

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR VISITORS TO PROTECTED AREAS :

- Entry to any Protected Area is subject to a valid permit from Chief Wildlife Warden or other authorised Officer.
- Nature belongs to all and every living being has a right to live peacefully.
- Lighting fire is strictly prohibited in Protected Areas as it not only destroys forests but also damages wildlife habitat.
- Waste materials particularly non-biodegradable ones such as plastics are harmful to environment and wildlife habitats. Please bring back your waste maerial with you. Leave nothing but your footprints.
- Corals look more beautiful in its natual habitat than in your house.
- Untrained divers and snorkellers cause immense damage to corals by reef walking. Avoid diving if you are not trained.
- Your Concern for nature conservation is highly appreciated. Please inform local authorities / staff positioned in Protected areas if you notice any undesirable activity.
- Shooting with camera is allowed not with guns inside Protected Area. Avoid carrying weapons.

For Further Details, Contact :

The Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) & The Chief Wildlife Warden

Andaman & Nicobar Islands
Van Sadan, Haddo P.O.
Port Blair - 744 102 (INDIA)
Phone : 03192 - 233270

The Divisional Forest Officer (Wildlife Division-II)

Mayabunder
Phone : 03192 - 273258.
A & N Islands (INDIA)

The Deputy Conservator of Forests (Wildlife Division-I)

Haddo P.O.
Port Blair - 744 102 (INDIA)
Phone : 03192 - 232816

The Divisional Forest Officer

Nicobar Forest Division
Phone : 03193 - 264213.
Great Nicobar
A & N Islands (INDIA)

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UNIQUE BIODIVERSITY OF ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS



GENERAL INFORMATION :

The Andaman & Nicobar Islands are located in the Bay of Bengal, off the eastern Coast of India.

LOCATION

Latitude : 6°45'N and 13°41'N

Longitude : 92° 12'E and 93° 57'E

GEOGRAPHIC AREA : 8249 Sq.km.

NUMBER OF ISLANDS : 349

TOTAL COASTLINE : 1962 KM.

CLIMATE : Tropical

ANNUAL RAINFALL : 3000 mm

FOREST COVER : 7615 sq.km.

RECORDED FORESTS : 7171 sq.km.

FOREST : These islands are known for their pristine tropical rain forests. More than 92 percent of the geographic area is covered with luxuriant forests. Important forest types include Tropical Evergreen forests, Moist deciduous forests, Littoral forests, Mangrove forests, Bamboo and Cane brakes. Important

tree species are Padauk (*Pterocarpus dalbergioides*), Gurjan (*Dipterocarpus sp.*), Badam, (*Terminalia procera*), White Chuglum (*T.bialata*), Black Chuglum (*T.manni*), Marble Wood (*Diospyros marmorata*), Chooi (*Sageraea elliptica*), Toungpeinne (*Artocarpus chaplasha*), Sea Mahua (*Manilkara littoralis*) etc.



Tropical Rain Forests

Mangrove vegetation is another important feature of these islands. They occur on the seaward fringes and on the sides of the creeks, occupying 966 sq.km.

area. Important mangrove species are *Rhizophora mucronata*, *Bruguiera conjugata*, *Avicennia officinalis*, *Ceriops tagal*, *Excoecaria sp.* etc. Mangroves protect shoreline from soil erosion and also serve as reservoir of organic matter to support marine life along the coast.



Mangrove Vegetation

WILDLIFE : These emerald isles are endowed with a rich variety of fauna. Geographic isolation of these islands has resulted in a high degree of endemism i.e., certain species are confined to these islands only. The surrounding seas are equally rich in marine biodiversity.

MAMMALS : Out of 55 terrestrial species and 7 marine mammal species reported, 32 species are endemic. Common mammal

found here are Andaman wild pig (*Sus Scrofa andamanensis*), Crab eating macaque (*Macaca fascicularis umbrosa*), Andaman masked palm civet (*Paguma larvata tytleri*), Dugong (*Dugong dugon*), Dolphin (*Delphinus delphis*), Whale (*Balenoptera musculus*), Spotted deer (*Axis axis*), Andaman spiny shrew (*Crociodura andamanensis*), Nicobar tree shrew (*Tupaia nicobarica nicobarica*), Andaman horse-shoe bat (*Rhinophya cognatus famulus*), Lesser short nosed bat (*Cynopterus brachiotis brachysoma*), elephant (*Elephas maximus*) etc.



Andaman Wild Pig



Crab-eating Macaque (Nicobar Monkey)

BIRDS : The rich avi-faunal diversity has always attracted ornithologists and bird watchers to these islands. As many as 246 species and sub species of birds are reported to inhabit



Dark Serpent Eagle



White-bellied Sea Eagle

these islands and of these 99 species and sub-species are endemic. Some important species are Andaman Teal (*Anas gibberifrons albogularis*), Megapode (*Megapodius freycinet*), Narcondum hornbill (*Rhyticeros narcondami*), Nicobar pigeon (*Caloenas nicobarica nicobarica*), Green Imperial Pigeon (*Ducula aenea*), Nicobar Parakeet (*Psittacula Caniceps*), Crested serpent eagle (*Spilornis cheela*), White-bellied sea eagle (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*), Edible-nest swiftlet (*Collocalia esculenta*), Emerald dove (*Chalcophaps indica*) etc.



Olive Ridley Turtle

REPTILES : Sandy beaches of these islands are famous for turtle nesting. There are 76 terrestrial reptiles. Of these 24 species are endemic. Important species include four main species of sea turtles viz., Leatherback turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), Green sea turtle

(*Chelonia mydas*), Hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata squamata*), and Olive Ridley turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), Salt water crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*), Water monitor lizard (*Varanus salvator*), Reticulate python (*Python reticulatus*), sea snakes and many other varieties of snakes including King Cobra. (*Ophiophagus hannah*)

MARINE LIFE : A&N Islands have 1962 km long coastline. Due to its long coastal stretch, these islands have a very rich marine biodiversity. They harbour more than 1200 species of fish, 350 species of echinoderms, 1000 species of molluscs and many more lower forms of life. Among vertebrates, dugong, dolphin, whale, salt water crocodiles, sea turtles, sea snakes etc. are common.



Photo: Dr. S.S. Garbhiyal

Salt Water Crocodile

Corals and Coral reefs are the most fascinating part of marine ecosystem here. So far more than 200 species of corals have been reported. Reefs are mostly fringing type on eastern coast and barrier type on the western coast. Important genera include *Acropora*, *Montipora*, *Pocillipora*, *Porites*, *Favia*, *Fungia*, *Goniopora*, *Millipora* and *Heliopora*. Coral reefs are important breeding and nursery ground for fish and many other organisms and have been aptly called "The Tropical Rain forests in the sea".



Fascinating World of Corals

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT : For conservation and management of wildlife in these islands, provisions of Indian Forest Act, 1927, Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, Coastal Regulation Zone Rules 1991, Andaman & Nicobar Wildlife Protection Rules 1973 and other relevant Acts and Rules are enforced.



Photo: Dr. Alak Saxena

Jollybuoy Island (MGM National Park)

A number of species found here are 'Endangered' species and included in schedule I of Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. These species are given special status for protection and conservation. Some of these species are

1. Andaman wild pig,
2. Crab eating macaque,
3. Dugong,
4. Elephant,
5. Salt water crocodile,
6. Leather back turtle,
7. Green sea turtle,
8. Hawksbill turtle,
9. Olive ridley turtle,
10. Reticulate python,
11. Andaman teal,
12. Narcondum hornbill,
13. Nicobar pigeon,
14. Nicobar megapode,
15. White bellied sea eagle,
16. Reef building corals,
17. Black coral,
18. Organ pipe coral,
19. Fire coral,
20. Fan coral,
21. Sea cucumber,
22. Edible nest swiftlets,
23. Water monitor lizard,
24. Certain species of shell.

For better protection and conservation a number of areas and islands have been declared as National Parks and Wildlife sanctuaries. There are 96 Wildlife sanctuaries, 9 National Parks and One Biosphere Reserve. Some important Protected Areas are :

Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park, Wandoor : To protect marine and terrestrial fauna (281.50 sq.km). Located around 30km, from Port Blair, it is a famous tourist attraction for coral viewing.

Mount Harriet National Park : To preserve terrestrial flora and fauna (46.62 sq.km.). Located in South Andaman it is an attraction for nature lovers.

Saddle Peak National Park : Located in North Andaman, it is known for unique terrestrial flora and fauna (32.54 sq.km.).

Galathea National Park For conservation of Megapode, Giant Robber crab, Nicobar pigeon and other important fauna (110 sq. km.). It is Located in Great Nicobar Island.

Campbell Bay National Park : For conservation of Crab eating macaque, Giant Robber crab, Megopode, Nicobar Pigeon et c. (426.23 sq.km.). It is Located in Great Nicobar Island

Narcondum Island Sanctuary : North eastern most Island, known for endemic Narcondum hornbill (6.81 sq.km.).

Cuthbert Bay Sanctuary : Located in Middle Andaman, it is known for turtle nesting (5.82 sq.km.).

Interview Island Sanctuary : Located in the North west side of Mayabunder, it is known for feral elephants (133 sq.km.).

Lohabarrack Crocodile Sanctuary : Located near Port Blair, it is meant for conservation of salt water crocodile (100 sq. km.).

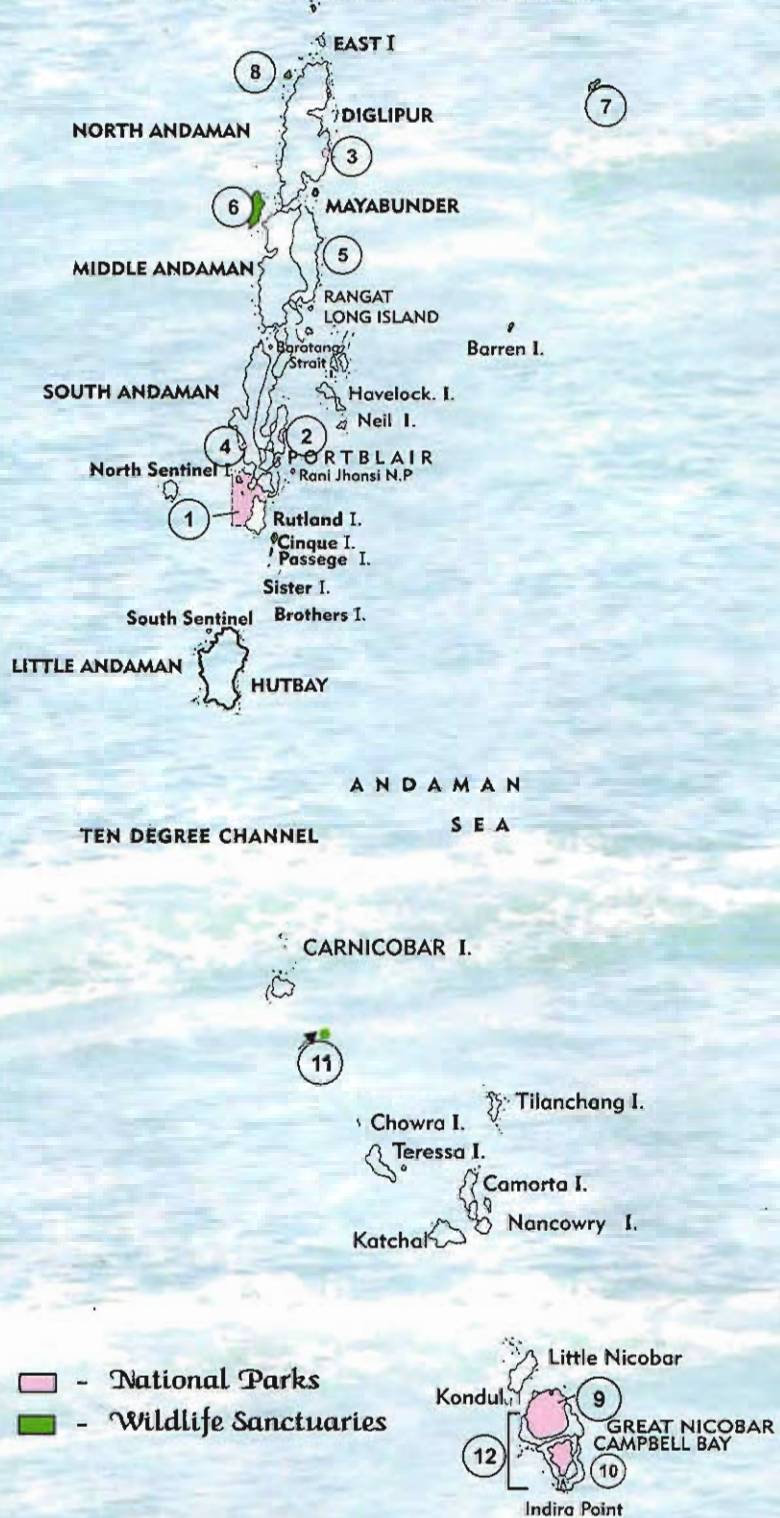
Battimalv Island Sanctuary : A southern group island, known for megapode and Nicobar pigeon (2.23 sq.km.).

Reef Island Sanctuary : Known for Andaman Grey Teal (1.74 sq.km.)

Great Nicobar Biosphere Reserve : Constituted under Man and Biosphere Programme (885 sq.km.).

A mini-zoo exists in Port Blair for exhibiting unique animal species found in the islands. A Biological Park is being developed at Chidiyatapu for housing and creating empathy for wild animals.

IMPORTANT NATIONAL PARKS & WILDLIFE SANCTUARIES OF ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS



Narcondum Hornbill



Padauk- the State Tree

Photo: Dr. Abhishek Saxena

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Butterfly Fish



Cinque Island Sanctuary