

Crested Serpent Eagle

The Crested Serpent Eagle is a formidable creature, feared and revered by all who cross its path. Its powerful talons can tear through flesh with ease, and its sharp beak can pierce through even the thickest of hides.

Yet, despite its fearsome reputation, there is a certain beauty to the Crested Serpent Eagle, grace and elegance that belies its strength. As it glides effortlessly through the treetops, it seems almost to dance with the wind, a symbol of the raw power and untamed beauty of the natural world.

Serial Number	Characteristics	Description
1	Common name	Crested Serpent Eagle
2	Scientific name	Spilornis cheela
3	Colour	Brown upperparts, white underparts with black streaks, and a distinctive crest on the head
4	Average length	55-75 cm
5	Average height	50-70 cm
6	Type of bird	Raptor
7	Found in India in states	Throughout India except for the higher altitudes of the Himalayas and the northeastern states
8	Habitat	Forests, wooded areas, and sometimes near human habitation
9	Status	Least Concern

Features

The Crested Serpent Eagle (*Spilornis cheela*) is a medium-sized bird of prey found in Asia. It is also known as the Crested Hawk-Eagle or the Crested Eagle due to the distinctive crest of feathers on its head.

The Crested Serpent Eagle has a wingspan of about 110-135 cm and weighs between 900 to 1,400 grams. It has a stocky build with broad wings and a relatively short tail. The crest of feathers on its head gives it a distinctive appearance, with a black tip and white base. The eagle has a hooked beak, which is sharp and curved and is used for tearing apart the prey.

It has dark brown upper parts, while the underparts are white with brown spots. The wings are dark brown with pale edges and a white band near the base of the primary feathers. The crest of feathers on its head is dark brown with a black tip and white base, while the eyes are yellow.

The Crested Serpent Eagle is about 60-70 cm tall, making it a medium-sized eagle. The body length of the Crested Serpent Eagle ranges from 55 to 76 cm.

Habitat and Food

In terms of habitat, Crested Serpent Eagles can be found in a variety of forested environments, including deciduous and evergreen forests, as well as bamboo forests and mangroves. They are also known to inhabit cultivated areas, such as plantations and orchards. However, they tend to avoid areas with heavy human activity.

In terms of diet, Crested Serpent Eagles are carnivorous, feeding primarily on reptiles such as snakes and lizards. They have been known to take other prey items as well, including small mammals, birds, and insects. They are known to hunt by perching in a high vantage point, such as a tree or rocky

outcropping, and then swooping down to capture their prey. They also have keen eyesight and are able to spot their prey from a distance.

Nesting and Nurturing

Crested Serpent Eagles typically build their nests high up in trees, often near the top of the canopy. They prefer trees that provide good cover and protection from the elements. The nests are made of sticks and branches, and are often quite large and bulky, measuring up to two meters in diameter.

The Crested Serpent Eagle lays a clutch of one to two eggs per breeding season. The eggs are laid at intervals of two to three days.

The eggs are oval-shaped and measure around 57 x 45 mm in size. The color of the eggs is white, with small reddish-brown spots.

The female Crested Serpent Eagle takes the primary responsibility for incubating the eggs. She spends most of her time sitting on the eggs, keeping them warm and protected. Incubation typically lasts around 33-36 days.

After hatching, the baby eagles, also known as eaglets, are covered in white down feathers. The female eagle continues to take care of the young eagles, while the male provides food. The young are fed with small prey, such as lizards, snakes, and rodents. The eaglets fledge after around 75 days, meaning they leave the nest and begin to learn how to fly and hunt on their own.

IUCN Status

This species is listed on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species as of "Least Concern," which means that its population is

currently stable and does not face any significant threats.