

Indian Pangolin

Why in News

Recently a radio-tagged Indian pangolin was released into the wild in **Nandankanan Zoological Park** (**Odisha**) following soft release protocols and provision for post-release monitoring.

Radio-tagging involves attaching a transmitter to an animal to monitor its movements.
Several wild animals — tigers, leopards and migratory birds — have been tagged over decades.

Key Points

About: //





- Pangolins are scaly anteater mammals and they have large, protective keratin scales covering their skin. They are the only known mammals with this feature.
- It uses these scales as armour to defend itself against predators by rolling into a ball when threatened.
- Diet:
 - Insectivore- Pangolins are nocturnal, and their diet consists of mainly ants and termites, which they capture using their long tongues.
- Types:
 - Out of the eight species of pangolin, the Indian Pangolin (Manis crassicaudata) and the Chinese Pangolin (Manis pentadactyla) are found in India.
 - Difference:
 - Indian Pangolin is a large anteater covered by 11-13 rows of scales on the back.
 - A terminal scale is also present on the lower side of the tail of the Indian Pangolin, which is absent in the Chinese Pangolin.
- Habitat:
 - Indian Pangolin:
 - It is widely distributed in India, except the arid region, high Himalayas and the North-East.
 - The species is also found in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka.
 - Chinese Pangolin:

• It is found in the Himalayan foothills in Eastern Nepal, Bhutan, Northern India, North-East Bangladesh and through Southern China.

Threats to Pangolins in India:

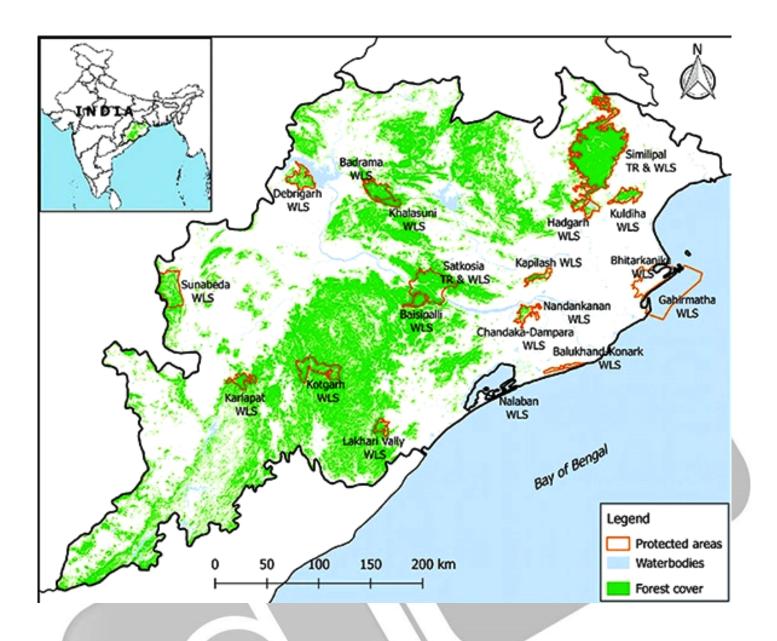
- Hunting and poaching for local consumptive use (e.g. as a protein source and traditional medicine) and international trade for its meat and scales in East and South East Asian countries, particularly China and Vietnam.
- They are believed to be the world's most trafficked mammal.

Conservation Status:

- Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule I
- **IUCN Red List:** Endangered
 - Chinese Pangolin is 'critically endangered'
- **CITES**: Appendix I

Nandankanan Zoological Park

- It is 15 kms from Odisha's capital, Bhubaneswar. It was inaugurated in 1960.
- First zoo in the country to become a member of the World Association of Zoos & Aquariums (WAZA).
 - WAZA is the global alliance of regional associations, national federations, zoos and aquariums, dedicated to the care and conservation of animals and their habitats around the world.
- It is recognized as a leading zoo for the breeding of the <u>Indian pangolin</u> and <u>white tiger</u>.
 - Leopards, mouse deer, lions, rats and vultures are also bred here.
- It was the world's first captive crocodile breeding centre, where gharials were bred in captivity in 1980.
- The State Botanical Garden of Nandankanan is one of the pioneering plant conservation and nature education centres of Odisha.



Source: TH

PDF Refernece URL: https://www.drishtiias.com/printpdf/indian-pangolin-2