

VANISHING WILDLIFE: 22 SPECIES HAVE GONE EXTINCT IN INDIA**Prelims:** Environment- Biodiversity & its Threat**Mains:** GS-III- Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment**Context:**

- ▶▶ The data tabled in the Lok Sabha by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change states that four species of fauna and 18 species of flora have gone extinct in India in the past few centuries.

Highlights of the BSI report:

- ▶▶ As per information given by the BSI (Botanical survey of India), 18 species of plants — four non-flowering and 14 flowering — have gone extinct.
- ▶▶ The notable species among them are:
 1. Lastreopsis wattii, a fern in Manipur discovered by George Watt in 1882
 2. Three species from the genus Ophiorrhiza (Ophiorrhiza brunonis, Ophiorrhiza caudate and Ophiorrhiza radican), all discovered from peninsular India.
 3. Corypha taliera Roxb, a palm species discovered in Myanmar and the Bengal region by William Roxburgh is also extinct.
 4. Among mammals, the cheetah (Acionyx jubatus) and the Sumatran rhinoceros (Dicerorhinus sumatrensis) are considered extinct in India.
 5. The pink-headed duck (Rhodonessa caryophyllaceai) is feared extinct since 1950 and the Himalayan quail (Ophrysia supercilios) was last reported in 1876.
- ▶▶ The major factors that have led to these extinctions are competition, predation, natural selection, and human induced factors like hunting, habitat degradation.

Other important facts:

- ▶▶ As per Botanical Survey of India (BSI) said India is home to 11.5% of all flora in the world.
- ▶▶ As per Zoological survey of India (ZSI), India has about 6.49% of all the fauna species in the world.
- ▶▶ According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, since 1750 more than double the number of plants has disappeared from the wild than birds, mammals and amphibians combined.