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Great Indian bustard

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The **great Indian bustard** (*Ardeotis nigriceps*) or **Indian bustard**, is a [bustard](#) found on the [Indian subcontinent](#). A large bird with a horizontal body and long bare legs, giving it an ostrich like appearance, this bird is among the heaviest of the flying birds. Once common on the dry plains of the [Indian subcontinent](#), as few as 150 individuals were estimated to survive in 2018 (reduced from an estimated 250 individuals in 2011)^[3] and the species is critically endangered by hunting and loss of its habitat, which consists of large expanses of dry grassland and scrub. These birds are often found associated in the same habitat as [blackbuck](#). It is protected under Wildlife Protection Act 1972 of India.

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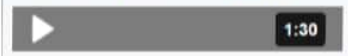
The great Indian bustard is a large ground bird with a height of about one metre. It is unmistakable with its black cap contrasting with the pale head and neck. The body is brownish with a black patch spotted in white. The male is deep sandy buff coloured and during the breeding season has a black breast band. The crown of the head is black and crested and is puffed up by displaying males. In the female which is smaller than the male, the head and neck are not pure white and the breast band is either rudimentary, broken or absent.^[4]

Among bustards, this species is smaller only than the [Kori bustard](#) and the [great bustard](#) in size. It is also the largest land bird in its native range. The great Indian bustard stands at about 1 m (3.3 ft) tall, having a somewhat long neck and quite long legs.^[5] The female as in most members of the bustard family are typically

Great Indian bustard



At Naliya grasslands, [Kutch](#), India



Breeding call recorded in Great Indian Bustard Sanctuary at Nanaj in Solapur district of Maharashtra, India

Conservation status



Critically Endangered (IUCN 3.1)^[1]

[CITES Appendix I \(CITES\)^{\[2\]}](#)

Scientific classification

Kingdom: [Animalia](#)
Phylum: [Chordata](#)
Class: [Aves](#)

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