnight, and eyes that gleam like the stars above, the Andaman Boobook is a creature of mystery and wonder.

Silent as the wind that whispers through the trees, this elusive species haunts the forests, preying on unsuspecting creatures that dare to cross its path. Its haunting calls echo through the night, a mournful melody that sends shivers down the spines of those who hear it.

Serial Number	Characteristic	Description
1.	Common name	Andaman Boobook
2.	Scientific Name	Ninox affinis
3.	Colour	Brown with white spots and streaks
4.	Average length in cms	26 – 28 cm
5.	Average Height in cms	18 – 20 cm
6.	Type of bird	Forest bird / Bird of prey
7.	Found in India in states	Andaman and Nicobar Islands
8.	Habitat	Tropical moist deciduous forests
9.	Status	Least Concern

## Features

The Andaman Boobook, also known as the Andaman Scops Owl, is a small species of owl that is endemic to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal. Its physical features

are perfectly adapted to its nocturnal lifestyle and the dense jungle environment it inhabits.

The Andaman Boobook is a relatively small owl, measuring about 20-25 centimeters in height and weighing around 80-100 grams. Its wingspan is approximately 50 centimeters, which allows it to glide through the forest with great ease and maneuverability.

The feathers of the Andaman Boobook are predominantly dark brown or black, with a few white spots on its head and chest. Its eyes are large and yellow, allowing it to see in low-light conditions, and are surrounded by a distinctive facial disk of feathers that helps to focus sound and improve its hearing.

One of the most notable features of the Andaman Boobook is its ear tufts, which are two small tufts of feathers on either side of its head that stand erect when the owl is alert or alarmed. These tufts help to break up the outline of the owl's head and provide camouflage in the dappled light of the jungle.



## Habitat and Food

The Andaman Boobook is a nocturnal bird species that are native to the dense forests of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal. It prefers to reside in the canopy of the forest, where it can take shelter and hunt for prey.

The Andaman Boobook's diet consists primarily of insects, small mammals, and birds. Its hunting style is characteristic of many owl species, using its keen sense of hearing and sight to locate prey in the darkness. The Andaman Boobook is known to hunt small rodents like mice and shrews, as well as insects like beetles and moths. It also preys on small birds like finches and warblers, which it catches in mid-flight.

The Andaman Boobook's habitat is in the dense jungles of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. These forests are characterized by tall trees with thick canopies, which provide ample cover

for the owl to hide in during the day. The Andaman Boobook is well adapted to this environment, with its dark feathers providing excellent camouflage among the shadows of the trees.

Despite its ability to blend in with its surroundings, the Andaman Boobook's habitat is under threat due to deforestation and habitat destruction caused by human activities. As the forests of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands are cleared for agriculture and urbanization, the owl's habitat is shrinking, making it increasingly vulnerable to extinction.

## **Nesting and Nurturing**

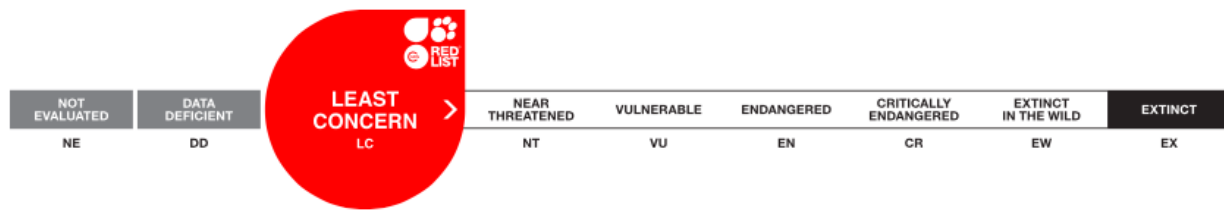
The Andaman Boobook is a species of owl that typically breeds during the months of March to June, although the breeding season may vary depending on the local climate and availability of prey.

When it comes to nesting, the Andaman Boobook typically lays 2-3 eggs in a simple nest that is made of twigs, leaves, and other forest debris. The nest is usually placed on the fork of a tree, and both the male and female will take turns incubating the eggs for around 25-30 days.

The eggs of the Andaman Boobook are typically white or cream in color and are marked with small reddish-brown spots. Once the eggs hatch, the parents take turns feeding and caring for the chicks. The chicks are born with a covering of white downy feathers and are completely dependent on their parents for food and protection.

As the chicks grow, their downy feathers are replaced with darker feathers, and they become more active and vocal. The parents continue to care for the chicks for several weeks until they are strong enough to leave the nest and hunt for themselves.

# IUCN Status



The Andaman Boobook is currently classified as “Least Concern” by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). This means that the species doesn’t face a high risk of extinction in the wild. Although their numbers are decreasing.

The main threat to the Andaman Boobook is habitat loss, which is caused by deforestation and other forms of human activity in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. As the forests and jungles of the islands are cleared for agriculture, logging, and other purposes, the owl’s habitat is shrinking, leaving it with fewer places to hunt and raise its young.

Another threat to the Andaman Boobook is hunting, which is carried out by some local communities for food and traditional purposes. While hunting is not believed to be a major threat to the species, it is important that efforts are made to regulate and monitor hunting activities to ensure that they do not have a negative impact on the owl population.