

# Brahminy Kite

The Brahminy kite, with its majestic wingspan and commanding presence, is a symbol of grace and power in the avian world. With feathers of fiery orange and snowy white, it soars through the heavens with an effortless elegance that belies its fierce hunting skills.

In the ancient cultures of South and Southeast Asia, the Brahminy kite was revered as a messenger of the gods, its regal bearing a testament to the divine. Even today, as it glides over the glittering waters of rivers and oceans, it seems to embody the very essence of freedom and wildness, a creature untamed and untamable.

| Serial Number | Characteristic           | Description  |
|---------------|--------------------------|--|
| 1             | Common Name              | Brahminy Kite  |
| 2             | Scientific Name          | Haliastur indus  |
| 3             | Colour                   | Brown with white head and chest                            |
| 4             | Average Length (cm)      | 45   |
| 5             | Average Height (cm)      | 50   |
| 6             | Type of Bird             | Bird of prey   |
| 7             | Found in India in States | Throughout India   |
| 8             | Habitat                  | Coastal regions, wetlands, mangroves, rivers, lakes, ponds |
| 9             | Status                   | Least Concern  |

## Features

The Brahminy kite is a medium-sized bird of prey with a wingspan of up to 1.5 meters (5 feet). Its body is compact and

muscular, built for agility and speed in flight. The beak is sharp and curved, ideal for tearing apart the flesh of its prey.

The feathers of the Brahminy kite are striking in their beauty. The head, neck, and chest are a brilliant white, while the rest of the body is a rich chestnut brown. The wings are a deep black, with stark white patches on the undersides that catch the eye as the bird glides overhead.



Despite its regal appearance, the Brahminy kite is not particularly tall. In fact, it stands at only around 45-50 cm (18-20 inches) from head to tail. However, its wingspan gives it an impressive presence in the sky, and its ability to swoop and dive with precision is a testament to its physical prowess.

# Habitat and Food



The Brahminy kite is a bird of prey found in a wide range of habitats, from mangrove swamps and estuaries to open grasslands and forests. It is commonly found in South and Southeast Asia, as well as parts of Australia and the Pacific Islands.

One of the Brahminy kite's preferred habitats is near water, where it can hunt for fish and other aquatic prey. It is also known to scavenge for food near human settlements, where it can feed on scraps and waste.

The Brahminy kite is a carnivore, feeding mainly on small mammals, birds, fish, and reptiles. It is a skilled hunter, using its sharp eyesight and agility to catch prey in mid-air or on the ground. It will also scavenge for food, and has been known to steal prey from other birds of prey.

One of the Brahminy kite's most impressive hunting techniques is its ability to hover in the air, scanning the ground for prey. When it spots a potential meal, it will swoop down with incredible speed and accuracy, using its sharp talons to grasp its prey and kill it with a swift blow from its beak.

## **Nesting and Nurturing**

The Brahminy kite is a monogamous bird, meaning that it mates with only one partner for life. During breeding season, the birds will build a large nest together, usually high up in a tree or on a cliff face.

The nest is made of sticks and twigs, and is lined with softer materials such as grass, leaves, and feathers. The female will lay a clutch of 1-2 eggs, which are typically pale bluish-white in color with brownish markings.

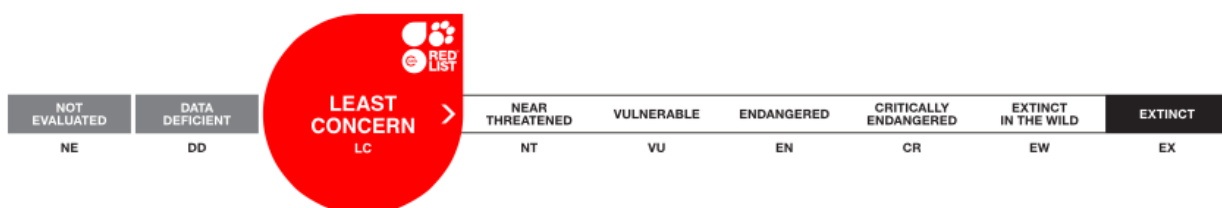
Both parents take turns incubating the eggs, with the female usually sitting on the eggs during the night and the male taking over during the day. Incubation lasts for around 35-38 days, after which the eggs hatch.



The chicks are born with a thick covering of down feathers, and are initially blind and helpless. The parents provide round-the-clock care for the young, bringing them food and keeping them warm and protected in the nest.

As the chicks grow, their parents will gradually introduce them to solid food, regurgitating small pieces of meat for them to eat. The chicks will fledge at around 50-60 days of age, but will continue to depend on their parents for food and protection for several more weeks.

## IUCN Status



IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature)

currently lists the Brahminy kite as a species of “Least Concern.” This means that, according to the latest available data, the species is not currently facing any significant threats or declines in population size.

Despite this relatively stable status, the Brahminy kite is still subject to some threats, such as habitat loss and degradation due to human activity. In some areas, the birds are also hunted for their meat or feathers, or killed due to human-wildlife conflict.

Conservation efforts are ongoing to monitor the population status of the Brahminy kite and protect their habitats from further degradation. By raising awareness of the importance of these birds and working to mitigate threats, we can help ensure that this majestic species remains a valued part of our natural world for generations to come.