

Rhesus Macaque

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Conservation

Why in News?

National Board for Wildlife's panel has recommended reinstating Rhesus Macaque species of monkeys under Schedule II of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

- **Purpose**- To restore statutory protection against illegal capture and cruelty, and to regulate scientific management.
- **Scientific Name** - *Macaca mulatta*.
- **Rhesus Macaque** - It is one of the most well-known and widespread species of Old-World monkeys.
- **Native Range** - It is native to South, Central, and Southeast Asia, including countries like India, China, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Thailand.
- **Habitat** - They thrive in diverse environments from arid grasslands and woodlands to mountainous regions and, notably, in urban and human-modified landscapes.
- **Behavior** - They are diurnal (active during the day), arboreal (tree-dwelling), and terrestrial (ground-dwelling).
- They are also known to be strong swimmers.
- **Physical Characteristics**
 - They are medium-sized monkeys.
 - Males are generally larger than females.
 - **Length** - About 47-64 cm (19-25 inches), excluding the tail.
 - **Weight** - Males average around 7.7 kg (17 lb); females average about 5.3 kg (12 lb).¹¹
- **Appearance** - They have brown or grey-brown fur, and their face is typically a pink or pale reddish color, and is bare of fur.
- They have a moderately long, non-prehensile tail.



- **Diet** - Rhesus Macaques are omnivores and their diet is highly flexible, adapting to their environment.
- **Social Structure** - They are highly gregarious, living in multi-male/multi-female groups called troops, which can range in size from 20 up to 200 individuals (sometimes more in provisioned areas).
- **Communication** - They are very vocal and use a variety of facial expressions, body postures, and gestures for complex social communication.
- **Significance** - They play an important role in dispersing seeds, and many trees around us are because of the seed dispersal that happens because of their foraging and usual activities.

Reference

[The Indian Express | Rhesus Monkeys](#)