



Black-necked Crane

Status, Breeding Productivity and Conservation
in Ladakh, India

2000-2004



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Parent crane feeding the chicks

home to wide variety of flora and fauna. Most of these wetlands are of glacial origin and remain frozen from December to March. Cranes arrive in these wetlands in March and April and after completing their breeding cycle leave these wetlands in October and November. A unique tent-dwelling tribe, the Changpas, move around the wetlands of Ladakh in search of pasturelands.

The wetlands of Changthang are the only known nesting sites of the Black-necked Crane in India. Several other species of birds use these wetlands as their breeding grounds too, such as the Bar-headed Goose (*Anser indicus*), Brown-headed Gull (*Larus brunicephalus*), Great-crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*), Ruddy Shelduck (*Tadorna ferruginea*) and Lesser Sand Plover (*Charadrius mongolus*).

Several species of mammals are found in the region, e.g. the Blue Sheep (*Pseudois nayaur*), Ladakh Urial (*Ovis orientalis vignii*), Tibetan Argali (*Ovis ammon hodgsoni*), Tibetan Wild Ass (*Equus kiang*), Himalayan Marmot (*Marmota himalayana*), Red Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), Tibetan Gazelle (*Procarpa picticaudata*), Snow Leopard (*Uncia uncia*), Wild Dog (*Cuon alpinus laniger*), Tibetan Wolf (*Canis lupus chanko*) and the Lynx (*Lynx isabellina*).

Black-necked Crane in Ladakh: A Historical Perspective

The first record of Black-necked Crane in India was made by F. Ludlow on 2 June 1919 at Tsokar, when he shot one bird and collected its head and wings for identification (Ludlow 1920). After Ludlow’s discovery and report of Black-necked Crane in Ladakh, Osmaston (1925) and Meintertzhagen (1927) also observed some breeding pairs