

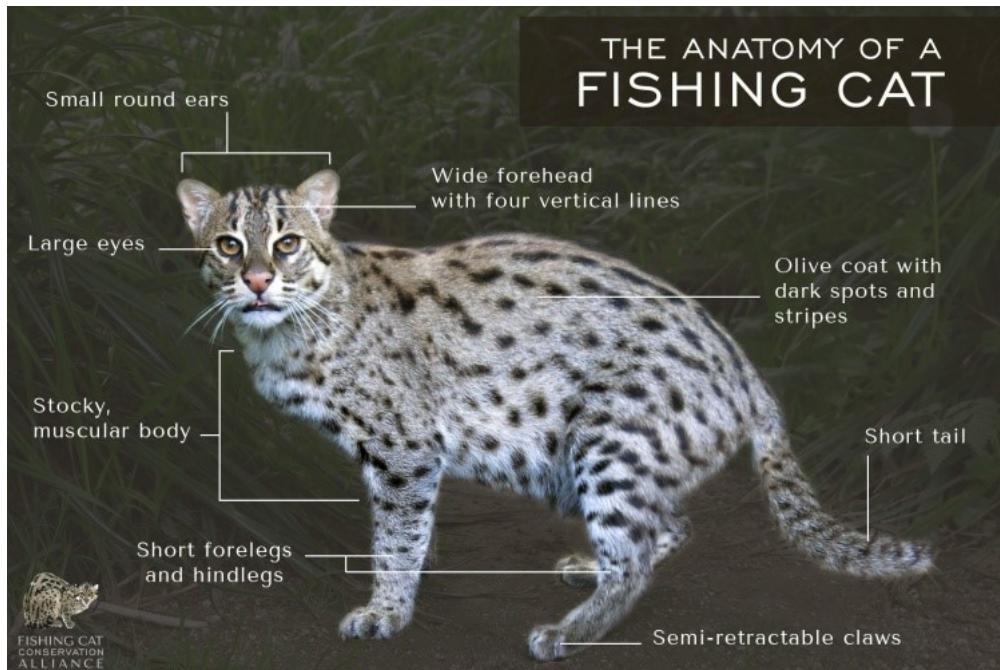
Fishing Cat

Prelims: Current events of National and international importance | Conservation

Why in News?

Fishing cat is recently spotted for the first time in Ramgarh Vishdhari Tiger Reserve (RVTR).

- **Scientific Name** - *Prionailurus viverrinus*.
- **Genus** - These cats are the largest of the *Prionailurus* genus.
- **Habitat** - It is primarily associated with wetlands and riverine habitats.
 - Some populations in Sri Lanka having even been recorded in highly urbanized landscapes and montane forests.
- **Distribution** - It is found distributed in patches across **South and Southeast Asia**.
 - **Countries** - Sri Lanka, **India**, Nepal, Cambodia, Thailand, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Myanmar.
- **Characteristics** - These are known for their **expert hunting skills** in aquatic habitats.
- **Weight** - Between 7 to 16 kg.
- **Appearance** - Fishing cats have a large neck and head, short muscular legs and a deep chest.
- The tail of the fishing cat is unusually short, about half the length of the body, and is used as a rudder while swimming.
- They have short, rounded ears and large eyes set close to each other.
- This species is characterized by olive-gray fur tinged with brown with rows of parallel oblong black spots along the flank and a white underbelly.
- Their underbelly is white with black stripes and spots.



- **Diet** - Primary diet is fish they also prey on rodents and birds.
- **Conservation Status**
 - **IUCN** - Vulnerable.
 - **CITES** - Appendix II.
- **Threats** - Habitat loss and fragmentation, conflict with humans over poultry and livestock, as well as the demand for bushmeat and trade for captive wildlife are causing fishing cat populations to decline.
- **Significance** - This finding confirms the reserve's growing importance as a biodiversity hotspot in Rajasthan, home to apex predators such as tigers and leopards, as well as smaller carnivores that are key to maintaining ecosystem balance.

Other four small cat species in RVTR Jungle Cat (*Felis chaus*), Rusty-spotted Cat (*Prionailurus rubiginosus*), Asiatic Wildcat (*Felis lybica ornata*), and Caracal (*Caracal caracal*).

Reference

[The Times of India | Fishing Cat](#)