

2. Olive Ridley goes for daytime Nesting after 7 Years

Prelims Syllabus: Biodiversity and its Threat

Mains Syllabus: GS-III Conservation, environmental pollution and Degradation, Environmental Impact Assessment.

Why in News?

- In a rare sight after a gap of seven years, mass nesting of Olive Ridley Turtles was witnessed during the daytime along the Rushikulya rookery coast in Odisha's Ganjam District.

About Olive Ridleys:

- The Olive ridley turtles are the smallest and most abundant of all sea turtles found in the world, inhabiting **warm waters of the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian oceans.**
- They are best known for their unique mass nesting called **Arribada.**
 - ✓ An arribada is a mass-nesting event when thousands of turtles come ashore at the same time to lay eggs on the same.
- The enormous number of Olive Ridleys nest in Odisha (namely at three river mouths: Dhamara, Devi and Rushikulya) in India.
- The species is listed as **Vulnerable in the IUCN Red List, Appendix 1 in CITES, and Schedule 1 in Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.**
- Olive-Ridleys face serious threats across their migratory route, habitat and nesting beaches due to human activities such as unfriendly turtle fishing practices, development and exploitation of nesting beaches for ports, etc.

Nesting Places of Olive Ridleys:

- **Dhamara River Mouth**
 - ✓ The Brahmani River (second largest river in Odisha) enters into the Bay of Bengal along with a combined mouth with the Mahanadi (the largest river in Odisha) known as the Dhamara.
- **Devi River**
 - ✓ Devi River is one of the **principal tributaries of Mahanadi.**
 - ✓ It flows through Jagatsinghpur district and Puri district across Odisha state in India and joins the Bay of Bengal.
- **Rushikulya River**
 - ✓ It originates from Rushikulya hills of the Eastern Ghats in Phulbani district.

- ✓ It is 165 kms long with 8900 sq.kms of catchment areas.
- ✓ It covers entire catchment area in the districts of Kandhamal and Ganjam district of Odisha.

Other National Parks of Olive Ridleys:

- **Bhitarkanika National Park**

- ✓ Bhitarkanika National Park is one of Odisha's finest biodiversity hotspots and is famous for its mangroves, migratory birds, turtles, estuarine crocodiles, and countless creeks.
- ✓ The wetland is represented by 3 Protected Areas, the Bhitarkanika National Park, the Bhitarkanika Wildlife Sanctuary and the Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary.
- ✓ Bhitarkanika is located in the estuary of Brahmani, Baitarani, Dhamra, and Mahanadi river systems.
- ✓ It is said to house 70% of the country's estuarine or saltwater crocodiles, conservation of which was started way back in 1975.

