

Iberian lynx

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Species | Conservation

Why in news?

Recently, the world's 1st rare white Iberian lynx has been spotted in Spain's Jaén mountains by wildlife photographer Ángel Hidalgo.

- **Scientific name** - Lynx pardinus.
- **Family** - Felidae.
- Iberian lynx is considered as world's most threatened ***cat species***.
- **Geographical range** - It is endemic to the southern Iberian Peninsula, where it occurs in Spain, Portugal and Southern France.
- **Habitat** - It prefers **open grassland mixed with dense shrubs** such as strawberry tree, mastic, and juniper, and trees such as holm oak and cork oak.
- **Appearance** - It has its sharp eyes, dark ear tufts, heavily spotted tawny coat, long legs and a very short tail with a black tip and a "beard" of fur around its face, and prominent black ear tufts.



- **Size** - It is smaller than its relative, the Eurasian lynx, with males typically weighing 7-15.9 kg and females weighing 9.2-10 kg.
- **Prey** - It is a **carnivore** that depends heavily on wild rabbits to feed, also eat ducks, young deer.
- **Conservation Status**
 - **IUCN** - Vulnerable
 - **CITES** - Appendix II
- **Threats** - Habitat destruction, reduction in prey, and human-induced threats such as poaching, road accidents, and habitat fragmentation and alteration.

Quick Fact

White Iberian lynx

- It is believed to be the world's **1st leucistic** Iberian lynx ever recorded.
- **Leucism** - A condition that causes a **lack of pigmentation in the fur**, but not in the eyes, causing the ghostly appearance of the wildcat.
- **Appearance** - It is unusually pale, cream-coloured coat, while retaining the typical features of its species - sharp eyes, dark ear tufts, and the signature facial ruff.
- White lynx's light fur offers **poor camouflage** in the wild, making survival more challenging.



References

1. [Times of India | World's 1st rare white Iberian lynx spotted in Spain](#)
2. [IUCN red list | Iberian lynx](#)