



Peninsular Rock Agama

Why in News?

Recently, a study has been carried out by researchers from **Indian Institute of Science (IISc)**, Bengaluru to understand several **environmental factors** (including urbanisation) that could affect the **presence of the Peninsular Rock Agama/ South Indian Rock Agama**.

What are Important Facts about Peninsular Rock Agama?



▪ About:

- **The Peninsular Rock Agama (*Psammophilus dorsalis*)** which is a type of **garden lizard** has a strong presence in **southern India**.
- This lizard is a **large animal**, strikingly coloured in **orange and black**.
- They **do not generate their own body heat**, so they need to seek **warmth from external sources** like a warm rock or a sunny spot on the wall.

▪ Geography:

- It is majorly found in India (Asia).
 - Indian states of **Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Bihar** hosts the population of the lizard.

▪ Habitat:

- It belongs to the **Precocial Species**.
 - Precocial species are those in which the young are relatively mature and mobile from the moment of birth or hatching.

▪ Protection Status:

- **IUCN Red List:** Least Concern
- **CITES:** N/A
- **Wildlife Protection Act 1972:** N/A

What has the Study Revealed about the Lizard?

- Rock Agama can indicate **which parts of the city are warming**, and their numbers **show how the food web is changing**.
 - Lizards need to **seek warmth from external sources** like a warm rock or a sunny spot on the wall as they do not generate their own body heat.
- These lizards **eat insects and are in turn eaten by raptors, snakes and dogs**, they **cannot live** in places where there are no insects.
 - Insects are **critical components** of a healthy **ecosystem** as they provide many services, including **pollination**.
 - Hence, the presence of rocky agamas **presents a good model system** to understand **other aspects of the ecosystem**.

[Source: TH](#)

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