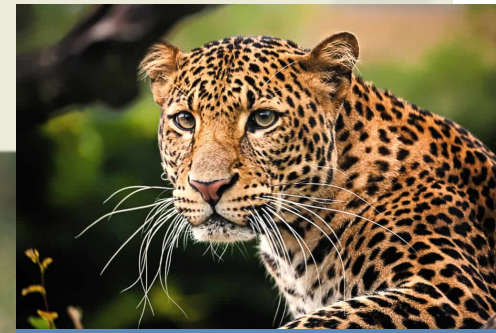




ZOOLOGICAL SURVEY OF PAKISTAN

Welcome to the latest edition of our Newsletter!



IN THIS ISSUE

- ZSP's ongoing research and conservation initiatives
- Recent Field Surveys and Expeditions
- Wildlife Research Highlights
- Departmental Activities and Events
- Upcoming Projects and Surveys



This newsletter presents a comprehensive overview of the key activities and accomplishments of the Zoological Survey of Pakistan (ZSP) during the period **January to March 2026**. It includes highlights of field surveys, official meetings, workshops, events, research initiatives, and other departmental engagements undertaken during the quarter.

Zoological Survey of Pakistan

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Barakahu Islamabad.

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The newsletter serves as an important platform for documenting the department's ongoing efforts in biodiversity assessment, wildlife research, and conservation activities. It also facilitates the dissemination of scientific updates, institutional progress, and collaborative initiatives, thereby strengthening communication, knowledge sharing, and public awareness regarding Pakistan's rich faunal diversity and its conservation.



Bar headed goose (*Anser indicus*)

The Asian Waterbird Census (AWC) is conducted annually across Asia to monitor populations of migratory and resident waterbirds. In Pakistan, the Zoological Survey of Pakistan (ZSP) has been carrying out the Mid-Winter Waterbirds Census, including waterfowl, since 1982 in compliance with the Ramsar Convention and the Convention on Migratory Birds. These censuses are conducted in collaboration with provincial wildlife departments and play an important role in raising awareness among local communities about migratory birds and wetland ecosystems.

The key objectives of the survey are to study the population dynamics of migratory ducks, geese, waders, and resident waterbirds, assess population trends, and develop science-based recommendations for the conservation and sustainable management of wetland habitats and associated avifauna.



Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*)

Asian Water Bird Census at the Important Wetlands of Punjab, Sindh and Baluchistan 2025-26



The survey was conducted across major wetlands of Punjab, Sindh and Baluchistan in December 2025 and January 2026. Key survey sites included Namal Lake, Chashma Barrage, Jinnah Barrage, Kallar Kahar Lake, the Uchali Wetland Complex (Uchali, Khabeki, and Jhallar Lakes), Head Marala, Rasul Barrage, and Head Qadirabad of Punjab. Manchar, Haleji, Keenjhar, Hammal, Langh, Drigh, Nurri lake, Ranpur dam, Bodesar dam, Kajrasar dam, Sangh lake, Runn of Kuch of Sindh province and Hub dam of Balochistan.

In Punjab wetland showed low water levels at the time of the survey. Khabeki, Jhallar and Uchali Lake exhibited low water levels, potentially affecting waterbird habitat quality. In Sindh due to sufficient monsoon rains of 2025, the wetlands were filled with water and there was abundance of birds at all the surveyed wetlands.



Nothern Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*)

Preliminary Census of Migratory Waterbirds at Mangla Dam, District Mirpur, Azad Kashmir January 2026

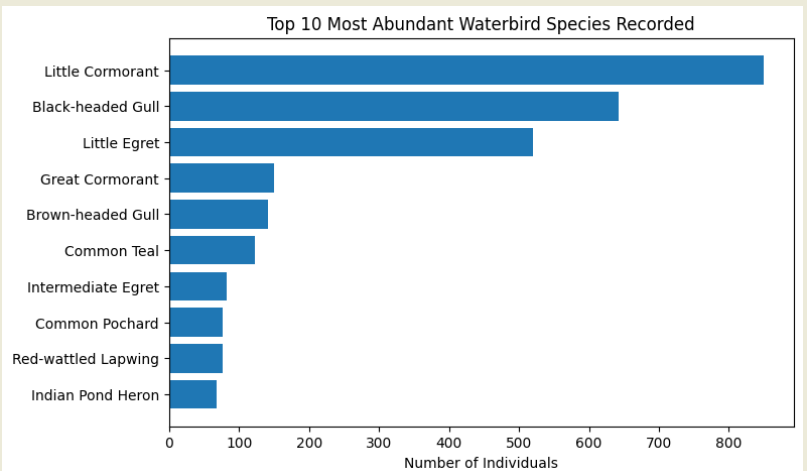
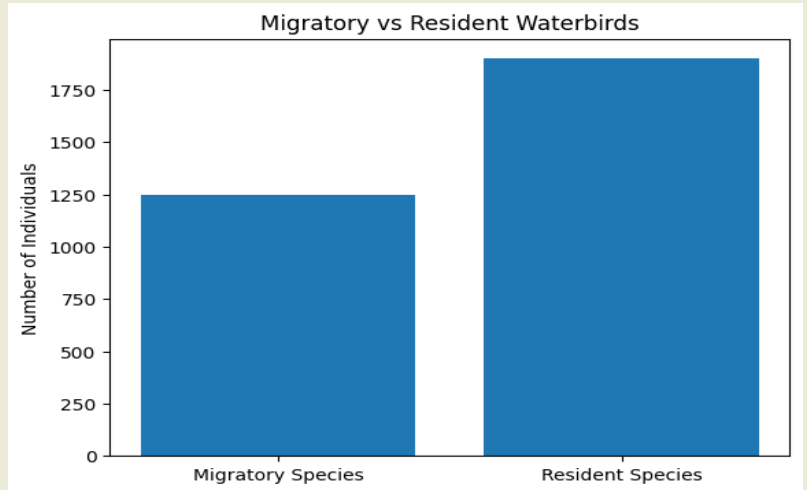


The Zoological Survey of Pakistan as a Departmental mandate conducts research and scientific surveys of Mid-winter Waterfowl census at all important wetlands of the country. Therefore, as a part of a regular activity, the present study was conducted at Mangla Dam, AJK. Mangla Dam (33° 12' N, 73° 39' E) is a large water storage reservoir built in 1967 on the Jhelum River, covering an area of 26,500 ha. It is located at 30 km North West of Jhelum city, Punjab Province, on the border with Azad Jammu and Kashmir at an elevation of 630 m.

The major reason for such surveys is to observe waterfowl population and to detect their population dynamics during migratory season in winter, which is also called their non-breeding season.

The present study was conducted to document richness and abundance of some waterfowls (Orders Anseriformes, Gruiformes and Charadriiformes) of Mangla Dam, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan.

The Dam was visited during the months of January 2026, for preliminary surveys of migratory waterfowl and other resident birds. Study site was visited at different selected points. The birds were directly observed, identified and counted with the help of binoculars (Olympus 8-16 X 40, DPS I) and spotting scopes (Nikon w/ 15-45 X). The GPS receiver (Magellan Sport rack) was also used to record the coordinates of wetland. For the identification of water birds, Sonobe and Usui (1993) were referred.



Waterbird Census at Kinara Park

Rawal Lake



Brown headed gul (*Chroicocephalus brunnicephalus*)



White wagtail (*Motacilla alba*)



Little cormorant (*Phalacrocorax sulcirostris*)



A comprehensive field survey of waterbirds was conducted at Kinara Park, Rawal Lake, Islamabad, on 12th February 2026. Kinara Park, situated along the scenic shoreline of Rawal Lake, represents an ecologically significant wetland habitat within the capital territory. In addition to serving as a major recreational site, the area supports diverse avifaunal communities, including both resident and migratory waterbirds. Its strategic location near urban settlements enhances its importance as a site for biodiversity conservation, environmental monitoring, and public awareness regarding wetland ecosystems.

The primary objective of the survey was to document species diversity, estimate population abundance, and evaluate the ecological status of waterbird communities utilizing the site. Standard field observation techniques were employed to ensure systematic data collection. During the survey, a total of 40 bird species, comprising both resident and migratory populations, were recorded.

Events

The department participated in the celebration of **World Wetlands Day 2026**, organized in collaboration with the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board at Kinara Park, Rawal Lake, Islamabad. The event, held under the global theme “Wetlands and Traditional Knowledge: Celebrating Cultural Heritage,” included a wetland clean-up drive and awareness activities aimed at promoting wetland conservation and community stewardship. The Honorable Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination graced the occasion as Chief Guest.



The department participated in the observance of **World Wildlife Day 2026**, organized by the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board at the Outdoor Education Centre, Trail-05, Margalla Hills National Park. The event featured expert talks on the global significance of World Wildlife Day, medicinal plants of Margalla Hills, and plant identification sessions, aimed at promoting wildlife conservation awareness and environmental education among participants.



Workshops & Meetings

Director of the ZSP department Mr. Altaf Hussain Khurro attended the Steering Committee Meeting held at the office of the Director General, Punjab Wildlife & Parks Department. The meeting focused on reviewing ongoing conservation initiatives, strengthening inter-departmental coordination, and discussing strategic priorities for wildlife management in the province.



The Director ZSP along his team, welcomed the newly appointed IGF, Prof. Dr. Syed Moazzam Nizami, to his office and briefed him on the ongoing progress, key achievements, and current conservation initiatives of the department. The meeting also focused on strengthening institutional coordination and future strategic directions for biodiversity research and wildlife conservation.

A workshop on “An Orientation to Powers and Functions of Committees, and Parliamentary Questions” was organized by the Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS), Islamabad, on 20 January 2026. Officers from ZSP attended the training as nominated participants to enhance their understanding of parliamentary procedures, committee functions, and the preparation of effective responses to parliamentary questions. The workshop served as an important capacity-building initiative, enabling departmental officers to engage confidently and effectively with parliamentary business and legislative matters.



The Zoological Survey of Pakistan (ZSP), actively participated in the 4 day training workshop on “Strengthening Governance through Artificial Intelligence (AI) Enabled Whole-of-Government (WoG) Approaches” held from 9th to 12th February 2026.

The workshop provided a valuable opportunity to enhance institutional capacity in the use of artificial intelligence and integrated governance approaches, supporting improved decision-making, coordination, and service delivery within the department.

Participation in this training reflects ZSP's commitment to adopting modern approaches for improved research, administration, and public service delivery.

The Director ZSP, participated in a Zoom meeting convened by the Chief Conservator Parks & Wildlife, Gilgit-Baltistan. The meeting was held to discuss key agenda items related to the wildlife survey in Gilgit-Baltistan, including its importance, survey methodologies, coordination and liaison among departments and conservation partners, the role of various stakeholders, and the identification of missing components in existing wildlife surveys.

The participation of ZSP highlighted the department's active role in collaborative wildlife conservation efforts and strengthened coordination with relevant organizations for evidence-based biodiversity assessment and management.

The Inspector General of Forests (IGF), Dr. Muazzam Nizami, visited the Zoological Survey of Pakistan (ZSP) to review the department's ongoing work and future plans. During the visit, the Director, ZSP, gave a comprehensive presentation highlighting the department's progress, key achievements, recent field surveys, research initiatives, and conservation efforts. The visit provided an opportunity to discuss strategic priorities and further strengthen the role of ZSP in national wildlife conservation and research.



Ongoing Activities

Biodiversity Assessment of Margalla Hills national Park Islamabad

This survey is a collaborative initiative between the Zoological Survey of Pakistan (ZSP) and the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board (IWMB) under the Ministry of Climate Change to conduct a one-year comprehensive biodiversity assessment of Margalla Hills National Park, combining scientific expertise and field experience to support wildlife conservation.



Digitalization of Biodiversity Data

The Zoological Survey of Pakistan (ZSP) is actively undertaking the digitalization of biodiversity data as part of its efforts to modernize data management and enhance accessibility. This initiative involves converting existing records, field data, and specimen information into standardized digital formats, ensuring their preservation and efficient retrieval.

This step reflects ZSP's commitment to adopting advanced technologies for strengthening institutional capacity and promoting evidence-based conservation practices in Pakistan.

