

A-Z Picture Cards

Fauna of the
Andaman and Nicobar Islands



About the cards

The A-Z picture cards are designed for early readers and readers. All the animals on these cards are found in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Some live on land, some live in the ocean. Each card has an illustration of an animal on one side along with an alphabet. On the flipside, the cards contain three facts about these animals.

 Lookout for the animals that are found only on the Islands!

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About Dakshin Foundation

Dakshin Foundation is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation based out of Bengaluru, India. Our mission is to inform and advocate for conservation and natural resource management, while promoting and supporting sustainable livelihoods, social development and environmental justice. India's coastal, marine and island systems form the primary focus of our work. Visit our website:

<https://www.dakshin.org/> to know more.

Dakshin Foundation's Environmental Education Programme believes that environmental awareness is a powerful tool to inculcate sensitivity and responsibility towards issues of conservation and sustainability in a significant manner. We work towards the holistic development of children with a focus on foundational learning and environmental education through place-based education– in formal and informal settings.



Treasured Islands

Treasured Islands, is an environmental education handbook for middle school teachers and students in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The revised and updated 3rd edition contextualising environmental education through place-based education has been created by the Andaman Nicobar Environment Team (ANET) and Dakshin Foundation.

These picture cards will also serve as supplement material for the *Treasured Islands* book.

About the Illustrator

These cards are designed and Illustrated by Subhadra Sridharan, a design student at Srishti, Bengaluru during her internship at Dakshin Foundation in 2021. She loves drawing plants and animals and hopes these cards help children learn more about the wonderful animals of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands!

Find her work at:

www.subhadra.myportfolio.com

Some terms to know

Endemic- Animals that are found only in certain parts of the earth and nowhere else.

Intertidal- Parts of the coast/beach where the ocean meets the land which is also known as the seashore.

Plankton- Microscopic animals and plants that are found in water and eaten by many marine animals.

Invertebrates- Animals that do not have a backbone.


How to use

Each card has three facts about the animal labelled with different symbols.

●- Appearance of the animal.

▲- Food habits of the animal.

■- Habitat and special features.

Look for a  on the top right of a card for animals that are endemic to the Islands.

A



Andaman giant gecko



Common Name-Andaman giant gecko

Scientific Name-*Gekko verreauxi*

- Endemic to the Andaman Islands; one of the world's largest geckos that can grow to over one foot in length.
- ▲ Feeds mainly on insects.
- They use specialised pads on their toes to climb on the surfaces of large trees.

B

Banded sea krait



Common Name-Banded sea krait

Scientific Name-*Laticauda colubrina*

- The venom of this snake is very potent but its usually a gentle snake.
- ▲ Feeds on small invertebrates and fish.
- They live most of their lives out in the ocean but come ashore beaches to lay their eggs.

Crab-eating macaque

C





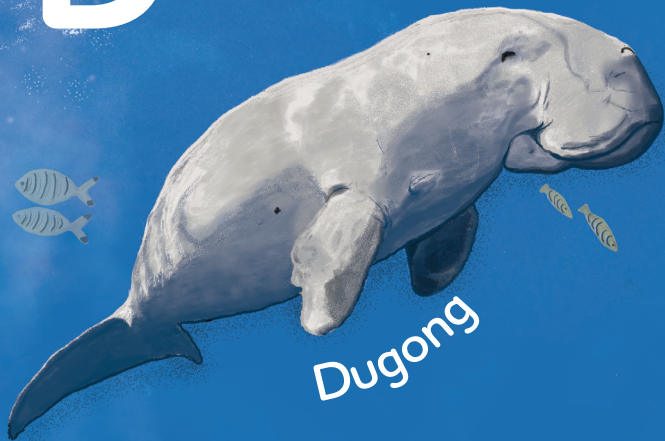
Common Name-

Nicobar crab-eating macaque

Scientific Name-*Macaca fascicularis umbrosus*

- Endemic to the Nicobar Islands, also known as Nicobar long-tailed macaque.
- ▲ Though known to eat crabs on occasions, they feed mostly on *Padanus* fruits.
- Found mostly on the forest floor and occasionally on tree tops.

D



Dugong

Common Name-Dugong

Scientific Name-*Dugong dugon*

- State animal of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- ▲ Also known as the sea cow and mostly feeds on sea grass.
- Their numbers in the Andamans have reduced over the years due to getting accidentally caught in fishing nets as well as hunting.

E

Eurasian curlew



Common Name-Eurasian curlew

Scientific Name-*Numenius arquata*

- This shorebird has a long curled bill, has brown feathers on the outside and is mostly white under its wings.
- ▲ Feeds on various seeds, berries, insects and occasionally vertebrates such as fish, small birds, lizards, etc.
- Found mainly in grasslands, coastal marshes and lowlands.

F



Flying fish

Common Name-Flying fish
Scientific Name-*Exocoetidae* sp.

- Their fins have been modified to act as wings that allow them to make powerful leaps.
- ▲ Mainly feeds on microscopic marine creatures known as plankton.
- “Fly” to gain speed and avoid predators like dolphins, tuna, marlin and seabirds.

G



Ghost crab

Common Name-Ghost crab
Scientific Name-Ocypodinae sp.

- Called ghost crab because the colour of their shell matches the sand making them difficult to spot.
- ▲ Omnivorous and feeds on insects, vegetation and sometimes even sea turtle eggs.
- Burrows in the part of the beach which gets covered by waves and recedes to keep their gills wet for breathing.

H



Hammerhead shark

Common Name-Hammerhead shark
Scientific Name-*Sphyrna* sp.

- Its hammer-shaped head helps its vision and hunting abilities.
- ▲ Eats fish, squid, octopus, crabs and even other sharks.
- Swims in groups or schools during the day but hunts alone during the night.

Imperial

Pigeon





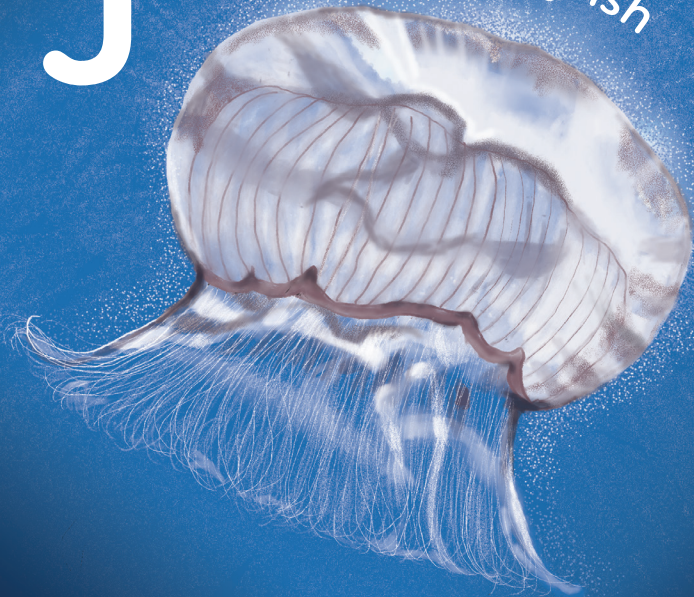
Common Name-Nicobar Imperial-pigeon

Scientific Name-*Ducula nicobarica*

- Has swift and powerful flight and usually flies well above tree tops.
- ▲ Feeds on fruits and berries in tree tops.
- Found in small flocks only in the evergreen forests of the Nicobar Islands.

J

Jellyfish



Common Name-Moon Jellyfish

Scientific Name-*Aurelia aurita*

- Free swimming organisms whose bodies are composed of more than 90 percent water.
- ▲ Have stinging cells in their tentacles to capture small fish and other organisms.
- Eaten by leatherback sea turtles.

K

Keelback





Common Name-Andaman keelback snake

Scientific Name-*Xenocrophis tytleri*

- Non-venomous snake endemic to the Andaman Islands.
- ▲ Mainly feeds on frogs, toads and fish.
- Found around freshwater bodies, slow moving streams and paddy fields.

L

Lug worm



Common Name-Lugworm

Scientific Name-*Arenicola sp.*

- Marine worm related to earthworms.
- ▲ Eats sand and digests anything edible in it.
- Lives in a U-shaped or J-shaped burrow in the sand.

M



Mudskipper

Common Name-Mudskipper
Scientific Name-Periophthalmus sp.

- A fish that spends time skipping on mud outside water because of specialised water sacs behind their eyes to keep their gills wet.
- ▲ Mudskippers prefer to eat worms, crickets, flies, meal worms, beetles and small fish.
- Found typically in mangroves and intertidal regions.



N

Narcondam
hornbill





Common Name-Narcondam hornbill

Scientific Name-*Aceros narcondami*

- A small hornbill with a black body, a white tail, and a strong pale bill with a flat, grooved casque on top.
- ▲ Feeds on berries and fruits on tall trees.
- Found only in the small Narcondam Island and nowhere else in the world.



Olive-backed sunbird

Common Name-Olive-backed sunbird

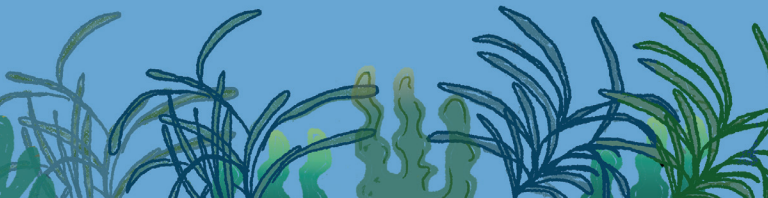
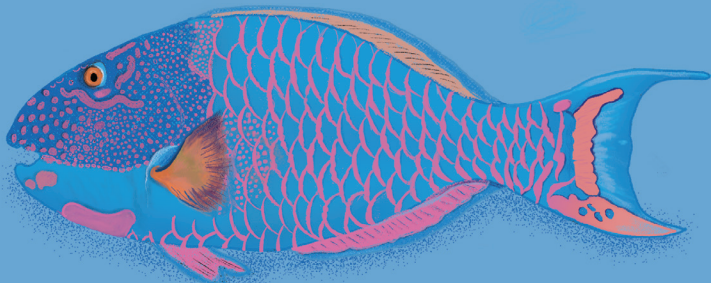
Scientific Name-

Cinnyris jugularis andamanicus

- Tiny, active sunbird with a plain olive back and yellow belly.
- ▲ Feeds mainly on insects, nectar and small fruits.
- Known to occur in forests, scrubs and coastal mangroves.

parrot fish

P



Common Name-Bicolor Parrot fish
Scientific Name-*Cetoscarus bicolor*

- Named for their parrot-like beak and secrete a mucus covering at night to protect from predators.
- ▲ Use their beak to feed on algae.
- Found in coral reefs, rocky coasts and seagrass beds.



Quail

Q





Common Name-
Nicobar blue-breasted quail
Scientific Name-
Synoicus chinensis trinkutensis

- The males of this tiny round quail have a gorgeous blue head and breast with a cinnamon belly but the female birds have a paler belly and a plain face.
- ▲ Feeds mainly on grass and small insects.
- Found in lowland plains, grassy hillsides, and farmlands.

Robber crab

R



Common Name-Robber crab

Scientific Name-*Birgus latro*

- It is the largest crab that lives on land which is also known as the coconut crab.
- ▲ Along with coconut, robber crabs also feed on fleshy fruits, nuts and seeds.
- They are typically found in coastal forests with plenty of rock crevices and soil for digging burrows.

S

Saltwater crocodile



Common Name-Saltwater crocodile

Scientific Name-*Crocodylus porosus*

- World's largest living reptile, males can reach up to 6.7m and weigh as much as 2,000 kg.
- ▲ Feeds on fish, turtles and small animals that visit the water's edge.
- Salties thrive in saline and brackish water conditions but are equally at home in freshwater habitats.

T

Trochus



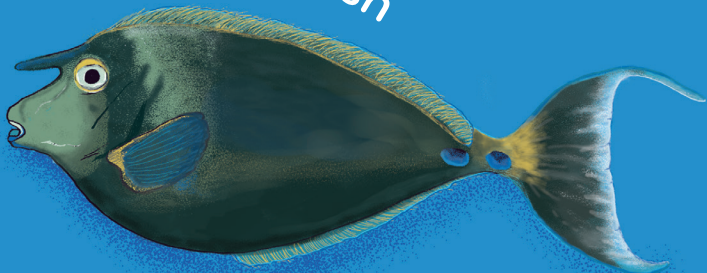
Common Name-Trochus snail

Scientific Name-*Trochus sp.*

- Medium to large top-shaped sea snails with a thick pearly interior layer.
- ▲ Feed on algae and small plants.
- Found near coral reefs and submerged rocks.

Unicornfish

U



Common Name-Blue-spine Unicornfish

Scientific Name-*Naso unicornis*

- Their name comes from the hornlike extension of the snout present in some species.
- ▲ Are herbivores that mainly feed on algae.
- Live in tropical waters around coral reefs .

V

Violet cuckoo



Common Name-Violet cuckoo

Scientific Name-

Chrysococcyx xanthorhynchus

- The male cuckoo is glossy and purple in colour with white bars on its belly, while the female birds are greenish brown.
- ▲ Violet cuckoos are insectivorous but they also eat fruit.
- Found in evergreen, deciduous forests and mangroves.

W

White-bellied

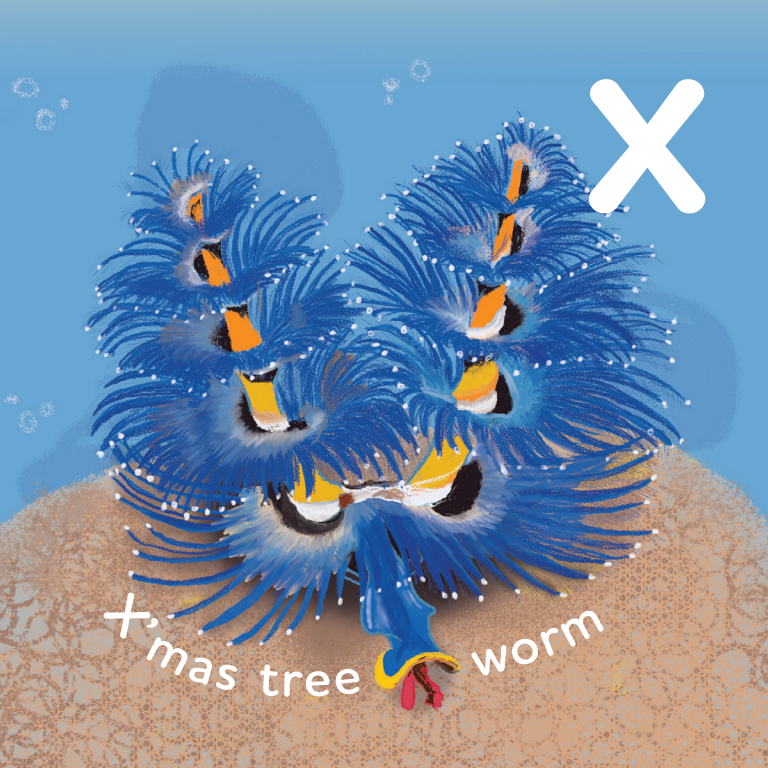
sea eagle



Common Name-White-bellied sea eagle

Scientific Name-*Haliaeetus leucogaster*

- Large gray and white raptor that soars with wings held in a strong V-shape.
- ▲ Feeds on a variety of mammals, birds, reptiles and fish including seabirds and snakes.
- Predominantly found along coastlines.



X

+ mas tree worm

Common Name-Christmas tree worm
Scientific Name-*Spirobranchus sp.*

- They are named for their spindly, fir tree like appearance.
- ▲ Their crowns protrude from their tube-like body and are used to catch and feed on zooplankton and phytoplankton.
- They bore and live inside corals where they hide from predators.

Y

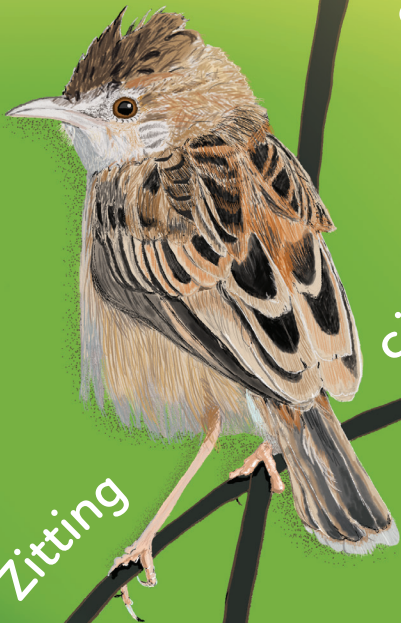
Yellow back fusilier



Common Name-Yellowback fusilier

Scientific Name-*Caesio xanthonota*

- Small to medium sized fish with greyish-blue body and bright yellow zone on the back.
- ▲ Uses upper jaw to help feed on plankton.
- Occurs in large schools mid-water over the reef during the day.



Z

cisticola

Zitting

Common Name-Zitting cisticola

Scientific Name-*Cisticola juncidis*

- Very small bird, with a rounded tail and a call which goes *zit, zit, zit*.
- ▲ Feeds mainly on insects.
- Found in open grasslands, seasonally flooded and grassy wetlands.