Long-snouted vine snake

Prelims – *Bio-diversity.*

Mains (GS III) – *Conservation.*

Why in News?

A rare long-snouted vine snake has been rediscovered in the Dudhwa Tiger Reserve in Lakhimpur Kheri, Uttar Pradesh.

- It is a species of long-snouted ***arboreal and diurnal*** snake.
- **Scientific Name -** Ahaetulla longirostris.
    - It is a member of the *A. fusca* clade and as a sister the species to *A. laudankia*.
- Previously, Ahaetulla longirostris had only been recorded once in Bihar and Odisha in 2024.
- **Appearance –** It can be bright green or orange brown. They typically have orange bellies.
- **Habitat** - These snakes live in forests as well as human-dominated areas like cities.
- **Distribution** - Commonly found in Southeast Asia.
- **Size** - Can reach a length of 4-feet.
- **Characteristics -** It has horizontal, keyhole-shaped pupils, which enhances their binocular vision, aiding them in hunting and navigating their arboreal environment.
- It is mildly poisonous, not very dangerous for humans.
- It is ovoviviparous, meaning it gives birth to live young after incubating eggs inside the female's body.
- **Distinction** - The new species differs from its congeners in bearing an elongate rostral appendage, green or ochre dorsum, orange-brown belly, and moderately keeled vertebral dorsal scale row.



Dudhwa Tiger Reserve
• Dudhwa Tiger Reserve, a protected area in Uttar Pradesh's Terai region. • It encompasses Dudhwa National Park, Kishanpur Wildlife Sanctuary, and Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary. • **Established in -** 1988. • **Rivers** - The Sharda River flows by the Kishanpur WL Sanctuary, - The Geruwa River flows through the Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary and - The Suheli and Mohana streams flow in the Dudhwa National Park, all of which are tributaries of the Ghagra River. • The reserve is home to some of the last *remaining oxbow lakes,* along with marshy grasslands, dry riverine grasslands, and dense, moist deciduous sal woodlands. • It is a biodiversity hotspot, where various flora and fauna are interconnected through food chains and food webs across different niches. • Katarniaghat now has the *highest number of tigers* in Dudhwa Tiger Reserve.

Reference

The Hindu | Rare long-snouted vine snake

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