

# Narcondam Hornbill

Amidst the dense canopy of the Narcondam Island, a magnificent bird with a striking appearance can be seen flying gracefully. With its large curved beak, iridescent black feathers, and a fiery orange-red patch on its throat, the Narcondam Hornbill is a true marvel of nature.

This avian beauty is not just a treat for the eyes but also a wonder of evolution. The Narcondam Hornbill has adapted to the unique ecosystem of the island and has become an important part of the island’s delicate ecological balance. The bird feeds on various types of fruits, spreading the seeds of different plant species across the island and helping in the regeneration of the forest.

However, the Narcondam Hornbill’s survival is threatened due to habitat loss and hunting by humans. Despite being a protected species, the population of Narcondam Hornbills is declining rapidly, making conservation efforts all the more important.

The Narcondam Hornbill is not just a bird, but a symbol of the delicate balance of nature and the need to protect it. Its existence is a reminder of the unique and fragile ecosystem of the Andaman Islands, and the importance of preserving it for future generations.

Serial Number	Characteristic	Description
1	Common Name	Narcondam Hornbill
2	Scientific Name	Rhyticeros narcondami
3	Colour	Male: Black with white belly, blue throat patch, and yellow bill. Female: Brown with white belly and yellow bill.

4	Average Length in cms	60 cm
5	Average Height in cms	95 cm
6	Type of Bird	Forest Bird
7	Found in India in States	Only found on Narcondam Island, Andaman and Nicobar Islands
8	Habitat	Primary and secondary forests on Narcondam Island
9	Status	Vulnerable

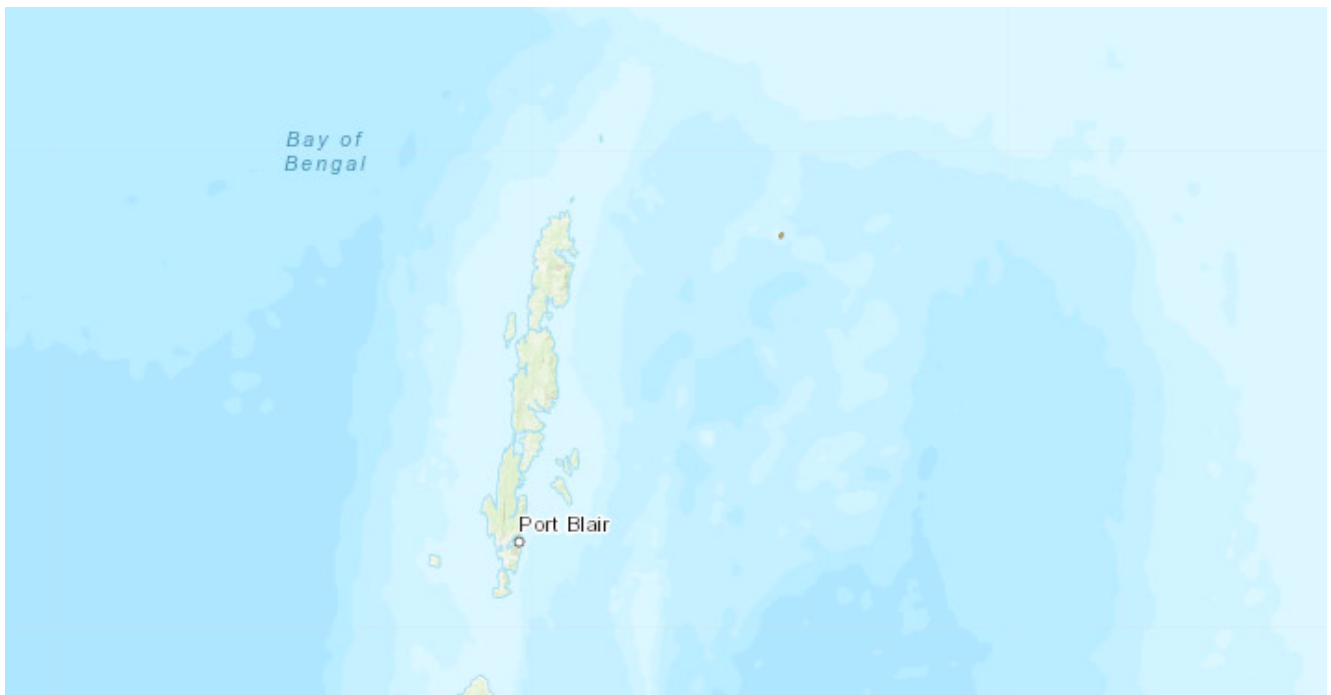
## Features

The Narcondam Hornbill is a large bird with a unique appearance, boasting a variety of physical features that make it stand out among other avian species. The bird's most distinctive feature is its large, curved bill that is ivory white in color and can reach up to 14 cm in length. This striking bill is offset by the bird's iridescent black feathers, which have a glossy sheen that shimmers in the sunlight.

The Narcondam Hornbill stands at an impressive height of around 75 cm and has a wingspan of up to 110 cm. Its body is relatively stocky, with broad shoulders and a short tail. The bird's feet are also adapted to its arboreal lifestyle, with two toes pointing forward and two pointing backward, allowing it to easily grip onto branches.

The Narcondam Hornbill's most eye-catching feature, however, is the fiery orange-red patch of bare skin on its throat known as the gular pouch. This patch is particularly vibrant in males and is used to attract mates during breeding season.

# Habitat and Food



The Narcondam Hornbill is a species that is endemic to the Narcondam Island, which is located in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands archipelago in the Bay of Bengal. The bird is most commonly found in the dense evergreen forests that cover the island, but can also be seen in secondary forests and wooded areas. As a frugivorous bird, the Narcondam Hornbill primarily feeds on fruits, with figs being a particular favorite. The bird's large, curved bill is perfectly adapted to picking and crushing a variety of fruits, making it an important seed disperser for many plant species on the island.

During breeding season, the female Narcondam Hornbill will seal herself inside a tree cavity, leaving only a small opening through which the male will feed her fruits and other small prey. The female will remain inside the cavity for several months until the eggs hatch and the chicks are ready to fledge.

The Narcondam Hornbill's diet and feeding habits make it an important part of the island's ecosystem. By spreading the seeds of various plant species, the bird helps to maintain the island's forested areas and promotes the growth of new

vegetation.

## **Nesting and Nurturing**

The Narcondam Hornbill is a cavity nester, which means that it builds its nest inside tree cavities. The female will typically choose a cavity that is large enough to accommodate her and her eggs, and then seal herself inside using a mixture of mud and fruit pulp. The small opening left for the male to feed her is then also sealed, leaving the female and her eggs protected from predators and the elements.

The Narcondam Hornbill typically lays a clutch of 2-3 white eggs, which are laid at intervals of several days. The eggs are relatively large, measuring around 45 mm in length and 35 mm in width. The female will remain inside the cavity for the entire incubation period, which lasts around 40-50 days.

Once the eggs hatch, the female will break open the mud seal and emerge from the cavity. The chicks are born helpless and blind, and are completely dependent on their parents for food and care. The male will bring food to the female and chicks, passing it through the small opening in the cavity using his bill. The female will then feed the chicks by regurgitating food for them to eat.

The chicks are covered in fluffy white down feathers, which help to keep them warm and protect them from injury inside the tree cavity. They will remain inside the cavity for around 2-3 months, until they are strong enough to fledge and leave the nest.

## **IUCN Status**



The Narcondam Hornbill is listed as “Vulnerable” on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List. This means that the species is facing a high risk of extinction in the wild.

The main threats to the Narcondam Hornbill’s survival include habitat loss and degradation due to human activity, particularly deforestation and conversion of land for agriculture. Hunting and trapping of the birds for food and trade is also a significant threat.

Conservation efforts are underway to protect the Narcondam Hornbill and its habitat, including the establishment of a protected area on Narcondam Island. However, continued monitoring and management is necessary to ensure the survival of this important species and the delicate ecological balance of the island.