

KAIBUL LAMJAO NATIONAL SANCTUARY

The Keibul Lamjao National Park (Kei - Tiger, Bul - vast, Lamjao-Large Land) is a [national park](#) in the [Bishnupur district](#) of the state of [Manipur](#) in India. It is 40 km² (15.4 sq mi) in area, the only floating park in the world, located in [North East India](#), and an integral part of [Loktak Lake](#).

- The national park is not characterized by many floating decomposed plant materials locally called [phumdis](#). To preserve the natural refuge of the endangered Manipur [Eld's deer](#) or [brow-antlered deer](#) (*Cervus eldi eldi*), or [sangai](#) also called the dancing deer, listed as an endangered species by [IUCN](#), the park which was initially declared to be a [sanctuary](#) in 1966, was subsequently declared to be a national park in 1977 through a gazette notification. The act has generated local support and public awareness.

- The park is a [swamp](#) with floating mass of vegetation created by accrual of organic garbage and [biomass](#) with soil particles that has been thickened into a solid form called [phumdis](#), at the south-eastern side of the [Loktak Lake](#), which has been declared a [Ramsar site](#). Two thirds to three fourths of the total park area is formed by phumdis.^[7] A waterway through the park provides year-round access by boats plying through the [Loktak Lake](#), to the Pabot Hill in the north. The reserve area of the park which was 4,000 ha (9,884.2 acres) in March 1997 was reduced to 2,160 ha (5,337.5 acres) in April 1998, under pressure from the local villagers. The swamp encompasses three hills, namely, Pabot, Toya and Chingjao that provide a refuge for the large mammals during the [monsoon](#) season. The distinctive nature of the park is that it is "too deep to be [marsh](#), too shallow to be a lake".

- The size of the park varies with the seasons as it is formed of phumdis (morass of [organic matter](#)). The peripheral areas of the lake are grounded to the bed of the lake during the dry season but get almost substantially submerged for a few days during the monsoon season. It emerges and floats to the surface fully a few days later, separating from the ground; the depth of the Phumdi varies from 1 ft (0.3 m) to 4 ft (1.2 m) and during this period the animals in the park move to higher hilly areas. About twenty percent of its thickness floats on the lake, above the surface, which supports the weight of large [mammals](#).

FAUNA

- Apart from the brow-antlered deer ([*Cervus eldi eldi*](#)), the flagship species of the park, other fauna found in the park were the following:[\[2\]](#)[\[7\]](#)[\[8\]](#)
- Mammals reported are the [hog deer](#) (*C. porcinus*), [wild boar](#) (*Sus scrofa*), [large Indian civet](#) (*Viverra civetta*), common otter ([Lutra lutra](#)), [fox](#)^[which?], [jungle cat](#) (*Felis chaus*), [Asian golden cat](#), bay [bamboo rat](#), [musk shrew](#), [common shrew](#), [flying fox](#) and [sambar](#) (*Cervus unicolor*).
- [Fishes](#) include [Channa striata](#), [Channa punctatus](#), [common carp](#), [Wallago attu](#) and [pool barb](#).
- [Amphibians](#) and [reptiles](#) include the keel back [tortoise](#), [viper](#), [krait](#), [cobra](#), [water cobra](#), [banded krait](#), Asian rat snake ([beauty rat snake](#)), [python](#), Russel's viper ([Daboia](#)), [checkered garter snake](#) and [common lizard](#) (*Viviparous lizard*). [Python molurus](#) is also found in the park.

Avifauna

- Prominent bird species recorded in the park are both migratory and resident. Some of them are the East Himalayan pied [kingfisher](#), [black kite](#), lesser sky-[lark](#), northern [hill myna](#), Burmese [pied myna](#), North Indian black [drongos](#), lesser eastern jungle [crow](#), yellow headed [wagtail](#), [spotbill duck](#), [blue-winged teal](#), ruddy [shell duck](#), threatened [hooded crane](#), Burmese sarus [sarus crane](#), [Indian white-breasted waterhen](#) and crimson-breasted pied [woodpecker](#).

Visitors' Information

- *Further information:* [Manipur](#)
- The park is approachable by road, rail and air through [Imphal](#), the capital of Manipur. By road it is 53 km (32.9 mi) from Imphal and 522 km (324.4 mi) from [Guwahati](#) ([Assam](#)) on the [National Highway](#) No. 53. Public and private transport ply on these roads.
- The nearest rail head is at [Dimapur](#) on the [broad gauge](#) line of the [Northeast Frontier Railways](#), which is 215 km (133.6 mi) from Imphal by road. [Jiribam](#) is also a railhead on the Manipur border, which is 225 km (139.8 mi) from Imphal
- Daily air service is available to Imphal from major cities such as [Calcutta](#), [Delhi](#), [Guwahati](#) and [Mumbai](#).^[4]
- Resorts under the Classic Hotel for family and travel-loving couple are available in the Sendra island park which is 5-6 kilometers away from the National Park. Basic accommodation of a forest rest house without boarding facilities is available at Phubala and Sendra islands inside the park and at [Moirang](#) town 10 km (6.2 mi) away from the park. Staying at Imphal which has better hotel facilities is a preferred option.
- Visit to the park is ideal between 0600 and 1000 hrs in the morning and 1530 and 1800 hrs in the afternoon, when the sangai deer comes out to feed in herds. A boat trip along the labyrinthine boat routes passing through colourful water plants would be a good way to see the park. An adventurous trip would be to take a walk through the park but the phumdi is not a firm ground. Manipur Tourism Department arranges conducted day tours to the [Loktak Lake](#) and the Keibul Lamjao Park.^[6]
- Manipur is considered a sensitive border state. Earlier the Foreigners entering Manipur (including foreign citizens born in Manipur) was needed to possess a Restricted Area Permit, but now it has been lifted from the state. There is no permit required for foreigners coming to Manipur, they only need to register themselves in the established check points i.e. Imphal Airport and (Mao and Jiribam) for those coming by road.^[1]

Thank you