

Ernakulam's Official District Species

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Environment

Why in News?

Recently, the district administration of Ernakulam (Kerala), advanced a unique initiative to select official district-level species (flora, fauna, bird, and fish).

- The rare **Periyar Cow** and the indigenous **Mulavoor Koorka**, highlighting grassroots biodiversity conservation and indigenous breed preservation.

Key Contenders

Candidate Species	Local Name / Scientific Identity	Key Characteristics
1. Periyar Cow	Indigenous Cattle Breed (<i>Bos indicus</i>)	• A hardy, disease-resistant native cattle strain traditionally bred and maintained in central Kerala. • Known for adaptability to local tropical weather, rugged terrain, and minimal maintenance feed requirements compared to exotic dairy breeds.
2. Mulavoor Koorka	Chinese Potato (<i>Plectranthus rotundifolius</i>)	• An indigenous root vegetable variety originating from Mulavoor (near Muvattupuzha in Ernakulam district). • Celebrated for its unique aroma, culinary texture, and deep regional agricultural heritage.

Significance

- It follows the precedent of state-level animal and plant symbols (such as Kerala's state elephant and state tree), designating **district-level biological symbols**.
- It fosters a sense of local ownership and community-led conservation under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002.
- Highlights the critical need to document and protect indigenous crop landraces (*Mulavoor Koorka*) and indigenous livestock breeds (*Periyar Cow*) against genetic erosion and commercial monoculture.



ERNAKULAM DISTRICT OFFICIAL SPECIES CAMPAIGN



**OBJECTIVE:** Promote local biodiversity conservation & heritage awareness



PERIYAR COW



-  Indigenously preserved cattle breed from central Kerala (Periyar region).
-  Exceptional resilience to local climate & diseases.



MULAVOOR KOORKA



-  Distinctive indigenous country potato variety (Mulavoor village origin).
-  Highly prized in traditional agri-horticultural diets.



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Reference

[The Hindu | Ernakulam's official species](#)