

Demography and Ecology of Indian Sarus Crane (*Grus antigone antigone*) in Uttar Pradesh, Northern India

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ABSTRACT

Uttar Pradesh (UP) has nine different Agro-climatic Zones in which the Indian Sarus Crane (ISC, *Grus antigone antigone*) is potentially located. A census of this species was performed in 2010 in UP at potential ISC habitats such as ponds, rivers, canals, agricultural fields and others. Data were collected regarding habitat types, threats, ownership, and other characteristics. In addition to the in-field census, subjective, qualitative data were obtained through a questionnaire survey. The total population of ISC was observed to be 11,905 and the population demonstrated a recruitment rate of 13%. No evidence supporting a declining population status was found. Some Agro-climatic Zones indicated a high population of cranes. For example, the Central Plain and the South Western Semi-Arid Plain had over 4,300 individuals each. Conversely, a very low population was observed in the Tarai Agro-climatic Zone, and no cranes were observed in Vindhyan Zone. ISC appear to form social organization and demonstrate omnivorous feeding habits. Their habitats were considered to be under various categories and degrees of threats. The most common threats appeared to be the result of pollution and agricultural development. The data collected could be useful in further planning of research and conservation efforts in the state and elsewhere.

Keywords: Adult-juvenile ratio, conservation strategy, density, distribution, habitat threat.