

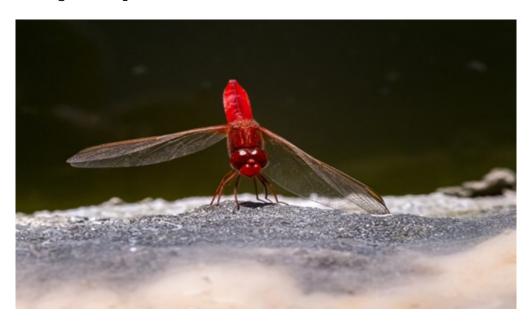
## **Crocothemis Erythraea**

**Prelims -** Current event of National and International importance| Biodiversity

## Why in News?

Recently, the elusive dragonfly species Crocothemis erythraea, a relic from the Ice Age, was rediscovered in the high-elevation regions of the southern Western Ghats.

- Genus Crocothemis.
- Common name Scarlet dragonfly or broad scarlet.
- Family Libellulidae.
- **Size** *35-45 millimetres in length,* with a wingspan of approximately 60-75 millimetres.
- Morphology The adult male scarlet dragonfly has a <u>bright scarlet red</u>, widened abdomen, with small amber patches at the bases of the hindwings.
- The veins on the leading edges of the wings are red.
- Females and immatures are yellow-brown and have a conspicuous pale stripe along the top of the thorax.



- **Habitat** It is often found slow-moving freshwater bodies such as ponds, lakes, marshes, and slow rivers.
- Distribution It is widely distributed across Europe, Africa, and parts of Asia.
- **Recent Rediscovery Location** Southern Western Ghats after decades of misidentification as *Crocothemis servilia*.
- It is also recorded in high ranges of Munnar, Wagamon, Rajakumari, Pampadum Shola, and Parambikulam.
- **Diet** They are active hunters, preying on various small insects such as mosquitoes, flies, and other small arthropods. They catch their prey midair using their legs.
- **Reproduction** Females lay their eggs by dipping the tip of their abdomen into the water while hovering above the surface.
- The eggs hatch into aquatic larvae (nymphs), which live in the water for several months to a few years before emerging as adults
- Conservation Status Listed as <u>Least Concern</u> by the IUCN.

## References

- 1. The Hindu Ice Age's winged relic.
- 2. Scarlet dragonfly | Crocothemis erythrea.

