Euphaea Wayanadensis

Prelims – *Bio-diversity.*

Mains (GS III) – *Conservation.*

Why in News?

A group of researchers have discovered a new species of damselfly in the Wayanad landscape of the Western Ghats, Kerala.

Odonate species
• Odonate species, commonly known as dragonflies and damselflies, are a group of insects belonging to the order Odonata. • Odonates are *predatory insects with 4 wings* and are known for their vibrant colors and agility in flight. • **Suborders -** Anisoptera (dragonflies) and Zygoptera (damselflies). - **Dragonflies (Anisoptera) -** Typically, larger and more robust, with eyes that touch on top of the head and wings spread out at rest. - **Damselflies (Zygoptera) -** Usually slenderer, with eyes separated and wings folded together along the body at rest. • **Ecological Importance-** Odonates play a crucial role in freshwater ecosystems as both predators and prey, helping to control populations of other insects, including mosquitoes. • **Global Distribution-** While they are predominantly found in warmer regions, some species thrive in habitats as far north as Canada.

- It is Kerala's 191st recorded ***odonate species***.
- **Family –** Euphaeidae.
- The team first observed the distinct morphotype of *Euphaea wayanadensis* at the ***Kalindi River***, Thirunelli, in Wayanad district in 2013.
- **Morphology -** A longer black hind wing patch, broader and uninterrupted humeral and ante humeral stripes in males, and unique structural traits in the male genital vesicle.
- Genetic analysis also played a crucial role in confirming the species' status.
- **Habitat -** The species preferred fast-flowing streams with rocks and aquatic vegetation with evergreen and semi-evergreen tree growth on the banks to thrive.



Reference

[The Hindu | Euphaea wayanadensis]

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