

Pygmy Hog

Prelims: Current events of national and international relations | Environment

Why in News?

The population of Pygmy Hog, once thought to be extinct, has increased from six individuals in 1996 to 194 through a captive breeding programme in Assam.

- It is the **world's smallest and rarest wild pig**.
- **Scientific name** – *Porcula salvania*.

***Pygmy Hog** is an **indicator species** (Organism whose presence, absence or abundance reflects a specific environmental condition).*

- **Appearance** - Males are slightly bigger than females. Their coats have blackish-brown bristles over gray-brown skin and they have no facial warts.
 - Both sexes have a tail and females have 3 pairs of mammae.
- **Habitat** - Pygmy hogs live in tall, dense grasslands that have a mixture of shrubs and trees.
- **Distinct Features** - Adult males possess visible upper canines that protrude from the sides of their mouths.
- Unlike other wild pigs, they lack prominent facial warts.
- **Distribution** - The mammals are now found in the Sonai-Rupai Wildlife Sanctuary, Bornadi Wildlife Sanctuary, Orang National Park, and Manas National Park.
- It remain hidden in tall dense grass and rarely emerge in the open.
- **Diet** - they have well developed teeth, with upturned canines and molars with rounded cusps. This allows them to enjoy an omnivorous diet.



Pygmy Hog Conservation Programme (PHCP)

- It is a long-running partnership in Assam, India, created to save Pygmy Hog from extinction.
- **Formed in** - 1995 and launched breeding in 1996 after capturing 6 wild founders from Manas National Park.
- **Key Partners** - Assam Forest Department, Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (Govt. of India), IUCN/SSC Wild Pig Specialist Group, Aaranyak, and EcoSystems-India.

Reference

[The Hindu| 'big comeback' of 'small hog'](#)