Spotted hyena

Why in News?

A recent study discovered that the hyena (Crocuta crocuta), one of Africa's most abundant carnivores, appeared in southern Egypt after it became extinct in Egypt 5,000 years ago.

- It is a Non-arboreal, Nocturnal, Highly social hyena species found abundant in ***sub Saharan Africa.***
- It is also known as the laughing hyena.
- **Scientific Name -** Crocutta crocutta.
- **Family –** Hyaenidae (largest extant member of the Hyaenidae).
- **Weight -** 40-86 kg - females often weigh more than males.
- **Habitat** - Semi-desert, savanna and open woodland, dense, dry woodland, and montane regions.
- **Range** - Sub-Saharan Africa, though historically across Africa and Eurasia.
- **Distinction** - It is physically distinguished from other species by its vaguely bear-like build, rounded ears, less prominent mane, spotted pelt, more dual-purposed dentition, fewer nipples, and pseudo-penis.
- It is the ***only placental mammalian species*** where females have a pseudo-penis and lack an external vaginal opening.



- **Diet –** Carnivorous.
- **Conservation status**
  - **IUCN Status** - Least Concern.
  - **CITES Appendix** - Not listed.
- **Population in Wild -** 27,000-47,000 individuals; most abundant within the ***Serengeti ecosystem and Kruger National Park.***
- **Threats -** Habitat loss and poaching.

References

1. Down to Earth | Spotted Hyena
2. Inaturalist | Spotted Hyena

