

Indian swiftlet

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Species

Why in news?

Recently, the Indian swiftlet made a surprise visit to the Adyar estuary in Chennai.

- **Scientific name** - *Aerodramus unicolor*.
- **Habitat** - Prefers rocky hills, mountainsides, caves and offshore islands that provide suitable nesting caves and disperses to plains during monsoons.
- **Distribution** - Found in the hills and coastal areas of ***Sri Lanka and southwest India*** (primarily in Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu).
- **Appearance** -
 - **Size & Shape** - It is small with 12cm long, compact swift with a shallow tail fork (unlike the Asian Palm-Swift's deep fork).
 - **Coloration** - Darker brown upperparts, paler brown underparts, and a slightly paler rump.



- **Diet - *Insectivorous*** (fleas, wasps, bees, locust, etc) catching flying insects mid-air in swift flocks.
- **Breeding** - The breeding season occurs mainly from March to June in India.
- **Nesting** - Nests are bracket-shaped and attached to vertical cave surfaces. They are made by the male bird using grass, moss, and feathers bound together with thick, whitish saliva.
- **Echolocation** - They use ***echolocation*** to navigate in dark caves during breeding and roosting.
- **Conservation Status**
 - **IUCN** - Least Concern
- **Threats** - Habitat destruction, nest harvesting for bird's nest soup, etc.

References

1. [The Hindu | Indian swiftlet makes a surprise visit](#)
2. [Birdlife | Indian swiftlet](#)
3. [eBird | Indian swiftlet](#)