Marbled Cat

Why in News?

The elusive marbled cats have been spotted recently at Dehing Patkai National Park, Assam.

- It is a ***small wild cat*** native to the eastern Himalayas and Southeast Asia.
- **Scientific name** – Pardofelis marmorata.
- **Habitat** – Cleared areas or agricultural plantations, at lower elevations and deciduous-evergreen tropical forests.
- **Distribution** – Nepal, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Malaysia, Sumatra, and Borneo.
    - **In India** – Northern India, Sikkim & Assam.

Dehing Patkai Wildlife Sanctuary *was declared as National Park on 15th June, 2021 and is the only sanctuary in India which is home to 7 different species of wild cats.*

- **Morphology** – Short, broad face, rounded ears, long bushy tail, coat is thick & soft and its color can vary from dark gray-brown to yellowish gray to red-brown.
- It marked with large, irregular dark-edged blotches, legs and underparts are patterned with black spots.



- **Comparison** – To *small clouded leopards* both bear the distinctive marbling pattern on their coats, with the combination of large, irregular shaped dark blotches, lined with black.
- **Behaviour** – It is a *nocturnal* animal, mainly active at night.
- It is known as a *very good climbers and relatively solitary* in nature.
- **Diet** – Birds, squirrels, rats, and possibly lizards and frogs.

- **Threats**
  - Deforestation.
  - Habitat loss and fragmentation.
  - Hunted for its fur, eating, commercial purposes, or medicine.
- **Conservation status**
  - **IUCN status** – Near Threatened (NT).
  - **CITES** – Appendix I.
  - **WPA, 1972** – Schedule I.

References

1. The Times of India| Marbled Cat
2. FCF| Marbled Cat

