

## **1. Pangolin**

### **Why in News?**

- Recently, TRAFFIC and World Wide Fund for Nature-India has revealed that 1,203 pangolins were poached for illegal wildlife trade in India from 2018-2022.

### **Highlights**

- Pangolins are nocturnal mammals that dig burrows and feed on ants and termites, and play a vital role in ecosystem management, mostly in aerating and adding moisture to the soil.
- Pangolins are known for their unique appearance. They have scales made of keratin that cover their entire body.
- When threatened, they can roll into a ball to protect themselves.
- It is adaptable to a wide range of habitats including primary and secondary tropical forests, limestone and bamboo forests, grasslands and agricultural fields.
- The Indian Pangolin is found across the Indian subcontinent; Bihar, West Bengal, and Assam also have the presence of Chinese pangolin.
- Once known to be found in large numbers, its population is rapidly declining in its range due to habitat loss and rampant poaching for its skin, scales, and meat.
- Pangolins are among the most trafficked wild mammals, globally, traded mostly in Asia, where their scales are considered to be medicinal and their meat a delicacy.
- In the red list of animals published by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Indian Pangolin is listed in the Endangered (EN) category.
- The Chinese pangolin has been listed as “critically endangered”.
- In India, pangolins, both Indian and Chinese, are protected under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 that prohibits its hunting, trade or any other form of utilisation.
- All pangolin species are listed in Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) Appendix I.