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Note: As per the amendments made under the 'Wild life (Protection) Amendment Act, 2022', all species that are covered under Appendices of **CITES** are now listed under **Schedule IV of the Act**.

Terrestrial Animals

Grey Wolf



Indian Wolf



WPA, 1972
Schedule I

Himalayan wolf or Tibetan wolf



WPA, 1972
Schedule I



Context

- 'Operation Bhediya' has been launched by the UP govt to capture man-eating wolf in U.P.



Characteristics

- Extremely **social living in a pack of 6-8 individuals**,
- Run at **very high speeds**,
- **Monogamous** and follow **male dominance hierarchy**,
- Communicate with **different vocalizations and scent-marking**.



Habitat

- **Indian Wolf** : In peninsular India including Rajasthan, Gujarat, etc.
- **Himalayan wolf or Tibetan wolf**: In Upper trans-Himalayan ranges.

Red Panda



WPA, 1972
Schedule I

Among 22 species covered under **Species Recovery Programme**



Context

- Red Panda Program of **Darjeeling's Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoo's** has been selected as finalist for 2024 **WAZA (World Association of Zoos and Aquariums) Conservation Award**.



Characteristics

- **Small arboreal mammals, indicator species** for ecological change.
- Skilled climbers; **nocturnal** and usually solitary, but come together in **pairs in breeding season**; most active during twilight hours of early morning and evening (**crepuscular**)
- **Sikkim's state animal**



Habitat

- Mixed deciduous and conifer forests with dense understories of bamboo.
- **Distribution**: India (Sikkim, West Bengal, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh), Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, China.

Asiatic Lion



Appendix I

WPA, 1972
Schedule I

Among 22 species covered under **Species Recovery Programme**



Context

- Six Asiatic lions have migrated from Gir Forest to the **Barda Wildlife Sanctuary (BWS)**.



Characteristics

- They are **slightly smaller than African lions**.
- Males have only moderate **mane growth at the top of the head**.
- Lions have **no particular breeding season**.



Habitat

- Only in Gir forest and other protected areas in Gujarat's Saurashtra region.

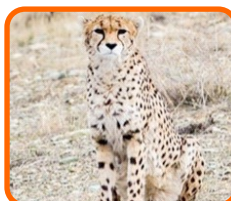


Conservation Measures

- 'Project Lion' announced on **August 15, 2020**.

Cheetah

Asiatic Cheetah



Appendix I

WPA, 1972
Schedule I

African Cheetah



Appendix I



Context

- Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary was chosen as the second home for the translocation of Cheetahs.



Characteristics

- Unlike other big cats (lions, tigers, leopards, and jaguars) cheetahs don't roar.
- **World's fastest Mammal** and the **only large carnivore to be extinct in India (1952)**.



Habitat

- **African Cheetah:** Sub-Saharan Africa (Namibia holds the largest population)
- **Asiatic Cheetah:** Limited to Iran's arid landscapes



Conservation Measures

- **Project Cheetah (World's first intercontinental large wild carnivore translocation project, part of Project Tiger)**
 - **Implementing agency:** National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)

Indian Tiger (*Panthera tigris*) or Royal Bengal Tiger



Appendix I



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Habitat

- **Tiger Range Countries:** Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Russia Thailand, and Vietnam.
- **India:** Shivalik-Gangetic plains, Central India and Eastern Ghats, Western Ghats, Northeastern Hills & Brahmaputra Flood Plains and Sundarbans.
- **Distribution:**
 - **Maximum in Madhya Pradesh** followed by Karnataka and Uttarakhand.



Characteristics

- **Flagship species of India**
- **Umbrella Species.**
- **Solitary, mostly nocturnal and territorial animal.**
- Territory of an adult male may encompass territories of 2-7 females
- Tiger stripes are **individually as unique as human fingerprints.**



Threats

- Habitat loss and loss of prey species, hunting, poaching, and illegal trade, Conflict with humans etc.



Conservation Efforts

- **Project Tiger (1973):** Centrally Sponsored Scheme, in-situ conservation
- **NTCA:** Statutory body constituted **under WPA, 1972, amended in 2006 to administer Project Tiger.**
- **National Animal of India**
- **M-STripes:** Digital monitoring system.
- **Global Tiger Initiative (2008):** World Bank's initiative
- **Global Tiger Forum:** International intergovernmental body
- **Other:** Conservation Assured Tiger Standards (CATS), World Wildlife Fund's Tigers Alive Initiative, etc.

Indian Elephant (*Elephas maximus*)



WPA, 1972
Schedule I



Habitat

- Found in the **central** and **southern Western Ghats, North East India, eastern India** and **northern India** and in some parts of southern peninsular India.
- India** is home to over **60% of the world's elephant population**
- Highest population in Karnataka**, followed by Assam and Kerala.
 - Kumki elephants**: Term used in India for captive Asian elephants that are trained to be used in operations to trap wild elephants.



Characteristics

- Highly intelligent animals** with strong family bonds with sophisticated forms of **communication**.
- One of three **subspecies of Asian elephants**, the other two being the Sumatran and Sri Lankan elephants.
- Life span**: 60–70 years.
- Gestation period**: 20–22 months (longest gestation period of all mammals).
- Leader of an elephant group**: Female.



Threats

- Habitat Fragmentation** and degradation, expansion of agriculture and industry, **human–elephant conflict, poaching**, etc.



Conservation Measures

- Project Elephant**: Launched in **1992**
- 33 Elephant Reserves** in 14 major Elephant states.

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Nilgiri Tahr



WPA, 1972
Schedule I

Among 22 species covered under **Species Recovery Programme**



Context

- Tamil Nadu government is executing a synchronized survey to estimate the population of Nilgiri Tahr.



Characteristics

- **Only mountain ungulate** (animal with hooves) in southern India amongst the **12 species present** in India.
- Locally known as “**Varaiaadu**”
- **Two epics** —
 - **Silappathikaram and Sivakasindamani** — mention its descriptions



Habitat

- **Endemic to western ghats**
- **Ernavikulam National Park in Anamalai Hills, Kerala**, home to the largest population.

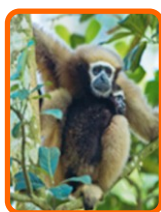


Conservation Measures

- **State animal** of Tamil Nadu
- October 7 declared as Nilgiri Tahr day by Tamil Nadu.

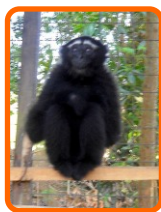
Hoolock Gibbon

Western hoolock gibbon



WPA, 1972
Schedule I

Eastern hoolock gibbon



WPA, 1972
Schedule I



Context

- **The National Board for Wildlife** approved oil exploration in **Assam's Hollongapar Gibbon Sanctuary**.



Characteristics

- **Two types:** western hoolock gibbon (*Hoolock hoolock*) and the eastern hoolock gibbon (*Hoolock leuconedys*).
- Arboreal, diurnal, and highly territorial
- **Sexual dimorphism in fur color:**
 - **Eastern:** Males are black; females light brown or golden
 - **Western:** Males black with white brows; females orange-tan



Habitat

- Endemic to **northeastern India**
- **Eastern Hoolock Gibbon:** Found in Arunachal Pradesh and parts of Assam
- **Western Hoolock Gibbon:** Found in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram

Pangolin



Indian Pangolin

Chinese Pangolin



Context

- Recently, instances of pangolin poaching is increasing in Telangana.



Characteristics

- They are **only mammals wholly-covered in scales** and use those scales to protect themselves from predators in wild.
- They eat ants, termites and larvae and are often **known as the scaly anteater**.
- Solitary, primarily **nocturnal animals**; long, sticky tongues that are longer than their bodies, toothless.
- Two pangolin species found in India- **Indian and Chinese Pangolin**.



Habitat

- India:** Found throughout country, south of Himalayas, excluding north-eastern region.
- Chinese:** Ranges through **Assam and eastern Himalayas**.

Markhor



Context

- In Rare Appearance, **Markhor** Spotted In Kashmir.



Characteristics

- It is World's largest wild goat.



Habitat

- Pakistan, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan.
- In India it is found only in **Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K)**.



Conservation Measures

- Global: UNGA proclaimed 24 May the International Day of the Markhor, starting in 2024
- India: Kashmir Markhor Recovery Project (Wildlife Trust of India)**, J&K notified Tattakuti **wildlife sanctuary** for the Markhor.

Indian Bison (Gaur)



Appendix I



Context

- Recently, Jharkhand Forest department initiated a study to revive the dwindling population of Bison at **Palamu Tiger Reserve**.



Characteristics

- Massively built, very strong, and social animal.
- Grazing animal** and munches on leaves, fruits, stems, flowers and seeds.
- Diurnal by nature** and remain active during the daytime.
- Their pregnancy period is 9 months same as humans.



Habitat

- Western Ghats.
- Prefer evergreen forests and moist deciduous forests.
- They generally **stick to the foothills**.

Fishing Cat



Context

- Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, is launching **India's first Fishing Cat Collaring Project** at Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary.



Characteristics

- A powerful feline, about **twice the size of a house cat**.
- Nocturnal hunters** that prey on fish, frogs, crustaceans, snakes, birds, and scavenged carcasses.



Habitat

- Inhabit **wetlands and mangroves**.
- In India, found mainly in Sundarbans, Himalayan foothills along Ganga & Brahmaputra valleys, and Western Ghats.

Iberian Lynx



Appendix I



Context

- According to IUCN, **conservation status** of Iberian lynx has **improved from Endangered to Vulnerable**, reflecting significant **increase in its population**.



Characteristics

- Solitary hunter; nocturnal or crepuscular; may temporarily become diurnal during winter; live in small, isolated meta-populations.
- European Rabbit** accounts for **80-99%** of its diet.



Habitat

- Endemic to **Iberian Peninsula**
- Found in **southwestern Spain, some populations in Portugal**.

Avian Species

Gyps Indicus (Indian Vulture)



WPA, 1972
Schedule I



Among 22 species covered under **Species Recovery Programme**



Context

- **Moyar valley** located in **Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (Tamil Nadu)** is the only region with largest nesting colony of Gyps vultures in wild.



Characteristics

- Possess **whitish feathers on a dark head and neck**, and a pale collar.
- **Colonial nesters** and often **seen in flocks**.
- **Population is declining**.



Habitat

- **Habitat Specialization:** Open Grassland.
- Found in **Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan**.



Conservation Measures

- **Banning of Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs** like diclofenac, Ketoprofen for veterinary use.
- **Vulture Action Plan 2020-25**.



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Great Indian Bustard (GIB)



Among 22 species covered under **Species Recovery Programme?** ✓



Context

- Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) approved **funds for next phase (from 2024 to 2029) of Bustard Recovery Program.**



Habitat

- Endemic to **Indian Subcontinent.**
- Mostly in **Rajasthan and Gujarat.**
- Small population in **Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.**



Conservation Efforts

- Key habitats** as National Parks/sanctuaries E.g., **Desert National Park, (Rajasthan), Naliya Grassland (Lala Bustard Wildlife Sanctuary).**
- GIB conservation breeding centres in **Rajasthan.**
- Artificial insemination at **National Breeding Centre in Jaisalmer.**
- Training of personnels for **artificial breeding at National Avian Research Centre (NARC), Abu Dhabi.**



Threats

- Predation
- Entanglement with power lines
- Organophosphate pesticide, etc.



Characteristics

- Agro-grassland omnivorous** birds **lacking frontal vision.**
- Males have gular pouch** to fill air & exhale with great humming sound to attract females.
- Males play **no role** in the **incubation and care of the young.**

About Lesser Florican (*Sypheotides indicus*)



Characteristics

- Smallest bird of the bustard family (Otididae).



Habitat

- Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh.



Threats

- Pesticide usage** in breeding grounds; Mismanagement of agro-grasslands, etc.

Jerdon's Courser



WPA, 1972
Schedule I



Among 22 species covered under **Species Recovery Programme**



Context

- Jerdon's Courser has not been **visually spotted in over a decade**.



Characteristics

- Nocturnal** ground-dwelling **bird** found only in the Eastern Ghats.
- Small, cryptic plumage for camouflage** in its scrub habitat



Habitat

- Exclusively endemic** to **Andhra Pradesh**, specifically within the **Sri Lankamalleswara Wildlife Sanctuary** in Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh.
- Prefers dry, scrub forests and **grasslands**

Greater Adjutant Stork



WPA, 1972
Schedule I



Context

- Purnima Devi Barman received the **2024 Whitley Gold Award** dubbed '**Green Oscar**' for conserving Greater Adjutant Stork (*Leptoptilos dubius*).



Characteristics

- Also known as 'Hargila', they reside **only in Assam (80%) and Bihar of India and Cambodia**.
- One of the largest flying birds** in the world.
- Primarily scavengers, feeding on carrion, but also consume fish, reptiles, and amphibians



Habitat

- Inhabits wetlands, nesting in **tall trees with closed canopies and bamboo clumps** around nesting trees, etc.

Amur Falcon



WPA, 1972
Schedule I



Context

- Manipur's Tamenglong district imposes a ban on hunting of Amur Falcon.



Characteristics

- It is locally known as '**Kahuaipuina**' in Manipur.
- Migratory raptor**: Make voyage from breeding grounds in Russia and China to southern Africa.
 - 22,000 km journey** (longest sea crossing of any raptor)
- Passes through **Manipur and Nagaland**.
- Feeds on dragonflies** that follow a similar migration path over Arabian Sea.

Aquatic Species



Eurasian Otter



WPA, 1972
Schedule I



Context

- For the first time in India, Eurasian otter was **radio-tagged in Satpura tiger Reserve (Madhya Pradesh)**.



Characteristics

- Brown Fur, adapted for aquatic lifestyle with webbed feet and ability to close small ears and nose under water.
- Other two otter species found in India – **Smooth-coated otter** and **Asian small-clawed otter**.



Habitat

- Found in **Europe, Asia, and Africa**.
- In India, found in **northern, northeast, and southern regions**.

Vaquita



Context

- A recent survey revealed a devastating decline in **population of endangered marine mammal, the Vaquita**.



Characteristics

- It is the **smallest and now most endangered species** of the **cetacean order**.
- It is a toothed whale, like dolphins and sperm whales, as opposed to whales with **baleen** (Baleen is a filter-feeding system inside the mouths), such as the blue whale.



Habitat

- It is **endemic to the Gulf of California** where it lives in the shallow waters bordering the Colorado estuary.

Blue Whales



WPA, 1972
Schedule I



Context

- Blue whales have made a comeback near the **Seychelles after 60 years**.



Characteristics

- Largest & loudest animal** on the planet.
- Lifespan**: Estimated at around 80 to 90 years.
- Key Behaviour aspect**: Sometimes **swim in small groups** but are more often **found alone or in pairs**.
- Diet**: Feeds almost exclusively on **krill (marine crustaceans)**



Habitat

- Found in **all oceans except the Arctic Ocean**.

Gangetic River Dolphin

Protection status



Appendix I



Context

- India conducts first-ever **Ganges River Dolphin Tagging in Assam.**



Characteristics

- Essentially blind, rely on Echolocation** (determining the location of objects using reflected sound) for biological needs.
- Breathes through a **blowhole**, surfacing every 30-120 seconds.



Habitat

- Restricted to freshwater** (Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna and Karnaphuli-Sangu river systems of Nepal, India, and Bangladesh)
- Presently, India houses **about 90% of the global population** of the dolphins.



Conservation Measures

- The **Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary**, Bihar is the only wildlife sanctuary for its protection
- It is India's **National Aquatic Animal** and is **endemic to the Indian sub-continent.**
- Project Dolphin** announced on 15th August 2020.

Reptiles, Insects, Amphibians, etc

Neptis Philyra



Context

- Rare butterfly species Neptis philyra was recently **discovered for the first time in India.**



Characteristics

- It has been discovered in **Tale Valley wildlife sanctuary** in lower Subansiri district of **Arunachal Pradesh.**
- It is commonly known as **long-streak sailor**
- It has **serrated wings with rich brownish-black on the upper side** and yellow brown on the underside
- It is **generally found in east Asia**, including eastern Siberia, Korea, Japan, central and southwest China.



Habitat

- Evergreen forests, riverine vegetation, and rocky streams.

Butterfly Cicada



Context

- A new species of **cicada** discovered in Meghalaya.



Characteristics

- It belongs to **genus Becquartina** and marks **the first ever record of this genus in the country.**
- The species in this genus are often called **"Butterfly cicadas"** because of their colourful wings.
- The present discovery extends the distributional range of the genus Becquartina from Southeast Asia into Northeast India.
- It increases the total number of known **Becquartina species to seven.**

Bumblebees



Context

- Recent research highlights that the Bumblebees **are resilient to pesticides.**



Characteristics

- Belongs to the **genus Bombus** and are important **pollinator for many wildflowers.**
- They are **fuzzy insects with short, stubby wings.**
- They are **larger than honeybees**, but they don't produce as much honey.
- They are known for **buzz pollination.**
- They **use dance as a means of communicating 'food alert'** signals to other members of their colony.

Gharial (Gavialis gangeticus)



Appendix I



WPA, 1972
Schedule I



Habitat

- **Inhabit freshwater rivers:** Chambal, Girwa, Ghagra, Son and Gandak.



Characteristics

- Named Gharial due to a **bulbous knob** at the end of their long narrow snout.
- Primarily **eats fish.**

Sea Anemone



Context

- Scientists have found mass sea anemone **bleaching off Agatti island, Lakshadweep**.



Characteristics

- They are **ocean-dwelling members of the phylum Cnidaria**.
 - Sea anemones are **predatory animals** and most species are found in **coastal tropical waters**.
 - Like corals, sea anemones establish **symbiotic relationships with green algae**.
- Sea surface temperature rise** disrupts this relationship, resulting in **bleaching**.
- They also have a **symbiotic relation** with **clownfish**.
 - Clownfish are protected by the **stinging tentacles** of **anemone** and anemone gets food from Clownfish's meals.
- They play key **biogeochemical roles in benthic ecosystems**.

Batillipes chandrayaani



Context

- A new species of marine tardigrade discovered from the southeast coast of Tamil Nadu is named **Batillipes chandrayaani** after **Chandrayaan-3 moon mission**.



Characteristics

- Third marine tardigrade species** to have been scientifically described from the Indian waters.
- It has a **trapezoid-shaped head** and **four pairs of legs** with **sharp-tipped sensory spines**.
- They can **survive extreme environmental conditions**
- Recently, a **study of the first tardigrade fossil** has enabled Scientist to classify them and **retrace their evolutionary history**.

Sea cucumbers



WPA, 1972
Schedule I



Context

- As per a new research, repopulating Sea Cucumbers **can help in recovery of coral reefs**.



Characteristics

- Belong to the animal group called **echinoderms**, which also contains starfish and sea urchins.
- Are known as **janitors of tropical seas** as they consume decomposing organic matter and convert it into recyclable nutrients and buffers the ocean's acidification.
- It exhibits **sexual and asexual reproduction**.

Sperm Whales (*Physeter macrocephalus*)



Context

- For the first time, Scientists have outlined that sperm whales **communicate using bursts of clicking noises**- called codas **sounding a bit like Morse code**.



Characteristics

- Largest of the **toothed** whales and **only males** tend to be observed closer to poles.



Habitat

- Found in **deep open waters**, or around **islands and coastal areas** with deep canyons or very narrow continental shelves.
- Found in India, Argentina, Bangladesh etc.

Olive Ridley Turtle



Appendix I



Context

- A high-level review meeting to be held by Tamil Nadu Chief Secretary amid **increase in deaths of Olive Ridley Turtles**.



Characteristics

- Gets its name from **olive green color of its heart-shaped shell**.
- Carnivores, and feed mainly on jellyfish, shrimp, snails, crabs, molluscs and a variety of fish and their eggs.
- Best known for their **unique mass nesting called Arribada**, where thousands of females come together to lay eggs on the same beach.



Habitat

- Among **smallest & most abundant sea turtles** and is found primarily in the **tropical regions of Pacific, Indian, and Atlantic oceans**.



Conservation Measures

- Odisha's Rushikulya, Gahirmatha, and Devi river rookeries are protected through **seasonal fishing bans and community involvement**
- Marine Turtle Action Plan (2021)**
- Operation Olivia** by Indian Coast Guards.

Indian Star Tortoise (*Geochelone elegans*)



WPA, 1972
Schedule I



Appendix I



Context

- The Indian star tortoise faces threats from **illegal wildlife trade and habitat loss**.



Characteristics

- **Solitary animals, do not hibernate** but stay inactive when it is very dry/hot/cold.
- **Mainly Herbivores** and **exhibit distinctive obsidian shell with sun-yellow star patterns**.



Habitat

- Endemic to arid regions of **northwest India, southern India, and Sri Lanka**.

Plant Species

Utricularia (Bladderworts)



Context

- Recently, **Plant 'Utricularia'** has been found in Rajasthan's **Keoladeo National Park** in large numbers.



About Utricularia

- **Rare and unique carnivorous plant**, named for its **tiny bladders or utricles**.
- **Tiny hairlike projections** at the opening of the **bladder** are sensitive to the motion of passing organisms sucking in prey.
- Preys on small organisms (such as protozoa, insects, larvae, mosquitoes, and even tadpoles).
- **Habitat:** Found in **lakes, streams, and waterlogged soils**.
- **Significance:** Boosts biodiversity and **maintains environmental balance** by controlling the population of small insects.

Seaweed



Context

- ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute have been designated as a **center of excellence for seaweed cultivation**.



Characteristics

- It is a common name for **various species of marine plants and algae** which grow in oceans as well as in rivers, lakes etc.
- Multicellular and macroscopic **autotrophs** broadly classified into **three groups** such as **green** (Chlorophyta), **brown** (Phaeophyta), and **red** (Rhodophyta) seaweeds.



Applications

- Nutritional:** Also called sea vegetables, it provides:-
 - Minerals:** calcium, phosphorus, sodium, potassium
 - Vitamins:** A, B1, B12, C, D, E etc
- Health:** Anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial & used in cancer treatment.
- Manufacturing:** Binding agents in toothpaste, fruit jelly, organic cosmetics, skincare items.
- Agriculture:** Enhances crop productivity

Aquilaria Malaccensis (agarwood)



Context

- CITES eases export of agarwood from **India**, **move to benefit lakhs of farmers**.



About Aquilaria Malaccensis

- An evergreen tree **native to Northeast India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, and parts of Southeast Asia**, and is considered a precious aromatic plant in the region.
- Aromatic plant's oil and chips** both are highly valued in the market.

Syntrichia Caninervis



Context

- Scientists have found a **desert moss** - Syntrichia Caninervis - which is able to withstand Mars-like environment conditions.



About Syntrichia Caninervis

- It is **widespread in some of Earth's harshest locations** including Antarctica and the Mojave Desert.
- It could be the **first possible pioneer species for the colonization of Mars**.



Semal Trees (Silk Cotton Tree)



Context

- Disappearance of **Semal trees** from Southern Rajasthan is creating adverse effects on the forests and people.



About Semal Trees

- Large **deciduous tree**, known for its Crimson red flowers.
- Ayurvedic medicines** can be prepared from every part of the tree.
 - For instance, roots are used for treating ailments such as diabetes, etc.

- Worshipped by **many tribal communities** in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.
- Its seed produces **edible oil, used in making soaps.**

Tmesipteris obanceolata



Context

- News research shows that **Tmesipteris obanceolata**, a species of fork fern, has **largest genome** of any organism on the earth.



About Tmesipteris obanceolata

- Contains **160 billion base pairs** (the units that make up a strand of DNA) outstripping the human genome by more than 50 times.
- It belongs to a **primordial group of plants** that evolved long before dinosaurs set foot on the earth.

- Found only in **New Caledonia and a few nearby islands in the Pacific Ocean** and thrives on the trunks and branches of trees in rainforests.

Palm Tree



Context

- Odisha will plant palm tree to **combat lightning deaths.**



About Palm Tree

- Belongs to **Tropical Forest Ecosystem.**
- Varieties of palm Tress:** Coconut, Oil Palm, Arecanut, Palmyrah etc.
 - Palmyrah is declared as **State Tree of Tamil Nadu.**

- Characteristics of Palm trees:**
 - Act as **natural conductors during lightning strikes** and prevent loss of lives.
 - Male palm tree produces only flowers, while female tree produces fruits as well.
- Benefits:**
 - Palm leaves used as construction materials for **fences, walls, and roofs.**
 - Provide **edible and non- edible products.**



Neelakurinji



Context

- It has been included on the **IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) official Red List of threatened species** under the **Vulnerable category**.



About Neelakurinji

- Shrub known for massive **blooming every 12 years**.
Semelparous, i.e., single reproductive episode before death.
- Location: Shola grasslands of Western Ghats – the Nilgiri hills**, Palani hills and the Eravikulam hills of Munnar, also Shevaroy hills in the Eastern Ghats.
 - The name **Nilgiris (blue mountains)** was derived from the colors of these flowers.
- Major Threats:** Tea and softwood plantations, **urbanization, invasion of exotic species like eucalyptus, black wattle, etc.**

Water Spinach



Context

- Water spinach** now reached the door of the farmers with the technology **developed by the Indian Institute of Vegetable Research (IIVR)**.



About Water spinach

- Native to **tropics and subtropics**, this **semi-aquatic perennial plant** is believed to have been the **first domesticated in Southeast Asia**.
- Benefits**
 - Rich in **folic acid (vitamin B9)**; Contains medium levels of **beta carotene, calcium, vitamin E and C**.
 - Helps prevent **neural tube defects in unborn children**.
 - Being **rich in iron**, it's beneficial for people with **anemia**.
 - Has great **potential as a purifier of aquatic habitats**.

Ashwagandha (withania somnifera)



Context

- Ashwagandha is growing in popularity, **both in India and abroad**.



About Ashwagandha

- It is an **evergreen shrub** found in parts of **India, Africa, and the Middle East**.
- Used as a medicinal plant, especially in traditional **Ayurvedic medicine**.
- Contains several **bioactive compounds**, including withanolides, which have anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects.
- Its supplements are often **promoted for stress and anxiety, sleep, male infertility, athletic performance, etc.**

Kashmir Chinars



Context

- Recently, Kashmir Chinars got digital protection through **geo-tagging** with QR-code.



About Kashmir Chinars

- **Native:** Originated in **Greece**, found throughout Kashmir, grows characteristically in **Eastern Himalayas**.
- **Char Chinar**, an Island on the Dal Lake, Srinagar is named after it.

Key Features

- **Large and deciduous**, growing up to 30 meters tall, takes about 150 years to reach to full height.
- Known for its longevity and its **leaves changes colors**, i.e., deep green (summer), blood-red, amber and yellow (autumn).
- **Applications:** Used for **medicinal** purposes, **wood** for interior furniture, and making **dyes**, etc.

Tropical Plant Subabul



Context

- Recently, researchers at the **Institute of Advanced Study in Science and Technology (IASST)**, **Guwahati** have identified the therapeutic potential of Subabul in **managing insulin resistance related to type II diabetes**.



About Subabul

- It is a **fast-growing** traditional medicinal leguminous tree native to tropical and subtropical regions.

- It is traditionally used by ethnic communities for its **nutritional value**, with **leaves and seeds** consumed raw or cooked in **soups and salads** as a rich source of protein and fiber.

Dicliptera polymorpha



Context

- Scientists from Agharkar Research Institute (ARI), Pune discovered a new **species of Dicliptera** in the Western Ghats (one of India's four global biodiversity hotspots)



About Dicliptera polymorpha

- **Habitat:** Thrives in **open grasslands with extreme conditions** like drought and frequent fires, utilizing **robust rootstocks** to endure environmental stress.

- **Unusual dual-blooming pattern:** Blooms twice a year, once **post-monsoon** (From early November to March or April) and again **after grassland fires** (in May and June).
- **Spicate inflorescence:** It is the **only known Indian species** with this spicate inflorescence structure, with its closest allied being found in Africa.

Sea buckthorn



Context

- Women in Ladakh play a key role in **sea buckthorn cultivation**



About sea buckthorn

- It was given **GI Tag in 2023**
- In Ladakh, it is **grown completely organically** without any pesticides. The berries are **harvested in September-October every year**.

- **Every part of the plant**, including fruit, leaf, twig, root and thorn, **has been traditionally used** as medicine, nutritional supplement, etc
- Therefore, It is popularly known as '**Wonder Plant, Ladakh Gold, Golden Bush or Gold Mine of cold deserts**'.

Water Hyacinth



Context

- Women from **flood-prone Borchila in Assam** are transforming water hyacinth into eco-friendly products and creating jobs under SBM-Urban.



About Water Hyacinth

- Water Hyacinth is **a non-native aquatic invasive plant** that has become **widespread in India**.

- **Positive Impact/Usage of Water Hyacinth**
 - It can **reduce water pollution** (Absorb heavy metals, toxins) and process animal feed, compost, and bioenergy.
 - It can **be harvested and processed into eco-friendly products** like crafts and furniture.
- **Negative Impacts of Water Hyacinth**
 - **Water Quality Degradation:** It depletes oxygen in water, harming aquatic life.
 - **Ecological Imbalance:** It can outcompete native plant species, leading to a decline in biodiversity in freshwater ecosystems.

Context: PM engaged with **number of wild animals** during inauguration of **Vantara**, the world's largest wildlife rescue and rehabilitation center, located in Jamnagar, Gujarat.

Okapi



Characteristics

- The okapi (*Okapia johnstoni*), often referred to as the "**forest giraffe**" or "**zebra giraffe**".
- Okapis are **solitary** animals, primarily **diurnal**, and have large home ranges that they mark with scent glands on their feet.



Habitat

- Endemic to arid regions of **northwest India, southern India, and Sri Lanka**.

African Lion (*Panthera leo*)



Characteristics

- Males have thick manes; **females are the main hunters**.
- In compare to Asiatic lions, **African lions are larger, have darker, fuller manes, and roam in large prides**.



Habitat

- Savannas, grasslands, and open **woodlands in sub-Saharan Africa**

Rare Two-Headed Turtle (Bicephalic Chelonian)



Characteristics

- A genetic **mutation** causes two heads on a single body (condition known as **polycephaly** or **bicephaly**).
- Both heads **may function independently**, leading to **coordination challenges**.
- **Not a separate species**, so no specific conservation status.
- **Often kept in captivity** due to survival challenges in the wild.



Habitat

- Savannas, grasslands, and open woodlands in sub-Saharan Africa

Orangutan (*Pongo* spp.)



Characteristics

- Large, reddish-brown primates with long arms
- Highly intelligent, **tool users**, and strong memory
- **Solitary**, except for mothers with offspring



Three Species

- Bornean, Sumatran, and Tapanuli.



Habitat

- Tropical rainforests of Borneo and Sumatra



Threats

- Deforestation due to **rubber plantation, illegal pet trade, and poaching**

Lemurs



Characteristics

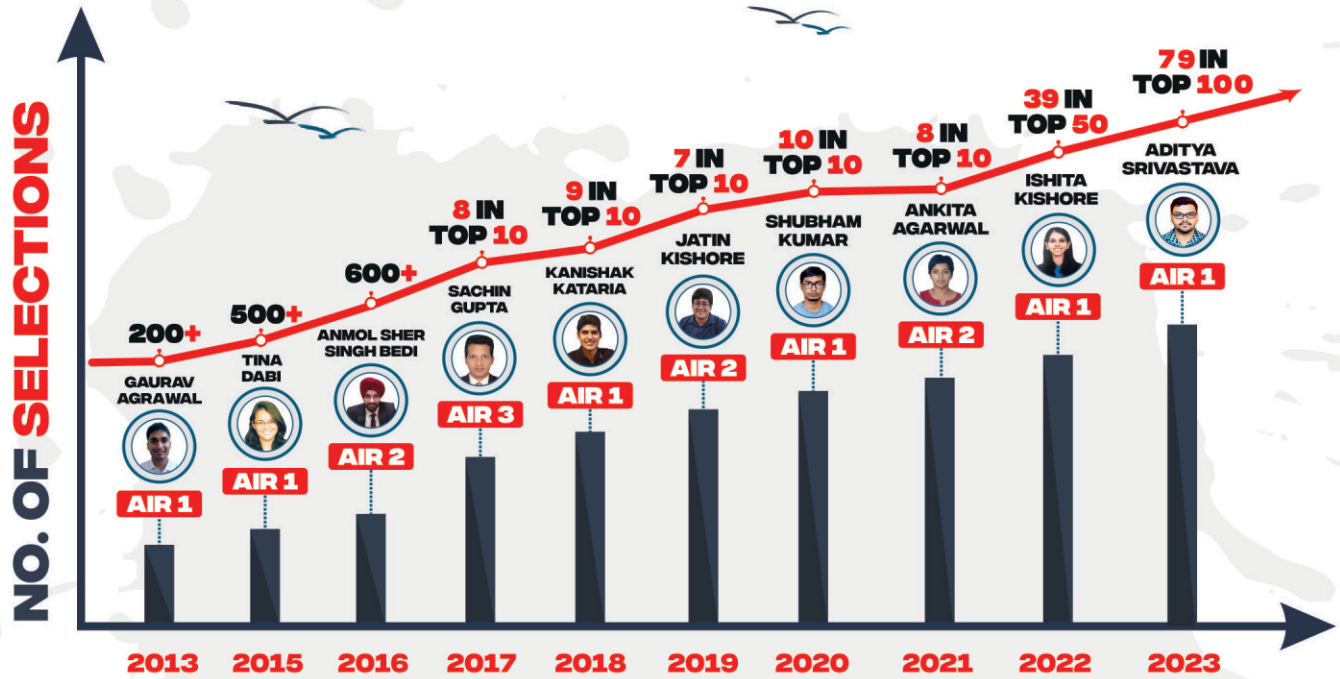
- Lemurs are primates belonging to the infraorder *Lemuriformes*.
- **With over 100 species**, they range from the tiny mouse lemur to the large indri.
- Many species are social, often **living in female-dominated groups**.
- **Many lemur species (not all)** are listed under Appendix I.



Habitat

- Found exclusively in **Madagascar and the nearby Comoros Islands**.
- Lemurs are **arboreal**.
- They inhabit diverse ecosystems, including **rainforests, dry deciduous forests, mangroves, and spiny forests**.

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Aditya Srivastava

16

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39
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