Great pied hornbill

Amidst the lush green forests of Southeast Asia, there lives a majestic bird whose beauty and magnificence are unmatched – the great pied hornbill. With its striking black and white plumage and a massive, curved bill, the hornbill cuts a remarkable figure against the backdrop of the verdant jungle.

As the sun rises over the horizon, the great pied hornbill emerges from its lofty tree perch, ready to greet the day with its distinctive call that echoes through the forest. With a powerful flap of its wings, the hornbill takes to the air, its sharp eyes scanning the ground below for its next meal.

Serial Number	**Characteristic**	**Description**
1.	Common name	Great Pied Hornbill
2.	Scientific Name	Buceros bicornis
3.	Colour	Black and white with yellow beak and casque
4.	Average length in cms	90-120 cm
5.	Average Height in cms	100-120 cm
6.	Type of bird	Forest bird
7.	Found in India in states	Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, and some parts of the Western Ghats
8.	Habitat	Tropical and subtropical forests, primarily in hilly and mountainous regions
9.	Status	Vulnerable

Features

The great pied hornbill is a magnificent bird that possesses a number of physical features that set it apart from other species. With its striking black and white plumage, the hornbill cuts a distinctive figure against the lush greenery of its forest habitat.

The great pied hornbill stands tall and proud, reaching an impressive height of up to 120 centimeters (47 inches). Its body is sleek and streamlined, designed for swift flight through the dense jungle canopy.

One of the most striking features of the great pied hornbill is its massive, curved bill, which can reach up to 30 centimeters (12 inches) in length. This impressive appendage is black in color, with a distinctive ivory-colored tip that adds to the hornbill’s regal appearance.

The great pied hornbill’s black and white plumage is another defining feature of this majestic bird. Its head, neck, and upper wings are black, while its lower wings, tail, and belly are white. The hornbill’s eyes are a deep, soulful brown, which lend the bird an air of intelligence and wisdom.

The female great pied hornbill is slightly smaller than the male, with a shorter bill and a slightly smaller body size. However, both males and females possess the same striking black and white coloration that makes the great pied hornbill one of the most recognizable and beloved species in the bird kingdom.

Habitat and Food

The great pied hornbill is a resident of the lush rainforests of Southeast Asia, including countries such as India, Nepal, Bhutan, and Myanmar. These majestic birds are well adapted to life in the dense jungle canopy, where they make their homes high up in the trees.

The great pied hornbill is an omnivore, with a varied diet that includes fruits, insects, small mammals, and even reptiles. They have a particular preference for figs, and will often seek out ripe fruit from the many fig trees that dot their forest habitat.

Using their powerful bills, the great pied hornbill is able to pluck fruit from the tree branches and swallow it whole. They are also skilled hunters, using their sharp eyesight to locate prey on the forest floor. Once they spot their target, they swoop down from the trees to capture it with their powerful beaks.

Great pied hornbills are also known to be cooperative breeders, with males and females working together to care for their young. The female will lay her eggs in a hollowed-out tree trunk, and the male will seal the entrance with a mud plaster, leaving only a small slit for the female to receive food. The male will then provide the female and the chicks with food, passing it through the small slit in the tree.

Nesting and Nurturing

The great pied hornbill is a unique bird species, known for its cooperative breeding behavior and remarkable nesting habits. The hornbill constructs its nest in the hollows of tall trees, often using mud and twigs to create a cozy and safe environment for their young.

The female great pied hornbill will lay between one and two eggs per breeding season, which are incubated for around 38 days. The eggs are a creamy white color, with a smooth and shiny surface that reflects the light of the jungle canopy.

Once the eggs hatch, the male great pied hornbill takes on the

responsibility of providing food and care for the young chicks. The female remains in the nest, taking care of the chicks and helping to keep them warm and protected.

The male great pied hornbill will visit the nest frequently, bringing a variety of insects, small mammals, and fruit to feed the hungry chicks. He will pass the food to the female through a small slit in the tree, and she will then distribute it to the chicks.

As the chicks grow and develop, the male great pied hornbill will gradually increase the size of the entrance to the nest, allowing the chicks to stretch their wings and begin to explore their surroundings. Eventually, the male will break open the wall of the nest, allowing the chicks to fly free and begin their life in the jungle canopy.

IUCN Status

The great pied hornbill is currently classified as a “Vulnerable” species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). This means that the species is facing a high risk of extinction in the wild in the near future if appropriate conservation measures are not taken to address the threats to their survival.

The great pied hornbill is threatened by a number of factors, including habitat loss due to deforestation, illegal hunting and trapping, and disturbance by humans. In addition, the bird’s reliance on large trees with natural tree cavities for nesting makes them particularly vulnerable to habitat destruction and fragmentation.