

Gaur

Gaur (*Bos gaurus*), also known as the Indian bison, is the largest wild cattle species found in the world. They are mainly found in the forested regions of India, Southeast Asia, and some parts of East Asia.

Gaur has a bulky, muscular body covered with a dark brown to black coat. Both males and females have curved horns, with those of males being more prominent and longer. Gaur is primarily herbivorous, feeding on a variety of grasses, leaves, and fruits.

Gaur is an important species in forest ecosystems, and their grazing and browsing patterns contribute to maintaining the diversity of plant species in forests. However, like many other large mammals, Gaur is also threatened by habitat loss due to deforestation and human encroachment, as well as hunting and poaching for their meat and body parts. In India, Gaur is listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List and is protected under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.

Sl No	Characteristics	Description
1	Common Name	Gaur
2	Scientific Name	<i>Bos gaurus</i>
3	Length	Up to 10 feet
4	Colour	Dark brown or black
5	Height	Up to 6 feet at the shoulder
6	Tail length	About 3 feet
7	Height till shoulder	Up to 6 feet
8	Average weight	1,000 to 2,200 pounds
9	Food habits	Herbivorous, mainly feeding on grass, leaves, and shoots

10	Habitat	Forested areas and grasslands in South and Southeast Asia
11	Any interesting facts about them	Gaur are the largest wild cattle species and are known for their impressive strength and agility. They can run at speeds of up to 30 miles per hour and jump over obstacles up to 6 feet high. Despite their size, gaur are excellent swimmers and have been known to cross large rivers and lakes.

Appearance

Gaur, also known as Indian bison or seladang, is a species of large wild cattle that are native to South and Southeast Asia.

Gaur has a dark brown to black coat, with a white or yellowish “stocking” on their lower legs. Some individuals may have lighter markings on their faces or chest.

Gaur is among the largest wild cattle species in the world, with males (bulls) being significantly larger than females (cows). Adult bulls can weigh up to 1,500 kg (3,300 lbs) and stand over 2 metres (6.5 feet) tall at the shoulder, while cows typically weigh around 700-1,000 kg (1,500-2,200 lbs) and are about 1.5 metres (5 feet) tall at the shoulder.

Both males and females have curved horns that grow upwards and outwards from the sides of their heads. The horns of males are thicker and longer, reaching up to 1 metre (3.3 feet) in length. Gaur has a muscular hump on their shoulders, which is more prominent in males. They also have a long, tufted tail that extends past their hocks.

Gaur is known for their strength and agility, which allow them to navigate through dense forests and steep terrain. They are also known for their aggressive behaviour, especially during mating season and when defending their territory or young. Gaur have a distinctive call that is described as a deep, resonant bellow, which can be heard from a distance. In some cultures, gaur is revered as a symbol of power and strength.

Food Habits

Gaur are herbivores, and their diet consists mainly of grasses, leaves, fruits, and shrubs. They are known to be selective feeders and prefer young and tender plant parts. Gaur are also known to consume large quantities of water, especially during the dry season.

Habitats

Gaur are found in several countries across South and Southeast Asia, including India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand, and Cambodia. In India, gaur are distributed in a wide range of habitats, including tropical and subtropical forests, grasslands, and savannas. They are most commonly found in the Western Ghats, the Eastern Ghats, and the northeastern states of India.

Vulnerable Species

Gaur is listed as a vulnerable species on the IUCN Red List due to habitat loss and hunting. In India, gaur populations have declined significantly over the years due to habitat fragmentation, poaching, and human-wildlife conflict.

According to the last estimation by the Indian government's wildlife census conducted in 2018, the total population of gaur in India is estimated to be around 30,000 individuals. The highest numbers of gaur are found in the Western Ghats

region, followed by the northeastern states of India. Habitat loss and fragmentation due to human activities such as agriculture, logging, and urbanization. Poaching for meat, horns, and other body parts. Human-wildlife conflict due to gaur raiding crops or attacking humans. Disease outbreaks due to contact with domestic livestock.

Protected Areas

Gaur is a protected species in India, and several national parks and wildlife reserves have been established to conserve their habitats and populations. Located in the state of Karnataka, Bandipur National Park is a popular destination for wildlife enthusiasts. The park is home to a large population of gaur, as well as other species such as tigers, leopards, and elephants.

Located in Madhya Pradesh, Kanha National Park is one of the largest parks in India and is known for its thriving gaur population. The park is also home to tigers, leopards, and several species of deer.

Located in Tamil Nadu, Mudumalai National Park is a well-known wildlife sanctuary that is home to a diverse range of flora and fauna. The park is home to a significant population of gaur, as well as elephants, tigers, and several species of primates.

Located in Kerala, Periyar National Park is a popular destination for nature lovers. The park is home to a large population of gaur, as well as elephants, tigers, and several species of deer. Located in Madhya Pradesh, Satpura National Park is known for its diverse wildlife and unique topography. The park is home to a significant population of gaur, as well as leopards, sloth bears, and several species of deer.