

## ANIMAL OF THE MONTH

### Brown Fish Owl *Ketupa zeyloensis*

#### Habitat and distribution

- The Brown Fish Owl inhabits areas close to freshwater bodies such as rivers, lakes, ponds, canals, wetlands, and mangroves. It prefers locations with large trees near water, which are used for roosting and nesting.
- In Pakistan, the Brown Fish Owl is widely distributed in Sindh, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Balochistan, especially along the Indus River system. Outside Pakistan, it is found in India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, and parts of Southeast Asia.



#### Description

It is a beautiful owl with buffy feathers around its facial disc, and a lovely medley of browns, blacks, and creamy beiges all over its body. It has striking bright yellow irises. Like the Eurasian Eagle-owl it has feathery ear tufts, which aren't ears at all, but rather feathers that look like the ears of some mammals. These protruding feathers can aid in communication and camouflage.

#### Feeding

The Brown Fish Owl is mainly nocturnal and feeds primarily on fish. Its diet also includes frogs, crabs, small reptiles, and occasionally small mammals, which it captures using its strong talons.

#### Threats & Conservation Strategies:

Major threats to the Brown Fish Owl include loss of wetland habitats, deforestation of riverside trees, water pollution, human disturbance, and a decline in fish populations.

Effective conservation strategies include:

- Protecting and restoring lowland rainforest habitats.
- Enforcing wildlife protection laws.
- Promoting ecotourism to benefit local communities.
- Raising public awareness about the species' ecological importance.

#### IUCN Status:

The brown fish owl is listed as Least Concern (LC) on the IUCN Red List

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