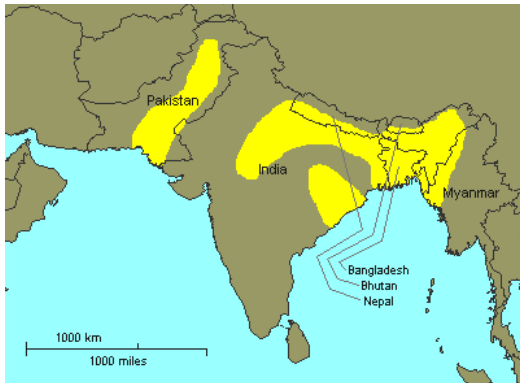


# Gharial

## *Gavialis gangeticus*



**Range:** India and Nepal

**Size:** ♂: 400- 600 cm ( 156-236 in )

♀: 350- 400 cm (138-156 in)

**Weight :** ♂: 159-250 kg (350-550 lbs)

♀ : 30.4- 46 kg (66-102 lbs)

**Teeth:** 106-112

**Habitat:** Slow sections of large rivers

**Incubation:** 83-94 days

**Eggs:** 28-60

**Fledge:**

**Sexual maturity:** ♂: 390 cm ♀: 243 cm

**Nest:** holes in sandy banks

**Social:** single male several females

**Breeding:** polygynous

**Food:** fish

**IUCN:** Critically endangered

**Subspecies :** monotypic

**Longevity:** captive: 80 yrs

Wild: 65 yrs

**Order:** Crocodylia **Family:** Gavialidae

The gharial has a characteristic elongated, narrow snout, similar only to the false gharial, (*Tomistoma schlegelii*). Variation in snout shape occurs with age. It generally becomes proportionally shorter and thicker with age. The bulbous growth on the tip of the male's snout is called a "Ghara" (after the Indian word meaning "pot"), and is present in sexually mature males. The species is also commonly known as the gavial. This name originated as a misspelling of gharial.

The gharial came incredibly close to extinction in the 1970s, but a long-term captive breeding and re-introduction program was instrumental in improving the species status in the wild over the following decades. Despite these efforts, between 1997 and 2006, the wild population declined by 58 percent from 436 to just 182 breeding adults. Habitat loss and degradation poses the biggest

threat to this species' survival as the human population explosion of the Indian subcontinent continues to encroach on the river systems where it is found. Dams, irrigation projects, sand mining and artificial embankments have all encroached on the gharial's habitat, reducing its range to just two percent of what it was previously.