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Status of Sarus Crane (*Grus antigone*) in Selected Sites of Kota District, Rajasthan

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Abstract

Sarus cranes are distributed all through the state but are more commonly seen in the southeast and eastern Rajasthan. The sarus crane, a bird species characteristic of wetlands, is categorized as vulnerable on the IUCN Red List. In India, sarus cranes occur mostly outside protected areas and use these unprotected areas for feeding and breeding. The Sarus Crane was found to use all habitats such as farmlands, wetlands, grasslands etc. The paper presents a review of the study conducted on its status in Kota. The results show that a total of 45 Sarus Cranes were sighted in the study areas.

Keywords: Sarus Crane, Pond, Status

Introduction

The Indian Sarus Crane (*Grus antigone*) is the only resident breeding crane present in India and Southeast Asia (Chaudhary *et al.*, 1999). Sarus Cranes are most common and densely distributed in the Indian states of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Haryana; they are less common in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh (Gole, 1989). The Sarus Crane, once a common bird of rural areas, is now confined to the patches of the rural landscapes. Many embedded wetlands in agricultural landscape spread across the various districts of the state have reported Sarus sightings. The Sarus Crane is the largest bird of India and the tallest flying bird of the world. This crane is classified as vulnerable in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Sarus Crane is an omnivorous bird and maintains the food chain and food web by furnishing strength to wetland ecosystem. Sarus crane is a social and monogamous bird.

Study Area & Methodology

Kota is a district of the south-eastern most part of Rajasthan. Kota is situated on the bank of Chambal River. The cartographic coordinates are 25.2138° N 75.8648° E. A good number of wetlands are found in this city. They provide a habitat platform to aquatic bio-communities. During the present study, 9 waterbodies of Kota District were covered by two-wheeler between March 2024 and February 2025. This species of Crane has been reported from some protected areas and important bird areas of Kota such as: Ummedganj Conservation Reserve, Abhera Pond, Girdharpura Pond, Dharampura Pond, Bhandaheda village pond, Alania dam, Borabas Pond, Sothia Talai and Mandargarh pond. A regular field visit was continuing throughout these periods at intervals of two or four days. However, the schedule was altered according to the situation and availability of suitable weather. Field data were collected during morning hours between 7.00 am to 10.00 am and in the evening from 3.00 pm to 7.00 pm during 2024-2025. To record the number of Sarus cranes, photographs were taken with DSLR camera and telephoto lens.



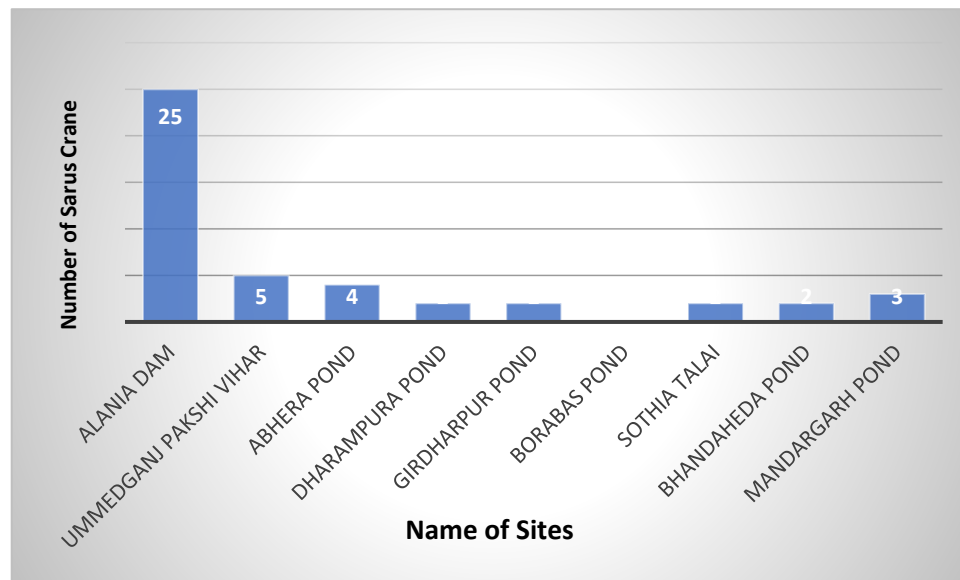
Map of Study Area

Result

This research is focused on the ground site observation, and interviews of some viewers. The findings show that 45 cranes were documented in the study areas. Some of the major strongholds of this species are the Alania dam in Kota district, where a count of 25 individuals (11pairs & 3 sub-adults) was reported. Breeding pairs of Sarus Crane can still be found in Ummedganj Pakshi Vihar, Mandargarh pond and village Bhandaheda. During the study period they have been seen mostly in pair, flocks, rarely in solo condition. In the present study number of *Grus antigone*, population is suspected of having decreased.

Site	Number of Sarus Cranes
Alania dam	25 (11pairs & 3 sub-adults)
Ummedganj Pakshi Vihar	5 (2 pairs & 1 sub-adult)
Abhera Pond,	4 (2 pairs)
Dharampura Pond	2 (1pair)
Girdharpura Pond	2 (1pair)
Borabas Pond	0
Sothia Talai	2 (1pair)
Bhandaheda Village Pond	2 (1pair)
Mandargarh Pond	3 (1 pair & 1 sub-adult)

Number of Sarus Cranes seen during the survey.



10

Population of Sarus Cranes in the study areas.



A Pair of Sarus Crane.



Sarus Crane Family.



Flock of Sarus Crane at Alania dam, Kota

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