



COMMUNITY-MANAGED

Vulture Restaurants

Unique Ecotourism Destinations in Nepal



**Bird
Conservation
Nepal (BCN)**

Vultures are large sized scavenging birds, feeding mostly on the carcasses of dead animals. Vultures play a highly important ecological role through the rapid consumption of animal carcasses.

They also have an important cultural role in the consumption of human dead bodies in sky burials within Nepal and Tibet.

South Asia's Vultures are on the brink of extinction because of veterinary use of the drug diclofenac. In two decades, five species of vultures among nine within the Indian Sub-continent have declined by up to 99.9%. Bird Conservation Nepal, BirdLife partner is a consortium member of Saving Asia's Vultures from Extinction (SAVE) is reversing these declines by advocating bans on diclofenac at the national level and by working with local communities to stop the use of diclofenac and untested veterinary drugs. Within Vulture Safe Zones, Vulture Safe

Feeding Sites (popularly called Jatayu Restaurants) provide a focus point for this work where you can see critically endangered birds in the wild and also delivering information regarding the issues and success on vulture conservation.





WHAT IS A VULTURE RESTAURANT (VULTURE SAFE FEEDING SITE)?

A Vulture Restaurant is for vultures, not for humans! While Vulture Restaurants in Nepal are the first to be community-managed. Many of Nepal's Vulture Restaurants are called Jatayu Restaurants, after the vulture god, Jatayu, from the Hindu religion. For Hindu followers, cows are regarded as sacred animals. In Nepal, killing a cow is punishable by law. Thus, when cattle become old and unproductive, they are often a burden to farmers. At a cow rescue centre attached to the restaurant we collect such cattle and provide good care until their natural death. As a result, we can also ensure that the food that these cattle provide to vultures is diclofenac-free. Dead cattle are placed at a designated dining place where vultures then come to feed. A hide is ideally placed to observe the vultures while they feed without disturbing them. Visitors can also enjoy the aerial acrobatics performed by the vultures as they circle the area. These restaurants generally attract most species of vultures. There are also plenty of opportunities for studying other birds as well as wildlife. A visitor centre also provides information on diverse aspects of these majestic creatures and the conservation efforts carried out to safeguard them. In addition, the visitor centre provides information on diclofenac and untested veterinary drugs, and the cultural and natural history of the area.

All income generated is used to manage the restaurant and visitor centre, as well as for activities that support the livelihood of local communities.

HOW DOES THE COMMUNITY BENEFIT?

Local communities operate the vulture restaurants to provide safe food for vultures and provide vulture conservation activities in the area. In return local communities receive income directly and indirectly from tourism. As a remains of carcass the community can sell hide to the leather industry and bones and manure to the fertilizer industry. Bird Conservation Nepal and our SAVE partners also support on livelihood activities like fish farming, bee-keeping, candle and incense sticks making, vegetables farming, production of non-timber forest products and grasses, pig farming, goat farming and dairies.



WHAT ARE THE MAIN ATTRACTIONS?

- Up to eight species of vulture (four critically endangered species)
- Nature walks
- Bird watching tourism
- Local culture
- Other wildlife
- Key Research Site
- Community Handicraft and other production

WHAT OTHER FACILITIES ARE AVAILABLE?

A few local restaurants, serving food and drinks, are located near the Jatayu Restaurants. If you want to stay with the local community, home stay facilities are available. Luxurious hotels can also be arranged by consulting our staff. Trained guides are available for nature walks and other cultural tours nearby the villages.



VULTURE SAFE ZONES

The general objective of Vulture Safe Zone is to establish (through monitoring & targeted awareness activities) a large area (100 km radius) where no diclofenac or other vulture-toxic drugs are present in cattle carcasses (their main food supply). The concept of Vulture Safe Zones was developed in Nepal in 2009 and is now being implemented in India and Pakistan.

Bird Conservation Nepal with a collaboration of stakeholders organizes regular awareness raising activities targeting various groups such as veterinarians, pharmacists, government agencies, conservation partners and local communities. Conservation and community partners are brought together under the umbrella of vulture conservation by linking them through a Vulture Conservation Movement Network. We monitor the availability and use of diclofenac and other veterinary drugs throughout Nepal; and monitor population trends and breeding success of all vulture species in Nepal.

Bird Conservation Nepal collaboration with Nepal government, conservation organization & international partners have achieved some significant successes.

- Diclofenac has been banned in all vulture range South Asian countries (Nepal, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh).
- The vulture-safe drug meloxicam was identified and is now being promoted as an effective replacement for diclofenac.
- Meloxicam is now widely available in Nepal.
- More than 56 districts of Nepal covering an area of 80% have been declared vet diclofenac-free.

In conjunction with Vulture Safe Zone initiative, Vulture Conservation Breeding Centres have been established in Nepa. The centre increase the breeding success of Critically Endangered White-rumped Vulture with the aim to release vultures in the future to supplement wild populations. Vulture Safe Zones will create the safe environments for the release of these captive reared birds.





KEY COMPONENTS OF VULTURE SAFE ZONES

- Awareness on diclofenac threat and the role of vultures in the environment
- Monitoring and removal of diclofenac and other toxic veterinary drugs
- Vulture colony monitoring
- Supplementary feeding
- Community empowerment and conservation activities



WHERE ARE NEPAL'S VULTURE RESTAURANTS?

1 Vulture Safe Feeding Site Pithauli and Kawasoti, Nawalparasi

Nepal's first feeding site lies within Kawasoti municipality in Nawalparasi district, and is adjacent to the buffer zone of Chitwan National Park. Chitwan National Park has been declared as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO and includes a Ramsar Site, Bees Hazari Tal, as well as being identified as an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA) by BirdLife International.

How to get there?

- From Narayangarh, it is 30 km west to Kawasoti Bazaar, on the East-West Highway, and a further 4 km south from there.
- Alternatively, it is a 20-minute flight from Kathmandu to Bharatpur, Chitwan and then a 35-km bus ride to Kawasoti Bazaar, Nawalparasi.

Special features

- First community-managed Vulture Restaurant in the world
- Nesting of critically endangered White-rumped vulture slender billed vulture and endangered Egyptian vulture in the vicinity
- Out of the nine species of vultures recorded in Nepal, eight have been seen feeding on carcasses at this site
- Highest number of nests (68) of critically endangered White-rumped Vulture in comparison to existing restaurants in Nepal during the 2009-10 breeding season
- Local nature guides
- Tharu (ethnic group) culture
- Home stay facilities
- Handicrafts prepared by the local community
- Jungle walk and bird watching
- Community managed model grassland
- Rhino, Tiger, Bengal Florican, Hug Deer

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WHERE ARE NEPAL'S VULTURE RESTAURANTS?



2 *Vulture Safe Feeding Site, Gaidatal, Rupandehi*

This site lies close to Gaidahwa Lake in Rupandehi district within the Lumbini Farmland IBA and just 15 km north of Lumbini, the birth place of Lord Buddha. It is located inside Gaidatal Community Forest in Bishnupura VDC.

How to get there?

- From Butwal it is 25 km west to the Fireline near Saljhandi along the East-West Highway. It is then 15 km south from there
- Alternatively, it is a 30-minute flight from Kathmandu to Bhairahawa, with a 40-km car/bus ride west from there

Special features

- Just 15 km north of Lord Buddha's birth place at Lumbini
- Panoramic view of Gaidahawa Lake (Key Biodiversity Area) nearby, with picnic spot
- Maximum number of vultures feeding on a carcass (281) ever recorded in Nepal in 2009
- Products prepared by local community
- Jungle walk and bird watching
- Globally Threatened farmland birds
- Connected to farmland IBA Lumbini
- Home Stay
- Scientific study & research

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3 *Vulture Safe Feeding Site* *Lalmatiya, Dang*

This site is situated in Kalika Community Forest (CF), Lalmatiya in Dang District and is adjacent to Dang Deukhuri Forest IBA. The site lies very close to the towns of Bhalubang and Lamahi and is located along the East-West Highway

How to get there?

- From Butwal, it is 103 km west to Lalmatiya, Dang along the East-West Highway, or 22 km east from Lamahi, Dang

Special features

- Located near the East-West Highway and Banke National Park
- Rafting and a picnic spot, available on the Rapti River
- Tharu culture
- Nesting of critically endangered White-rumped vulture in the vicinity
- Attractive demonstration plot of Sal trees
- Jungle walk and bird watching
- Hyana

Contact:

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4 *Vulture Safe Feeding Site* *Bijauri, Dang*

This site is situated at Syalapani in Bhulke CF, Bijauri VDC, Dang District. It is also not far from Tulsipur, Dang.

How to get there?

- It is 41 km north from Lamahi, Dang on the East-West Highway, 18 km west of Ghorahi and 5 km north of Bijauri

Special features

- Located in Bhulke CF, the Protected Vulture Conservation Habitat Area has been endorsed by DFO, Dang
- Scenic view of Dhaulagiri, Sisne Himal, Mahabharat Range and Asia's largest valley, Dang
- Home stay with Tharu/Magar culture
- Nesting of critically endangered White-rumped Vulture in the vicinity
- Jungle walk and birdwatching

Contact:

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WHERE ARE NEPAL'S VULTURE RESTAURANTS?



5 *Vulture Safe Feeding Site* *Khutiya, Kailali*

This site is situated at Khutiya in Samaiji CF, Shreepur in Kailali District. It is not far from Attariya, Kailali and lies on the bank of the Khutiya River. This site is lies within newly declared Khutiya IBA.

How to get there?

- Khutiya is 8 km east of Attariya, on the East-West Highway. Attariya is 13 km north of Dhangadhi
- It is a 50-minute flight from Kathmandu to Dhangadhi

Special features

- Near the East-West Highway, Bardiya National Park, and Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve
- Khutiya River, Tikapur Park and picnic spots in the vicinity
- Tharu culture, with Home Stay
- Highest number of nests (67) of critically endangered White-rumped Vulture compared to other operating restaurants in Nepal during the 2011-12 breeding season
- Ghodaghodi Lake (Ramsar Site) nearby
- Karnali River; the only river in Nepal supporting the critically endangered Ganges River Dolphin

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6 **Vulture Safe Feeding Site** **Ghachowk, Kaski**

It is situated in Ghachowk VDC, Kaski District, in the Annapurna Conservation Area (Nepal's largest Important Bird and Biodiversity Area). The site lies on the bank of the Seti River and is not far from Pokhara.

How to get there?

- From Kathmandu it is 200 km west to Pokhara and another 13 km north-west from there.
- It is a 30-minute flight from Kathmandu to Pokhara.

Special features

- Lies on the outskirts of Pokhara
- Scenic views of the Machhapuchhre Range, Seti gorge and Pokhara city
- Picnic spot
- Gurung culture
- Home stay
- Paragliding
- Rafting
- Trekking route to Annapurna Base Camp
- Hiking
- Hot water spring

Contact:

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ENTRY FEE:

Foreigners = **NRs. 1000** per person

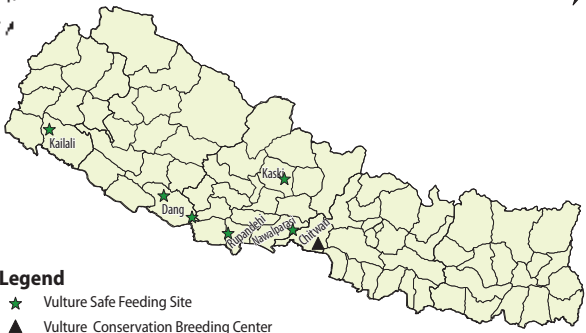
Researchers = **NRs. 1000** per person

Nepalese= **NRs. 150** per person

For BCN Members= **NRs. 100** per person

Students = **NRs. 50** per person

Vulture Safe Feeding Site and Vulture Conservation Breeding Center in Nepal



Legend

- ★ Vulture Safe Feeding Site
- ▲ Vulture Conservation Breeding Center
- District

0 0.3 0.6 1.2 1.8 2.4 Decimal Degrees

JATAYU RESEARCH GRANT

Bird Conservation Nepal provides Jatayu Research Grant to university graduates who are undertaking their research on vulture conservation.

The objectives of these scholarships are to create an interest of university students in vulture conservation and groom them as vulture conservationists. Annual deadline for scholarship is August 31 and recipients will be notified by September 15.

YOU CAN DONATE!!!

- Food for cattle
- Livelihood supports to locals
- Conservation education for school children

Donations can be provided directly to the Vulture Safe Feeding Site Management Committee at the local site or through Bird Conservation Nepal.

DEDICATED FOR VULTURE CONSERVATION



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