Indian wolf

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Why in News?

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has for the first time evaluated the Indian wolf (Canis lupus pallipes) separately, suggesting that it may be classified as a distinct species within the Canis genus.

According to IUCN's global panel of canid experts, the Indian wolf population is estimated to be around 3,093 left (2,877-3,310) across India and Pakistan, putting it in the "vulnerable" category on the Red List.

- **Commonly known as -** Gray wolf.
- **Scientific Name -** Canis lupus pallipes.
    - The 'genus' currently has seven species recognized by the IUCN.

The other 7 species of Canis genus are namely Canis lupus (wolf), Canis latrans (coyote), Canis aureus (Golden Jackal), Canis simensis (Ethiopian wolf), Canis familiaris (domestic dog), Canis rufus (red wolf) and Canis lupaster (African wolf).

- This species is relatively less vocal and have rarely been known to howl.
- Indian wolves are territorial and hunt during the night. One wolf usually is acting as a decoy while the other attacks from behind.
- **Habitat** - Lives in semi-arid and arid areas.
- **Size** - The Indian wolf is intermediate in size between the Arabian and Himalayan wolves.
- It lacks the Himalayan wolf's thick winter coat because it lives in warmer conditions.
- **Appearance -** The hair on their back is longer, which may protect them

from solar radiation.

- Their coat is generally a grizzled, grayish-red or reddish-white.
- A dark, V-shaped patch of black-tipped hair is noticeable on their shoulders and back. Their limbs are paler than the rest of their body, and their underparts are almost entirely white.
- **Distribution -** This wolf's range is almost entirely restricted to India, with Pakistan having just about 10 to 20 lefts.
- **Diet -** Indian wolves are carnivores and prey mainly on antelopes, rodents, hares, and raccoons.
- Indian wolves are monogamous and mate for life.
- **Conservation status**
  - **Wildlife Protection Act of 1972** - Schedule I.
  - **IUCN** - Endangered.
  - **Threats -** Habitat loss, unregulated hunting, and loss of prey.
- **Threats -** Habitat loss and persecution.



Reference

Times of India | Indian Wolf

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