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| NOT EVALUATED | DATA DEFICIENT | LEAST CONCERN | NEAR THREATENED | VULNERABLE | ENDANGERED | < CRITICALLY ENDANGERED > | EXTINCT IN THE WILD | EXTINCT |
| NE | DD | LC | NT | VU | EN | CR | EW | EX |



Geographical range

Amazing Species: White-bellied Heron

The **White-bellied Heron**, *Ardea insignis*, is listed as 'Critically Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. It occurs in the eastern Himalayan foothills in Bhutan and north-east India, to the hills of Bangladesh and north Myanmar. It may also occur in south-east Tibet, China, but is now extinct in Nepal. Also known as the Imperial Heron, this is the second largest species of heron in the world.

Knowledge ^{EQ}
Experts ^{EQ}
Action ^{EQ}
Get Involved ^{EQ}

The population of White-bellied Herons is extremely small and numbers are declining rapidly putting this species at severe risk of extinction. Threats include direct exploitation and disturbance, including poaching and destruction of nests, as well as widespread habitat destruction. The latter is attributed to unsustainable harvesting of natural resources by communities living in the vicinity of the species.

Recognising the importance of the riverbed in Punakha-Wangdue for White-bellied Herons, the Royal Government of Bhutan has declared the area as protected habitat. Improved conservation of the areas where this heron breeds is needed and an extensive survey into the extent of its population and range has been proposed. Satellite tagging of individuals has been suggested in order to understand more about its range and migratory patterns.



The production of the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™ is made possible through the IUCN Red List Partnership.