Bryospilus Bharaticus

Why in News?

Recently, the researchers have discovered a new species of tiny crustacean in Western Ghats.

- It is a ***new species of water fleas*** (type of small crustacean).

  Water fleas *are small aquatic animals belonging to crustacea group and are usually found in rivers, ponds, and pools.*

- **Discovered in** – Moss growths of *Korigad fort* and adjacent areas on Deccan Plateau near Pune in the Western Ghats.
- **Taxonomy**
  - **Scientific name** – The researchers named the organism as *Bryospilus (Indobryospilus) Bharaticus*.
  - **Genus** – Bryospilus, is a unique animal with characteristic adaptations suited for *living in semi-terrestrial environments*, such as water film found on mosses.
  - This discovery marks the ***1st time***, in this genus has been recorded in Tropical Asia.



Research Highlights

- The relatives of this species are found across various continents that were once part of the supercontinent Gondwanaland, which included South America, Australia, New Zealand, and Africa, along with India.
- The researchers suggest that ancestors of this species could have been present in the Indian subcontinent before the breakup of Gondwanaland, approximately 200 million years ago.
- The species' presence in a pristine environment with minimal human disturbance highlights the health of the habitat.

References

1. The Times of India| New Species of Tiny Crustacean
2. Pune News| Asian Representative of Bryospilus Genus

