**Protection and Conservation of Wildlife**

**(National Parks of Pakistan)**

**INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE AND CONSERVE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

**P**akistan has given serious thought to promote and conserve its biological resources by taking important steps in the following areas:

1. **Establishment of Protected Areas (P.As):**

The World Conservation Union (IUCN) defines a Protected Area as: “A clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values” ( Dudley 2008 ).

In order to conserve as many species and ecosystems as possible, the government has established 237 protected areas (P.As) so far. These include 26 national parks, 99 wildlife sanctuaries, 96 game reserves and 16 unclassified areas. The extent of land under protection in Pakistan comprises 9% of the country area, i.e., 71649 square kilometers. As of March 2013, there are nineteen (19) Ramsar Wetland sites, covering an area of 1,343,627 hectares (3,320,170 acres) in [Pakistan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pakistan) declared under the Ramsar Convention.

[*Biosphere reserves*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biosphere_reserves): They are established according to the [UNESCO](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UNESCO)'s [Man and the Biosphere Programme](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Man_and_the_Biosphere_Programme) (MAB) to promote sustainable development for conservation of biological and cultural diversity. As of 2016, the Lal Suhanra Biosphere Reserve and Ziarat Juniper Forest are the only two biosphere reserve in Pakistan, which were approved by UNESCO in 1977 and 2013 respectively. A number of initiatives and projects have been undertaken to promote and develop other biosphere reserves in Pakistan but due to weak implementation this has not yet been materialized. In July 2012, [Pakistan Museum of Natural History](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pakistan_Museum_of_Natural_History) and Beijing Museum of Natural History signed a MoU to work on trans-boundary biodiversity and to improve MAB related activities in the Karakoram, Himalaya, and Hindukush regions.

1. **Institutional Measures:**

The first step towards legislation to protect biodiversity was introduced in 1968 with establishment of the Wildlife Enquiry Committee (WEC). This Committee drafted conservation legislation which was later adopted through various provincial acts and ordinances. These statutes provide for the creation and management of Various categories of P.As; national parks, wildlife sanctuaries; game reserves; and private game reserves. A national Council for Conservation of Wildlife (NCCW) was established in 1974 within the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock. The NCCW has an advisory board and is responsible for coordinating, formulation and implementing wildlife policies at the federal and provincial levels, coordinating activities with international agencies and promoting conservation generally. The first piece of legislation to consider environment as a whole was the Environmental Protection Ordinance 1983. The National Conservation Strategy (NCS) marked a further shift away from simple regulation and protection measures towards a holistic view of environmental problems.

1. **International Conventions and Agreements**:

Pakistan is a signatory of virtually all the major international agreements in this field: the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar), the World Heritage Convention, and the Convention of the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals(Bonn). Pakistani is a member of the World Conservation union (IUCN) and the International Waterfowl and Wetland Research Bureau (IWRB). In addition, Pakistan also signed convention on Biological Diversity (Rio de Janeiro). Today 125 countries are parties to this convention. iv. National Conservation Strategy (NCS): The Ministry of Environment, Urban Affairs, Forestry and Wildlife, Islamabad which is the apex body in Pakistan responsible for environment related issues has formulated a ®National Conservation Strategy¯ which encompasses Biodiversity along with other thirteen core programme areas. This strategy provides backward and forward linkages among various core areas.

The NCS recognizes that the existing protected areas (P.As) system is incomplete, in that it is not representative of all the ecosystems and plants and animal communities; the boundaries of existing P.As are in most cases not drawn according to ecological criteria; many are too small and isolated; and there are limited management planning capabiliities and weak law enforcement programmes. There are no plans which identify species ®hot spots¯, or the specific management requirements of rare and endangered species. The lack of any significant financial benefits and incentives to local people to participate also constrains biodiversity conservation in the country. As a result of these conditions, much of Pakistan¯s biodiversity is severely threatened, and in critical need of attention. To conserve biodiversity, the NCS recommends investing Rs. 1.08 billion in the following seven programmes.

* Management of national parks and protected areas.
* Development of new national parks.
* Development of new wetland reserves.
* Medical, botanicals and germplasm preservation programme.
* Community management of game reserves.
* Programmes for endangered species.
* Captive breeding in the private sector.

**NATIONAL PARKS OF PAKISTAN**

In Pakistan a National Park is an area of outstanding scenic merit and natural beauty where the landscape, flora and fauna are protected and preserved in a natural state. Public access for recreation, education and research is provided for. Access roads and other facilities should be planned so they do not conflict with the main objectives of national parks. Hunting wild animals is prohibited, as is firing gun or otherwise interfering with animals and plants. Clearing land for cultivation, mining or allowing polluted water to flow in National Parks is also prohibited. Under the regulations, these acts may be allowed for scientific purposes or to improve the park. Minimum geographical area required for an area to be declared as a national park is 1000 acre (04 km²) and such a national park exists in Pakistan that is ToliPir National Park located in Poonch district of AJ&K. There are 26 National Parks in Pakistan which are given as under.

01. **Margallah Hills National Park:** Islamabad, established 1980, area 15,883 ha.

02. **Hazarganji Chiltan National Park:** Balochistan, established 1980, area 15,555 ha.

03. **Hingol National Park:** Balochistan, established 1997, area 6, 19,043 ha.

04. **Kirthar National Park:** Sindh, established 1974, area 3, 08,733 ha.

05. **Ayubia National Park:** Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, established 1984, area 3,122 ha.

06. **Chitral Gol National Park:** Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, established 1984, area 7,750 ha.

07. **Sheikh Badin National Park:** Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, established 1999, area 15,540 ha.

08. **Saiful Maluk National Park:** Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, established 2003, area 12,026 ha.

09. **Lulosar Dodipat National Park:** Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, established 2003, area 75,058 ha.

10. **Broghil Valley National Park:** Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, established August 25, 2010, Area 134,744 ha.

11. **Khunjerab National Park:** Gilgit-Baltistan, established 1975, area 2, 27,143 ha.

12. **Hunderab Shandoor National Park:** Gilgit-Baltistan, established 1993, area 1, 65,000 ha.

13. **Deosai National Park:** Gilgit-Baltistan, established 1993, area 3, 63,600 ha.

14. **Central Karakoram National Park:** Gilgit-Baltistan, established 1993, area 9, 73,845 ha.

15. **Qurumber National Park:** Gilgit-Baltistan, established August 2, 2011, area 74,000 ha.

16. **Machhiara National Park:** AJ & K, established 1996, area 13,532 ha.

17. **Ghamot National Park:** AJ & K, established 2004, area 27,271 ha.

18. **Pir Lasoorha National Park:** AJ & K, established 2005, area 1,580 ha.

19. **Toli Pir National Park:** AJ & K, established 2005, area 1,000 ha.

20. **Musk Deer Gorez National Park:** AJ & K, established 2007, area 52,815 ha.

21. **Deva Vatala National Park:** AJ & K, established 2007, area 2,993 ha.

22. **Poonch River Mahaseer National Park:** AJ & K, established 2011

23. **Lal Suhanra National Park:** Punjab, established 1972, area 87,426 ha.

24. **Chinji National Park:** Punjab, established 1987, area 6, 097 ha.

25. **Kala Chitta National Park:** Punjab, established Dec. 2008, area 36,965 ha.

26. **Murree-Kotli Sattian-Kahuta National Park:** Punjab, established Sep. 2009

 Following are the major National Parks of Pakistan:

**LAL SUHANRA NATIONAL PARK**

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| **Geographical Location:** | 29\*24'N-72\*01'E |
| **Physical Location:** | 36 km to the east of Bahawalpur in the province of Punjab  |
| **Total Area:** | 87,426 hectares |
| **Date Established:** | 1972 |
| **Best Time to Visit:** | October to March |

Lal Suhanra Nartional park was declared a national park on 26 October 1972, following recommendations made by the Wildlife Enquiry Committee in 1971. Originally, the park comprised an area of 31,355ha, of which 20,932ha were desert, 8,488ha irrigated forest plantation and 1,934ha reservoir; it was due to be enlarged by 22,680ha. It is crossed by the dried-up bed of the Hakra River and features an important wetland, Patisar Lake. Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation(PTDC) has 6 A/C bedroom resorts in the park. Beside this camping can also be done in selected campsites.

**Wildlife:**
Blackbuck became virtually extinct in the Cholistan Desert but the species has been re-introduced in Lal Suhanra within large enclosures, together with Chinkara gazelle, Nilgai antelope, Hog deer and Indian rhinoceros. There is big lake in the center of the park called Patisar Lake, which is ideal for bird watching. Patisar Lake regularly holds between 10,000 and 30,000 ducks and common coot in mid-winter. Over 13,00 waterfowl were present in January 1987. The park also supports a large population of birds of prey.

**Mammals:**
Mammals in the park include--Long-eared Hedgehog (**C**), Nilgai antelope (**T**), Black buck (**T**), Chinkara gazelle (**V**), Hog deer (**T**), Red fox (**C**), Bengal Fox (**V**), Golden Jackal (**C**), Porcupine (**C**), Caracal cat (**R**), Moongoose (**C**), Jungle cat (**C**), Indian Wolf (**R**), Wild boar (**C**), Honey Badger or Ratel (**?**), Little Civet (**?**), Indian (Black-naped) Hare (**C**), Smooth-coated Otter (**V**) and Indian rhino (**introduced**) (**T**).

**Note:** T=Threatened, V=Vulnerable, R=Rare, C=Common, ?=Unknown.

**Birds:**
**Total species: 160**
Birds in the park are--Houbara bustard, Griffon vulture, Honey buzzard, Marsh harrier, Hen harrier, Laggar falcon, Peregrine falcon, Kestrel, Indian sparrow hawk, Egyptian vulture, Larks, Shrikes, Wheatears and Barn Owl.

**Reptiles:**

Reptiles in the park are-- Monitor lizard, Russell's viper, Indian cobra, Saw scaled viper, Wolf snake, John's sand boa and Spiny tailed lizard.

**KHUNJERAB NATIONAL PARK**

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| **Geographical Location:** | 34\*44'N-75\*17'E |
| **Physical Location:** | Karakoram Range Mountains on Pakistan/China border in upper Hunza/Gojal |
| **Total Area:** | 226,913 hectares |
| **Date Established:** | 1975 |
| **Best Time to Visit:** | March to September |

Khunjerab National Park is Pakistan's third largest National Park. The park is adjacent to Taxkorgan Natural Reserve (1,400,000ha) in China. This park was created on 29 April 1975 by the late Zulfikar Ali Bhutto on the recommendation of Wildlife biologist Dr. George Schaller. Over half of the park is above 4,000m. Khunjerab Pass, the gateway to China via the Karakoram Highway, is at 4,934m.

**Wildlife:**
The primary purpose of setting up of this park was to provide protection to the endangered Marco polo sheep, which is only found in this area in Pakistan. According to the Mir of Hunza, the population was around 400 but had dropped to below 180 by the time of the completion of the Karakoram Highway. A herd of almost 75 Marco Polo sheep was recorded in the spring of 1984 and park staff saw at least 50 crossing the Pass in May 1989. The park is also famous for its Snow Leopards. Some reports say that it might contain the highest density of these beautiful cats in the total Himalayan ecosystem which is the natural habitat of these cats. Over 2,000 Siberian ibex, widely distributed and abundant in the park but absent from neighbouring China are also present here.

**Mammals:**
**Total species: 16**

Mammals in the park include------- Snow leopard (**T**), Himalayan Ibex (**C**), Brown bear (**T**), Tibetan red fox (**C**), Tibetan wolf (**T**), Blue Sheep (**in Shimshal area only**) (**V**), Marcopolo Sheep (**T**), Tibetan wild ass or Kiang (**Unconfirmed reports**) (**?**), Ermine (**C)**, Alpine weasle (**?**), Stone Martin (**C**), Golden Marmot (**C**), Lynx (**Unconfirmed reports**) (**?**), Large-eared Pika (**C**), Dhole (**Unconfirmed reports**) (**?**), Cape hare (**C**), Common field mouse (**C**), Royle's mountain vole (**C**), Lesser shrew (**C**) and Migratory hamster (**C**).

**Note:** T=Threatened, V=Vulnerable, R=Rare, C=Common, ?=Unknown.

**Birds:**
**Total species: 66**

Common birds in the park are---- Lammegier vulture, Golden eagle, Himalayan griffon vulture, Eurasian black vulture, Marsh harrier, Eurasian sparrow hawk, Eurasian kestrel, Lesser kestrel, Saker falcon, Peregrine falcon, Himalayan Snow cock, Snow partridge, Chukar, Grey heron, Common sandpiper, Hill pigeon, Snow pigeon, Northern eagle owl, Eurasian cuckoo, Common swallow, Magpie, Alpine cough and Raven.

**HAZARGANJI CHILTAN NATIONAL PARK**

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| **Geographical Location:** | 30'17'N-67\*13'E |
| **Physical Location:** | 20 south-west of Quetta in the province of Baluchistan  |
| **Total Area:** | 15,555 hectares |
| **Date Established:** | 1980 |
| **Best Time to Visit:** | March to September |

Hazarganji Chiltan National Park, is another beautiful national park of Pakistan. The area is mountainous with precipitous slopes divided by ravines. The Chiltan Hills and Hazar Ganji Range lie west and east, respectively, of the north-south Chiltan divide. It can easily be reached from the provincial capital Quetta and attracts many visitors. Facilities include a museum, picnic spots and accommodation in rest houses.

**Wildlife:**
This park was primarily establised to provide refuge to the endangered Chiltan wild goat or Markhor. In the 1950s it was said to exceed 1,200, but in November 1970 the population was estimated to number about 200, based on a total count of 107 individuals. At present the total population of the Chiltan wild goat is estimated to be about 800. The Suleiman markhor is also present in the northern part of the Chiltan Range and a few urial still survive on the western slopes between 1,500m and 2,100m. Carnivores include Stripped hyaena and Red fox.

**Mammals:**
Mammals in the park include--Chiltan wildgoat or Markhor (**T**), Suleiman Markhor (**T**), Urial sheep (Gad) (**V**), Indian wolf (**R**), Stripped hyena (**V**), Leopard (**?**), Caracal (**?**), Jackal (**C**), Red fox (**C**), Porcupine (**C**) and Desert hare (**C**).

**Note:** T=Threatened, V=Vulnerable, R=Rare, C=Common, ?=Unknown.

**Birds:**
Birds in the park are--Houbara bustard, Griffon vulture, Egyptian vulture, Honey buzzard, Laggar falcon, Peregrine falcon, Kestrel, Indian sparrow hawk, Scops owl, Common cuckoo, European bee-eater, Rock partridge, European nightjar, Long-billed pipit, Orphean warbler, Variable wheatear, Blue rock thrush, Stonechat, and Lichtenstein's desert finch.

**Reptiles:**

Reptiles in the park are-- Monitor lizard, Russell's viper, Saw scaled viper and Spiny tailed lizard.

**KIRTHAR NATIONAL PARK**

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| **Geographical Location:** | 25\*42'N-67\*35'E |
| **Physical Location:** | South-western part of the province of Sind, north east of Karachi  |
| **Total Area:** | 308,733 hectares |
| **Date Established:** | 1974 |
| **Best Time to Visit:** | Mid October to November and December to mid March |

Kirthar National Park is Pakistan's second biggest National Park (Hingol National Park being the biggest now). It is also the first National Park from Pakistan to be included in the 1975 United Nation's list of National Parks around the world. Kirthar is an area of outstanding beauty and cultural heritage which provides important habitat for a variety of mammals, birds and reptiles characteristic of the arid subtropics Approximately one third of the park lies in the north of Karachi district and two thirds in the south-west of Dadu district. The park is part of a 447,161ha protected areas complex, being contiguous with Mahal Kohistan Wildlife Sanctuary (70,577ha) to the south and Hab Dam Wildlife Sanctuary (27,219ha) to the south-west. Surjan, Sumbak, Eri and Hothiano Game Reserve (40,632ha) lies just to the east of the park. There are two tourist centers in the Park managed by Sind Wildlife Management Board, namely Khar and Karchat. The centres offer cottage and dormitory accommodation and guides are available. There are some 671km of unmetalled roads within the park, most of which are negotiable only by four-wheel drive vehicle.

**Wildlife:**
In 1977, 1,480 wild goat and 430 urial were counted in the park and 2,141 chinkara in the park and adjacent Surjan, Sumbak, Eri and Hothiano Game Reserve. There are now over 5,000 wild goat, about 1,250 urial and less than 150 chinkara in the park, and a further 400 wild goat and 70 urial in the game reserve . A helicopter survey conducted in November 2000 yielded estimates of the total populations of the three large indigenous ungulates in the park. The Sindh ibex population was estimated at 13,155 ± 2460, and concentrated on the Khirthar Range, with lower concentrations on Khambu and Dumbar and small numbers elsewhere; higher elevations appear critical to this species. The Sindh urial population was estimated at 10,425 ± 675 and concentrated on rocky sites with characteristic vegetation mainly near Khar and at Dumbar, with small numbers elsewhere. The chinkara population was estimated at 1060 ± 580 and concentrated in the lowlands, sharing much of its habitat with farming. The KNP populations of all three species are of conservation importance. In October 1984, 15 blackbuck from the USA were brought to Khar visitor centre for captive propagation . It is planned to introduce the species to the park.

**Mammals:**
**Total species: 34**
Mammals in the park include--------Sindh leopard (**T**), Stripped Hyena (**T**), Desert Wolf (**T**), Indian Fox (C), Sind Wildgoat (**C**), Blandford's Urial (**V**), Honey Badger (**R**), Indian Pangolin (**R**), Caracal (**T**), Jungle cat (**C**), Jackal (**C**), Chinkara Gazelle (**V**), Black Buck ( Reintroduced ) (**R**), Hedgehog (**C**), Porcupine (**C**), Indian Grey Mongoose (**C**), Cairo Spiny mouse (**?**) and the Rock Mouse (**C**).

**Note:** T=Threatened, V=Vulnerable, R=Rare, C=Common, ?=Unknown.

**Birds:**
**Total species: 58**
Birds in the park are Lammegier vulture ( **Winter migrant**), Bonnelli's eagle, Imperial eagle, Tawny eagle, Golden eagle, Eurasian griffon vulture, Egyptian vulture, Cinereous vulture, Lagger falcon, Red-headed merlin, Kestrel, Close-Barred sandgrouse, Houbara bustard, Grey partridge, See See partridge, Stone Curlew, Indian sand grouse, Coronetted sand grouse, Painted sand grouse, Eagle owl , Sind pied woodpecker, Hume's chat, Brown rock pipit, Striped buning, Finche larks, Hoopoe, Shrikes and Wheatears.

**Reptiles:**

The Rock python, Sind cobra, Russell's viper, Saw-scaled viper, Sind krait, Royal rat snake, Tortoises, Desert Monitor lizard, Yellow Monitor lizard, Sind Crocodile (**Possibly extinct**) and different species of lizard and chameleon.

**HINGOL NATIONAL PARK**

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| **Geographical Location:** | 25\*30'N-65\*30'E |
| **Physical Location:** | Makran coast, Baluchistan province. Approximately 190 km west of Karachi |
| **Total Area:** | 610, 043 hectares |
| **Date Established:** | 1988 and 1997 (includes Dhrun Wildlife Sanctuary) |
| **Best Time to Visit:** | Mid October to November and December to mid March |

Covering about 610,043 ha, Hingol National Park, the largest National Park in Pakistan, lies on the Makran coast approximately 190 km from Karachi. The area was for the first time declared *reserved* in 1988. The park area covers parts of the three districts, namely; Lasbela, Gawader and Owaran of Baluchistan province containing a variety of topographical features and vegetation, varying from arid sub tropical forest in the north to arid montane in the west. Large tracts of the NP are covered with drift sand and can be classified as coastal semi desert. The National Park includes the estuary of the Hingol river which supports a significant diversity of bird and fish species.

Currently, 20 staff members including 18 game watchers, two deputy rangers are responsible for the management of the Park under the guidance of the park Manager who reports to the Conservator and the Secretary Wildlife, Forest, Livestock, Environment and Tourism.

**Wildlife:**
Although no detailed inventories of wildlife have been undertaken, Hingol is known to support threatened invertebrates in addition to a variety of bird species. One reliable source informed that the park has been an excellent habitat to wild animals including over 3000 ibexes, and 1500 Urials and more than 1200 Chinkara, besides number of resident and migratory birds. The Houbara Bustard (*Chlamydotis undulata*), Dalmatian and Spot-billed Pelican (*Pelecanus philippensis*) are regular visitors to the area.

The River Hingol has been nurturing crocodiles for centuries. The Marsh Crocodile (*Crocodylus palustris*), Olive Ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) and Green Marine Turtles (*Cheloniamydas*),  endemic and threatened species of fish, such as the Mahasheer occur and schools of Plumbeous Dolphins (*Sousa plumbea*) are known from close in-shore areas.

**Mammals:**
Mammals in the park include--------Sindh leopard (**T**), Indian Fox (**R**), Jungle cat (**C**), Jackal (**C**), Sind Wildgoat (**V**), Blandford's Urial (**T**), Chinkara Gazelle (**T**), Honey Badger (**R**), Indian Pangolin (**R**), Hedgehog (**C**), Porcupine (**C**), Indian Grey Mongoose (**C**), Cairo Spiny mouse (**?**) and the Rock Mouse (**C**).

**Note:** T=Threatened, V=Vulnerable, R=Rare, C=Common, ?=Unknown.

**Birds:**
Birds in the park are-------Houbara Bustard, Dalmatian and Spot-billed Pelican, Bonnelli's eagle, Imperial eagle, Tawny eagle, Golden eagle, Eurasian griffon vulture, Egyptian vulture, Cinereous vulture, Lagger falcon, Red-headed merlin, Kestrel, Close-Barred sandgrouse, Grey partridge, See See partridge, Stone Curlew, Indian sand grouse, Coronetted sand grouse, Painted sand grouse, Eagle owl , Sind pied woodpecker, Hume's chat, Brown rock pipit, Striped buning, Finche larks, Hoopoe, Shrikes and Wheatears.

**Reptiles:**

The Marsh Crocodile, Olive Ridley and Green Marine Turtles, Desert Monitor lizard, Yellow Monitor lizard, and different species of lizard and chameleon.

**CHITRAL GOL NATIONAL PARK**

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| **Geographical Location:** | 35\*56'N-71'40\*E |
| **Physical Location:** | Northwest in the N.W.F.P province of Pakistan bordering Afghanistan in the Hindukush Range |
| **Total Area:** | 7750 hectares |
| **Date Established:** | 1984 |
| **Best Time to Visit:** | May to September |

Chitral Gol National Park is situated in the beautiful valley of Chitral. Chitral Gol is a narrow valley, its gorge running for some 18km before broadening out into a basin surrounded by high peaks. Numerous tributaries drain into the Chitral Gol, which flows southwards into the Kunar River. Visitors and Visitor Facilities Include two hunting lodges, originally built by the Mehtars.

**Wildlife:**
This park is famous for its Markhor goats, estimated 100-125 in 1970, and 225 in 1975. A more recent estimate indicates a population size of 650. Other ungulates, such as Siberian ibex and Ladakh urial (*Shapu*), occur in very small numbers, as do black bear. The status of snow leopard changed from tenuous security in 1970 to seriously threatened by 1974. The species does not appear to be resident, visiting the park occasionally. Wolves are seen less frequently following restrictions on grazing by livestock.

**Mammals:**

Mammals in the park include---Snow leopard **(T)**, Kashmir Markhor **(V)**, Siberian ibex **(V)**, Ladakh urial **(T)**, Black bear**(T)**, Tibetan Wolf **(V)**, Red fox **(C)**, Yellow throated martin **(C)** and Himalayan otter **(V)**.

**Note:** T=Threatened, V=Vulnerable, R=Rare, C=Common, ?=Unknown.

**Birds:**
Common bird in the park are---- Lammergier vulture, Himalayan Griffon vulture, Golden eagle, Demosille crane (***Passage migrant***), Peregrine falcon, Himalayan snowcock, Himalayan monal, Snow partridge and rock Partridge.

**DEOSAI NATIONAL PARK**

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| **Geographical Location:** | Lat:\*\*\*\*---Lon:\*\*\*\* |
| **Physical Location:** | South east of Skardu in the Karakoram range bordering India  |
| **Total Area:** | 3,58,400 hectares |
| **Date Established:** | \*\*\*\*\* |
| **Best Time to Visit:** | March to September |

Above the tree line and at an average height of 13,500 feet above sea level, the Deosai Plains are among the highest plateaus in the world. The Deosai Plains cover an area of almost 3,000 square kilometers. For just over half the year - between November and May - Deosai is snow-bound. In the summer months when the snow clears up, Deosai is accessible from Skardu in the north and the Astore Valley in the west.

**Wildlife:**
Deosai Plains make up one of the last frontiers of natural habitat for the Himalayan brown bear, a creature that once roamed the mountains freely. The park currently has inbetween 20-28 Brown bears. This park was establised to protect these endangered bears. Recently a research project has started by Himalayan Wildlife Foundation (HWF) and the Northern Areas Forests, Parks, and Wildlife Department to secure the survival of the brown bear in the Deosai Plains and to monitor their population. The Deosai Plains are also home to the ibex, red fox, golden marmot, wolf, the Ladakh urial, the snow leopard, and a number of resident and migratory birds.

**Mammals:**
Mammals in the park include--Brown bear (**T**), Snow leopard (**T**), Himalayan Musk deer (**V**) Golden marmot (**C**), Pika (**C**), Migratory hamster (**?**) and Ermine (**C**).

**Note:** T=Threatened, V=Vulnerable, R=Rare, C=Common, ?=Unknown.

**Birds:**
Birds in the park are--Golden eagle, Lammagier vulture, Griffon vulture, Laggar falcon, Peregrine falcon, Kestrel, Indian sparrow hawk and Snow cock.

**AYUBIA NATIONAL PARK**

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| **Geographical Location:** | 33\*52'N-73\*09'E |
| **Physical Location:** | North of Murree in the Himalayan range mountains  |
| **Total Area:** | 1,684 hectares |
| **Date Established:** | 1984 |
| **Best Time to Visit:** | March to September |

Ayubia National Park is a small national park in the Murree hills. The initial area of the park was 1684 ha, expanded through a northern extension in 1998 to make a total of 3312 ha. The park supports one of the best remaining examples of moist Himalayan temperate forest in Pakistan and is surrounded by seven major villages and three small towns (Nathiagali, Ayubia and Khanspur). The national park consists entirely of reserve forests, which spill out of the park area on the west and south sides. The scenery is superb with huge pine forests covering the hills and providing shelter to the larger and smaller mammals. Ayubia National Park is a major recreation area visited by large numbers of local tourists, mostly from Islamabad and Abottabad. No official figures are available, but local estimates suggest that there are about 100,000 visitors per year.

**Wildlife:**
This park provides refuge to the elusive leopard and the black bear. Bird watching is excellent here. Some of the bird species pass through the park on migration. The population of the Koklass Pheasant and the rare Kalij Pheasant are the highest known for Pakistan. Only 30 individuals of the Kalij Pheasant are known to exist in the park.

**Mammals:**
Mammals in the park include--Asiatic leopard (**V**), Black bear (**T**), Yellow throated marten (**R**), Kashmir hill fox (**C**), Red Flying squirrel (**C**), Himalayan palm civet (**R**), Masked civet (**R**) and Rhesus Macaque (**C**).

**Note:** T=Threatened, V=Vulnerable, R=Rare, C=Common, ?=Unknown.

**Birds:**
Birds in the park are--Golden eagle, Himalayan Griffon vulture, Honey buzzard, Peregrine falcon, Kestrel, Indian sparrow hawk, Hill pigeon, Spotted dove and Collared dove.

**MARGALLA HILLS NATIONAL PARK**

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| **Geographical Location:** | 33\*43'N/72\*55'E |
| **Physical Location:** | North east of the national capital Islamabad, in the province of Punjab  |
| **Total Area:** | 17,386 hectares |
| **Date Established:** | 1980 |
| **Best Time to Visit:** | Throughout the year |

Margalla Hills National Park, is located in the foothills of the Himalayan range. The topography is rugged, with numerous valleys and many steep and even precipitous slopes. The area is drained by the River Kurang and its tributaries, which flow into the River Soan. This park is the most accessible park in Pakistan due to its close proximity to the national capital, Islamabad. A visitor centre is planned for Daman-E-Koh, providing lounge accommodation and an information service. Lodges, camping grounds and picnic sites are also planned and the provision of a chair lift may be considered