Dog-faced Water Snake (Cerberus Rynchops)

Why in News?

Herpetologists recently sighted the dog-faced water snake for the first time in the floodplains at Garemara in western Assam's Nalbari district.

- It is a rear-fanged, mildly venomous, and semi-aquatic snake.
- It is also known as the *South Asian bockadam.*
- **Appearance –** Mottled grey and black colour.
- It is well *adapted to brackish water*, due to their aquatic habitat they have nostrils placed higher upon their snout giving them a dog-like appearance.
- They have salt glands below upper lip that discard excess salt acquired from the brackish water they consume.
- **Size** – Grow up to one metre.
- **Diet** – It is known to hunt for fish and crustaceans in shallow waters, using a ***sit-and-wait predatory strategy***.
- **Habitat** – Predominantly associated with coastal ecosystems, inhabiting mangroves, coastal mudflats, and estuarine habitats, Inland records of the species are rare.
- **Distribution** - Across South, Southeast Asia, and parts of Australia002E
    - Indian coastal regions in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Kerala, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- **Breeding** – **Viviparous** – Give birth to young ones.
- **Conservation Status**
    - **IUCN –** Least Concern.
- **Threats**
    - Loss of Mangrove Habitats
    - Entanglement in fishing nets.

References

1. The Hindu - Dog-faced snake
2. Round Glass Sustain - Dog-faced water snake