
1. Mangrove Pitta

Why in News?

- The first mangrove pitta bird census was recently conducted in two coastal districts of Odisha (Kendrapara and Jagatsingpur).

Highlights

- The Mangrove Pitta bird (*Pitta megarhyncha*) is a species of bird that can be found in a few pockets of eastern India, including Odisha's Bhitarkanika and West Bengal's Sundarbans.
- The Mangrove Pitta bird is a ground forager (an animal that searches widely for food) and tree refter that primarily inhabits coastal mangrove forests in India.
- The IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) has categorized and evaluated the species and has listed it as "Near Threatened".
- This species is important because it is a bio-indicator of the health of mangrove forests, which are crucial to maintaining ecological balance in coastal areas.
- This census was conducted using a point count method, where direct sightings and chirping sounds were used to count the birds.
- The census of Mangrove Pitta birds found that a total of 179 individual birds were counted.
- The highest concentration of these birds was found in the mangroves near the Mahipura river mouth inside the Bhitarkanika National Park.