SHALLABUGH THE RAMSAR SITE



When the Government of India (GoI) added 11 more wetlands to the list of Ramsar sites, marshes that are of international importance, bringing the country's total tally to 75, two wetlands – Shallabugh and Hygam were from Kashmir.
The entire wetland is preserved and has been set up as a conservation reserve as a protective measure for the marshes, migratory birds, and waterfowls present there.

DOs ✔

- ✔ Get necessary permission before visiting
- ✔ Maintain a safe distance from all wildlife
- ✔ Appreciate the wetland and local regulations
- ✔ Neither visit alone nor in a group of too many
- ✔ Respect wildlife's private space
- ✔ Take nothing and leave only puddled footprints
- ✔ Tune down

DON'Ts

- x Don't litter and ensure that waste is disposed only in bins earmarked for the purpose
- x Don't throw away plastic bags
- x Don't collect any form of fauna or flora from any locations
- x Don't take photographs of people without their consent
- x Don't damage plants by walking, driving, or landing on extensive moss beds or lichen-covered areas
- x Don't make noise to avoid frightening wildlife

IBA IMPORTANT BIRD AREA SITE NUMBER --

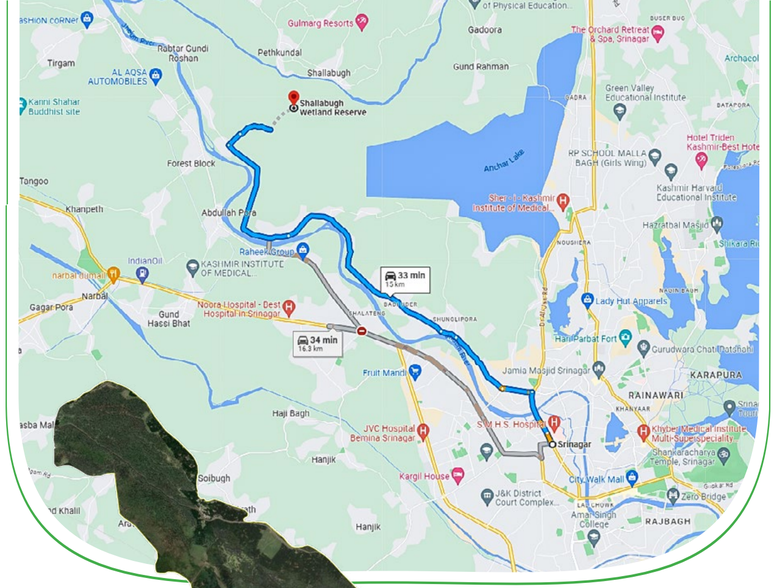
Ramsar SITE NUMBER 2488

Shallabugh

WETLAND CONSERVATION RESERVE



DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE PROTECTION, GOVT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR



Latitude
34°09'N

Longitude
74°43'E

Altitude
1565 metres (5100 feet)

Area
1675 hectare

Distance
61 km from Srinagar City

Best time to visit
November to April

How to reach
By road transport from Srinagar

Located near Srinagar City, and falls within districts of Srinagar and Ganderbal, Shallabugh Wetland Reserve is fed by the perennial Sindh nalla and several other small streams. The depth of the wetland ranges between 0.5-2 metres. The shallow areas have extensive reed beds providing good habitat for waterfowl. The wetland is important for long distance migrants as a stopover site for migratory birds travelling along the Central Asian flyway, feeding and resting. Many water birds occur in huge numbers in this wetland. Shallabugh Wetland is crucial for sustaining biodiversity and the livelihood of the local people. Presently, the livelihood of a seizable population of 10 villages depends on this wetland for the extraction of willow wicker, popular fisheries, and livestock grazing. Around 300 households are earning a livelihood through willow wicker based basket industry.



Avifauna

Some 64 species in and around Shallabugh wetland have been counted during bird ringing studies. Some of the popular migratory birds visiting the Shallabugh reserve include Geese, Bar Geese, White Heeled Duck, Shoveller, Red-Crested Pochard, White-Eyed Pochard, Common Teal, Pintail, Mallard, Gadwall, Coot, Hoonk, and Graylag. Among these, Pintail, Common Teal, and Gadwall are the birds visiting this wetland in maximum numbers. The flying visitors started to throng to this wetland from the first week of November and the outward migration is expected from March up to mid-April.

The wetlands of Kashmir valley besides being important wetlands for both resident and migratory waterfowl are also major wintering area for variety of migratory ducks and geese and extremely important breeding area for Mallard, Blunt-winged Warbler and Ferruginous Duck and variety of other waterfowl. It has been observed that the waterfowl population which start their inward migration to the Shallabugh wetland in mid-November peaks to around more than 300,000-400,000 during the last week of February and later starts declining in numbers as the temperature in Kashmir rises before their return migrating during early spring (late March). The wetland harbours a variety of aquatic and semi-aquatic vegetation providing a good habitat for a variety of birds.

The Shallabugh Wetland along with other wetlands of the Valley provide buffering of water flows in vulnerable high mountain catchments across the Greater Himalayan regions of Kashmir, and are also crucial for sustaining biodiversity and local people's livelihoods. Presently, the livelihood of a sizeable population of around 10 villages depends on Shallabugh Wetland reserve for extraction of wicker willow, popular, fishery, and livestock grazing.

