

Crab-plover

The Crab-plover, with its striking black and white plumage, is a bird that looks as if it were crafted by the hand of an artist. Its elegant yet robust form belies the fierce hunter that lies within.

In the heat of the day, the Crab-plover can be seen basking in the sun on the shores of the Arabian Sea, its sharp eyes scanning the sandy beaches for prey. And when it spots a tasty morsel, it springs into action with lightning speed, snatching up crabs and other crustaceans in its powerful beak.

Serial Number	Characteristics	Description
1	Common name	Crab-plover
2	Scientific name	Dromas ardeola
3	Colour	Black and white plumage with a red bill and red legs
4	Average length	38-43 cm
5	Average height	28-33 cm
6	Type of bird	Shorebird
7	Found in India in states	Coastal regions of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, and Andhra Pradesh
8	Habitat	Sandy beaches, mudflats, and rocky shores
9	Status	Least Concern

Features

The Crab-plover (Dromas ardeola) is a unique bird species with distinct physical features.

The Crab-plover has a distinctive appearance, with black-and-white plumage and a long, curved bill. Its body is stocky, with a large head and short tail. The wings are broad and pointed, with white patches on the upper surface.

The Crab-plover has a striking black-and-white plumage. The upper parts and wings are black, while the underparts are white. The face, throat, and breasts are also white, with a black patch around the eye. It has a wingspan of 82-89 cm (32-35 inches).

The Crab-plover has a body length of approximately 38-42 cm (15-17 inches) and a weight of around 400-500 grams (14-18 ounces). Its bill is long and curved, measuring up to 7.5 cm (3 inches) in length.

Habitat and Food

They are a shorebird that can be found in the intertidal zone, on sandy and muddy coasts, and on the edges of mangroves in parts of the Indian Ocean and Red Sea. They breed on small islands, mainly in the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea.

The Crab-plover has a unique feeding habit that sets it apart from other shorebirds. It feeds primarily on crabs, as its name suggests, but also eats other small crustaceans and mollusks. They have a special adaptation in their bill that allows them to pry open the shells of crabs and other prey. The Crab-plover also has specialized digestive enzymes that help break down the tough exoskeletons of crabs and other crustaceans.

Nesting and Nurturing

Crab-plovers are colonial nesters, which means that they breed in large groups. They typically nest on sandy or rocky beaches, and sometimes on coral islands. They build their

nests in shallow depressions in the sand, and the nests are often located close to the water's edge. They lay a clutch of two eggs. Crab-plovers do not build elaborate nests. Instead, they create a shallow depression in the sand, where they lay their eggs. The eggs of the Crab-plover are pale greenish-blue or olive-green in color, with brown or gray markings.

The eggs of the Crab-plover are relatively large compared to the size of the bird. They measure around 6.5 cm in length and 4.5 cm in width. The incubation period for Crab-plover eggs is around 28-30 days. Both the male and female take turns incubating the eggs.

Once the eggs hatch, the parents take turns caring for the chicks. They feed them regurgitated fish and other small marine animals. The chicks fledge after about 35-40 days and become independent shortly thereafter.

IUCN Status

The Crab-plover is a species of bird that is listed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as "Least Concern."

Although there is currently no evidence to suggest that the population of Crab-plovers is declining, their breeding and nesting habitats are under threat from coastal development, oil spills, and other human activities. Therefore, the IUCN recommends continued monitoring of the species to ensure that any potential threats are identified and addressed in a timely manner.