

## Golden-Headed Cisticola

### Why in News?

According to bird watchers, the recent discovery of a golden-headed cisticola in the southern Western Ghats marks the 1<sup>st</sup> sighting after an extensive gap.

- It is a tiny bird, *shines brightly with its golden crown* and captivating song.
- **Scientific Name** - Cisticola exilis.
- **Discovered in** - [Mathikettan Shola National Park](#), Idukki, Kerala.
- It is known as ***Bright-Capped Cisticola***.
- **Habitat** - Grasslands, sub-coastal areas, wetlands, savannas, woodlands, scrublands, swamp margins, rivers, and irrigated farmlands.
- **Distribution** - Western Australia, north-east to Darwin, Cape York and *India* and southern China.

*Golden-Headed Cisticola has been observed in parts of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, northern Kerala and 1<sup>st</sup> time found in the southern part of the Palakkad gap in the Western Ghats.*

- **Morphology** - Small, sandy-colored bird with short tail, cream-colored underside and brown upper side.
- Streaks of black or dark brown on the upper part of their body, black wings, golden head, throat is white and back of their neck is dull shade of gold.



- **Sexual dimorphism**
  - **Male** - Has distinct ***golden-orange plumage*** on their head, neck, and chest during breeding.
  - It also has pinkish beaks and black streaks on their backs.
- **Call** - It produces a *variety of sounds distinct from other birds* range from a teewip to

wheezz, whit-whit.

- **Diet** - It is omnivorous, feed on invertebrates such as insects, small slugs, and eat grass seeds.
- **Threats** - Urbanization
  - Land development
  - Changes in agricultural practices
  - Wetland degradation.
- **Conservation Status**
- **IUCN** - Least Concern.
- **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972** - Schedule II.

## References

1. [The Hindu| Golden-headed Cisticola](#)
2. [Thai National Parks| Bright-capped cisticola](#)
3. [Simply Birding| Golden-headed Cisticola's Threats](#)

