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# Phoenicopteriformes: A new Order addition for Avian diversity of Todgarh Raoli Wildlife Sanctuary, Rajasthan

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## ABSTRACT

This paper deals with first sighting of Phoenicopteriformes order's bird Greater Flamingo (Family: Phoenicopteridae) and addition for avian diversity of Todgarh-Raoli wildlife sanctuary. It was the first confirmed photographs records from this sanctuary. Taxonomic description, distribution, vernacular name, present status, location map and photographs are providing here for their easy identification and updating of avian diversity of Todgarh-Raoli wildlife sanctuary.

**Key words:** : Addition, Order, Avifauna, Greater Flamingo, Todgarh-Raoli wls.

## INTRODUCTION

Birds are the most significant and component of fresh water wetland ecosystem. Wetlands are among the most productive ecosystem in the world and play vital role in flood control, aquifer recharge, nutrient absorption and erosion control. Also wetlands provide home for a huge diversity of wildlife such as birds, mammals, fish, frogs, insects and plants (Prajapati, 2017). India has about 7,57,060 wetland identified and reported 310 bird species (about 150 migratory birds) from these wetlands. Out of which 46,748 wetlands identified from Rajasthan and about 100 bird species reported from these wetlands (Kumar & Gupta, 2013; Bassi *et al.*, 2014).

Flamingos are one of the most beautiful wetland birds belonging to the order Phoenicopteriformes. There are six species of flamingos in the world, of which two species occur in India i.e. Greater flamingo and Lesser flamingo (Tere, 2005). The order Phoenicopteriformes represents 2 species from Rajasthan but no one earlier reported from this sanctuary.

During the survey of sanctuary from year 2015 to year 2019, we have sighted one unidentified bird species. After critical study by using various published

literature and field photographs (Ali & Ripley, 1986; Beaman & Medge 1998; Grimmet *et al.*, 1999; Arjun & Roshnath, 2018; Purohit *et al.*, 2020a & 2020b; Singh *et al.*, 2022, Purohit *et al.*, 2024), this bird species has been identified and photographic evidence of presence of order Phoenicopteriformes, is first time reported from this sanctuary.

***Phoenicopus roseus*** Pallus, 1811.

**Taxonomic description:** Its size between 110 cm to 150 cm high and weight up to 4.2 kg. It has black-tipped bills with a distinctive downward bend. their large bills consist of layers of horny paltes used to filter out prey from the water. Legs are large and strong and bright pink as well and end with pink, webbed feet. Eyes are yellow, neck is long, lean and curved. It will often rest their head on their body in order to avoid fatigue in the neck muscles. Young flamingos are whitish-grey and only attain the pink coloration several years into their adult life (Fig. 1-photo plate).

**Distribution:** Angola, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Fance, Greece, India, Israel, Italy, Kenya,

Kuwait, Madagascar, Morocco, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Turkey, UAE.

In India: Gujarat, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Orissa, Maharashtra, Karnataka. In Rajasthan: Jodhpur (Dhawa), Jaipur (Sambhar Lake), Ajmer (Ajmer city).

**Vernacular name:** Greater Flamingo

**Status:** Least concern (IUCN red list).

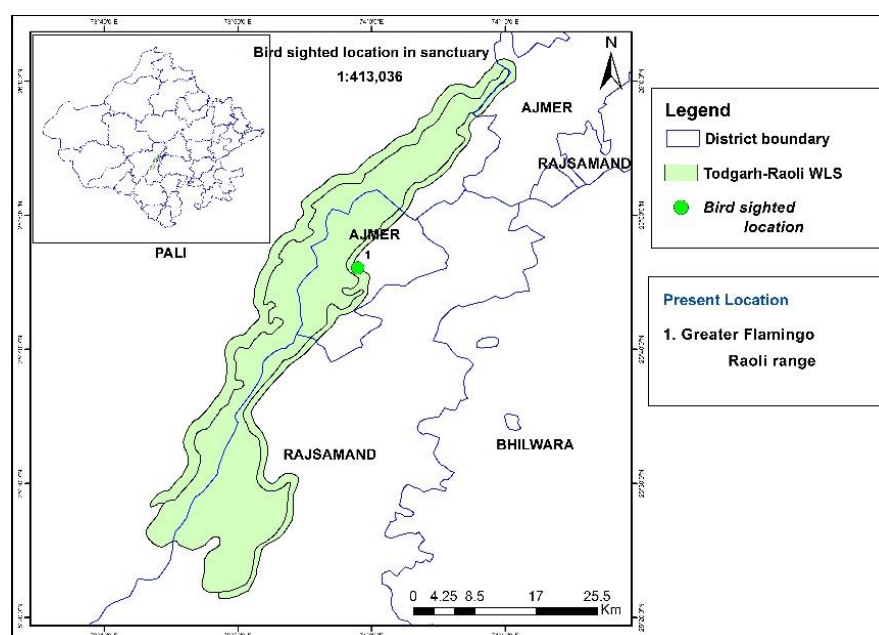
**Note:** Greater flamingo is a social bird; they live in large colonies, oftentimes numbering into the thousands of individuals. The nest is a small mound up to 36 cm high, circular and with a depressed center for the egg to be laid. Male and female look alike but males are slightly larger than female; female obtain their adult colour slightly earlier than males. Juveniles are grey-brown with some pink in the under parts,

wings and tail; legs and beak brown. It is generally known as carnivore bird, they feed on nematodes, worms, crabs, molluscs, crustaceans, insects and larvae, and even vertebrates such as small fish. They will also consume vegetable matter, including grass seeds and shoots, decaying leaves and algae. This species typically feeds with the head and most of the neck underwater, while walking along steadily, often stirring up to the bottom mud with the feet, to bring out prey. Their most characteristic habitat is large alkaline or saline lakes or estuarine lagoons, lakes; may be far inland or near the mangrove swamps, tidal flats or sandy islands in the inter-tidal zone.

**Location with GPS:** Todgarh-Raoli wildlife sanctuary, Raoli Range, Tilakheda, 22. Feb. 2019, 25°46'4.24"N, 73°58'57.28"E, 506.5m (Fig. 2-distribution map).



**Fig. 1.** Occurrence of Greater Flamingo in Todgarh-Raoli wls



**Fig. 2.** Map showing distribution of Greater Flamingo in Todgarh-Raoli wls

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