# Woolly Flying Squirrel

**Prelims** – *Current events of national and international importance| General Science.*

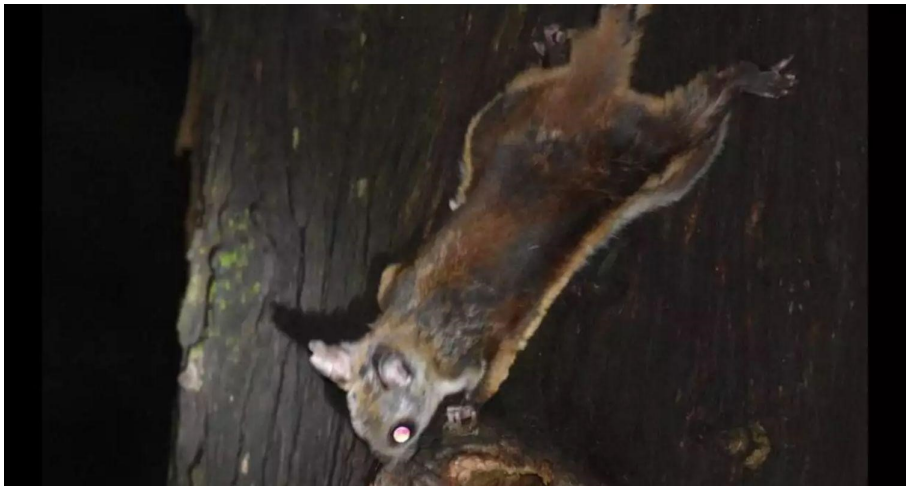
**Mains (GS III)** – *Conservation.*

**Why in News?**

*Himachal Pradesh Forest Department (HPFD) has captured the first-ever photographic evidence of the elusive Woolly Flying Squirrel at Miyar Valley in Lahaul and Spiti district.*

> *Miyar Valley is located in the Western Himalayas and is a part of the Lahaul Range, located between Pir Panjal and Zanskar Range.*

- **Scientific Name -** Eupetaurus cinereus.
- It is one of the rarest and least known mammals in Asia.
- It is also the largest flying squirrel, the longest squirrel and the heaviest of all gliding mammals.
- **Endemic to -** The north-western Himalayas.
- **Habitat -** Remote and uninhabited region of caves and crevices, found on steep cliffs in dry conifer forests.
- **Distribution -** Northern Pakistan and Northwestern India.
- **Appearance -** Similar to other species of flying squirrels, this animal features flexible membranes on either side of its body that link the front and back legs.
- Its body is adorned with a thick layer of straight, silky fur. The fur on its back is a blue-gray hue, while the underside is a lighter shade of gray.
- The throat and ears are covered in creamy white hairs, and the soles of its feet are lined with dense black fur, leaving only the bare, pinkish-brown toe pads exposed.
- **Behaviour -** This species is nocturnal and arboreal; due to its large size and blunt claws, this terrestrial mammal cannot climb trees.
- It was long believed to be extinct until it was rediscovered in 1994.
- **Diet -** These rodents are herbivores, they generally feed upon mosses, lichens, buds and cones.
- **Conservation Status - IUCN** – Endangered.



**References**


1. Business Standard | Woolly Flying Squirrel
2. News Arena Network | Woolly flying squirrel



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