

CHUNDIKULAM NATIONAL PARK

This is located in northern Sri Lanka. The nearest city to this national park is Kilinochchi, about 12 km from Chundikulam national park. The town of Chundikkulam is located on a narrow piece of land between the lagoon and the Indian Ocean. The lagoon is sometimes referred to as Elephant Pass Lagoon. It sits in the middle of Indian Ocean towards east and Jaffna lagoon towards west. Surrounded by long trees and dense forest this place will be a dreamland.

The lagoon is fed by a number of small rivers from the south, including Kanakarayan Aru, Netheli Aru and Theravil Aru. It used to be linked to Jaffna Lagoon but since the construction of the causeway at Elephant Pass the lagoon has in effect been a lake. The lagoon's water is brackish.

The lagoon is surrounded by palmyra palm plantations and scrubland. The land is used by prawn fishing and some salt production. The lagoon has small areas of mangrove swamp and sea grass beds. The lagoon attracts a wide variety of water birds including storks, ibis, ducks, coot, gulls and tern. Most of the lagoon was designated a bird sanctuary in 1938.

Chundikkulam Lagoon is partly surrounded by mangrove swamps and sea grass beds. The surrounding area includes palmyra palm plantations, scrub forests and a variety of dry zone flora. Numerous varieties of water and wader birds are found in the park including bar-tailed godwit, black-tailed godwit, black-winged stilt, brown-headed gull, common sandpiper, curlew sandpiper, eurasian coot, eurasian curlew, eurasian spoonbill, eurasian teal, eurasian wigeon, garganey, greater flamingo, gull-billed tern, marsh sandpiper, northern pintail, orientalibis, painted stork, ruff, shoveler, tereks and piper and wood sandpiper. Mammals found in the park include leopard, sloth bear and deer.

The army opened the Chundikulam Nature Park Holiday Resort in the northern part of the sanctuary in January 2012. In May 2015, the government announced that Chundikkulam, along with Adam's Bridge, Delft and Madhu Road, would be designated national parks. Chundikkulam sanctuary became a national park on 22 June 2015 with an area of 19,565 ha (48,347 acres).

