

Pilia malenadu

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

Why in news?

Researchers discover a **new species of spider** in a Chikkamagaluru village, name it after 'Malenadu'

- **Family** - Salticidae.
- **Genus** - Pilia, a genus of ***jumping spiders***.
 - These spiders are **small, agile predators** known for excellent vision, agile movements and jumping ability.
 - It exhibit complex courtship behavior and active hunting, ***unlike web-building spiders***.
 - **1st described by** - Eugène Louis Simon in 1902.
- **Location** - Madhugundi village, Mudigere taluk of Chikkamagaluru, Karnataka.
- **Etymology** - Named after the Malenadu region of Karnataka, locally known as the "***land of hills***" — "mala" means hill, "nadu" means land.
- **Taxonomic importance** -
 - This is the **1st time** both male & female specimens of the genus have been identified, resolving a long-standing taxonomic gap.
 - Previously, only three species - all male specimens, are known.
- **Distinctiveness** - It ***differs*** from common ***house or garden spiders***, both in appearance and behaviour.
- **Habitat** - **2 plant species** — Memecylon umbellatum & Memecylon malabaricum - the spiders were found concealed between the leaves of these plants.
- **Morphology** - New species is morphologically closest to ***Bristowia***, another genus of jumping spiders, sharing robust first legs and comparable genital structures.



- **Significance** - This is the 1st discovery of a Pilia genus spider species in 123 years, last recorded in ***1902 in Kerala***, underscores the importance of Western Ghats' status as a biodiversity hotspot.

Reference

[The Hindu | New spider species is discovered in Chikkamagaluru](#)