

PHEASANTS

A.



B.



C.



D.



E.



Fig: A. Kalij Pheasant, B. Himalayan Monal, C. Temminck's Tragopan, D. Red Jungle Fowl & E. Grey Peacock Pheasant

Pheasant populations in most of their range have long been undergoing heavy depletion due to excessive hunting and poaching for their bright plumage and meat. A large tract of their habitat has been encroached on by humans. PNHZ Park has been involved in the conservation breeding of several pheasants including both indigenous and exotic pheasants. The Central Zoo Authority has designated the Park as the coordinating zoo for the conservation breeding of Satyr Tragopan, and the participating zoo for the conservation breeding of Grey Peacock pheasant, Himalayan Monal, and Blood pheasant. The other Himalayan species in the Park are Red Jungle fowl, Kalij pheasant, Cheer pheasant, and Temminck's Tragopan.

ENCLOSURES AND ENRICHMENT

The pheasantry at the zoo was reconstructed in the year 2000-01. The Park has 11 enclosures for pheasants including exotic and indigenous. Chick-rearing houses are behind the enclosures. The front has been provided with non-breakable transparent fiberglass to give a clear view to the visitors. This also acts as a windbreaker and serves as protection from visitors and noise pollution. The floor of the enclosures is concrete for protection from rats and other predators.

All enclosures are provided with perches, wooden nesting boxes, feeders, small trees, and shrubs. The enclosures are enriched with dry leaves and soil.





Fig: A. Nesting Box. B. Feeder. C. Perches. D. Enclosure. E. Wheat Sprouts. F. Vegetables. G&H. Chick rearing house

OFF-DISPLAY CONSERVATION BREEDING CENTRE FOR HERBIVORES AND PHEASANTS AT DOWHILL, KURSEONG

An area of 4.65 hectares and 1.28 hectares of forest land under Kurseong Forest Division was handed over to Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park for the construction of Satellite Zoo and staff quarters respectively.

The breeding center was inaugurated on 07.12.2011 by Shri Hiten Barman, Minister-in-Charge/ Forests, Govt of west Bengal along with Shri Rohit Sharma, MLA, Kurseong. The satellite zoo was developed for the purpose of pheasantry as well as the conservation breeding of herbivores and pheasants.

The breeding centre has a 2-unit pheasantry, 7-unit pheasantry and an aviary with 4 enclosures. Another 2 unit pheasantry is being constructed at present. The pheasantry is complete with chick rearing houses and artificial incubation rooms. The breeding centre also has a veterinary hospital, keeper's quarters, record keeping room, and the Deputy Directors bungalow. The centre is also equipped with automatic artificial incubators.



Fig: A. Pheasant enclosure & B. Chick rearing house

FEEDING

Feed is provided once a day in feeders usually in the early mornings. To fulfill the protein requirements of the pheasants the Park also provides mealworms in their diet.

Feed item	Quantity		Day of fasting
	Winter	Summer	
i. Crushed maize	10 gms	10 gms	No fasting
ii. Onion	05 gms	5gms	
iii. Garlic	05 gms	5 gms	
iv. Green & leafy vegetables (lettuce, cabbage, leaves of raddish, carrots, citrus fruits, turnip, palak, raya, simraya, raddish and carrot leaves kumra etc.	30 gms	30 gms	
v. Mutton heart			
vi. Wheat & paddy husk			
vii. Boiled egg with shell	20 gms	20 gms	
viii. Sattu Balls	30 gms	30 gms	
Meal worms if possible	1 /2 pc	1 /2 pc	
	10 gms	10 gms	
	15 each	15 each	

VETERINARY CARE

Calcium and protein supplements are administered to the pheasants prior to each breeding season to combat infertility. Each egg placed in artificial incubation is candled and monitored till it hatches. Newly hatched chicks are placed in a still air incubator and are fed with starter feed. Fecal testing for presence of parasites is done regularly.

De-Worming Schedule of Animal:

SL NO	SPECIES	DRUG USED	MONTH
1	PHEASANTS AND BIRDS	Piperazine Citrate Albendazole	APRIL- SEPTEMBER OCTOBER- MARCH

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SANITATION AND HYGIENE

All aviaries have foot dips (Potassium permanganate) at the entrance of the enclosures. The soil in the each pheasant enclosure is tilled every 3 months to reduce the pathogenicity of microbes as well as make the substrate rich in nutrients by loosening the soil.

Disinfection Schedule:

SL NO	SPECIES	TYPE OF ENCLOSURE	DISINFECTANT USED AND METHOD	FREQUENCY OF DISINFECTION
1	ALL SPECIES	OPEN	1. Virkon S: 10% Solution Sprayed	Every Two Weeks
2	ALL SPECIES	NIGHT SHELTERS	1. Virkon S: 10% Solution Sprayed	Every Two Weeks
			3. Blow Flame: Flaming	Every Two Weeks
			4. Gluteraldehyde Concentrate.: 10% wash	Every day
			5. Potassium Permanganate: Foot bath	Every day

RESEARCH STUDIES

A research study titled “Studies on Biology, Breeding, Behaviour and Aviary practices for improved performance of Captive Himalayan Pheasants” funded by the Central Zoo Authority was submitted in 2016. The main objective of the study was to study the behaviour of captive Himalayan pheasants and to standardize species-specific exhibit designs, and captive diets with the aim of providing better captive management.

AUGMENTATION OF RED JUNGLE FOWL AT MAHANANDA WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

In order to augment the wild population of the species, two pairs (2:2) of captive Red Jungle Fowl from PNHZP were released in Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary on 12.01.2022 in presence of Shri. Rajendra Jakher, CCF Wildlife North; Dr. Basavaraj S. Holeyachi, Director PNHZP; Shri. S. S. S. S. Sherpa, DFO Darjeeling, Wildlife Division, and zoo staff. Currently the park houses 51 (20:26:5) Red Jungle Fowl



Fig: Release of Red Jungle Fowl at Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary