

## **Solapur – Birds Paradise**

Solapur is largest city in southern Maharashtra, India. It is 2 TIER city classified as B-1 by HRA classification. It is 37 most Populated city in INDIA and 43rd largest urban agglomeration

Solapur is recognized internationally for Great Indian Bustard Sanctuary. Many birders from India as well as abroad visit this sanctuary. In India we can see about 1306 various birds throughout the year .In Solapur throughout the year we can see about 269 birds throughout the year i.e. 21% of birds seen in India.

Majority of Solapur district is covered by thorn forest and dry land with three rivers. We have a one major dam at Ujani on the Bhima River. There are altogether about 114 lakes in Solapur District. Solapur is having good flora and fauna. In and nearby Solapur city we have Siddheshwar Van Vihar, Smruti Van or Sambhaji lake, Lake at MIDC, Hipperga Lake, Nannaj, Pandharpur, Bhima river belt, Asti lake, Hotagi lake etc. The best times to visit this place are early morning at 6 am to 9 am and 4 pm to 6 pm.

We can see many aquatics birds like Spoon bills, Painted stork, White ibis, Black ibis, White throated Kingfisher, Small Kingfisher, Sandpipers, Herons, Swamp Hens, Common Coot, Little Grebes, Indian Cormorants, Red-Wattled Lapwings; Black winged Stilt, Spot billed duck etc. seen throughout the year. We can see many bush birds like Larks, Pratincoles, Pipts, Red Adavat, Black headed Munia, Scaly breasted Munia, Baya Weavers, Sunbirds, Babblers, Indian peafowl, Grey Frankolin, Tailor birds, Shirkes etc throughout the year.

We have birds of prey like Shikra, Black winged Kite, Brahminy Kite, Tawny Eagle, Harriers, Small toed snake Eagle etc. are seen throughout the year.

We have good number of winter visitors during January to March months. These birds are Greater Flamingos, Bar headed Geese, Ruddy Shelduck, Eurasian Wigeon, Mallard, Northern pintail, Siberian Cranes, Northern Shoveler, Black tailed Godwits, Rosy Pelican etc.

We are trying our level best to enhance the image of Solapur through this perspective. Many birders in India contact us to know about Great Indian Bustard as well as other species of birds in Solapur. There are few people in Solapur who are taking keen interest in bird watching. I took lot of effort to

pass on this information to young children in school, college as well as in other NGO. I have prepared audiovisual presentation on bird watching as well as bird of Solapur.

According to me Solapur is Birds Paradise.

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Solapur's flora and fauna includes its wild life sanctuary. The Government of Maharashtra declared Great Indian Bustard Sanctuary in 1979 with the sole objective of conserving the rarest species of Great Indian Bustard, which are endangered with extinction. The sanctuary consists of the area of North Solapur, Madha, Mohol and Karmala Talukas of Solapur District and Karjat, Shrigonda, Newasa Talukas of Ahmednagar District covering a total area of 8496.44 sq.kms. This bird has been included in the Schedule-1 of Wildlife Act 1972 and accordingly due protection has been given to this bird. The headquarters of the sanctuary are Nannaj of Solapur District and Rehekuri of Ahmednagar District.

The other salient feature of the Sanctuary is Maldhok wild life sanctuary. It is coming under Ninnaj taluka. It has total geographical area is of 8496.44 sq.kms. Here the forest is tropical thorn forest. The main trees found in the sanctuary are Neem, Sishu, Babul, Bor, Tarwad, Henkal, Dongri, Kusali Pavanya, Sheda, and Marvel etc. the common species of this forest are the Great Indian Bustard, Blackbuck, Wolf, Indian Fox, Jackal etc.