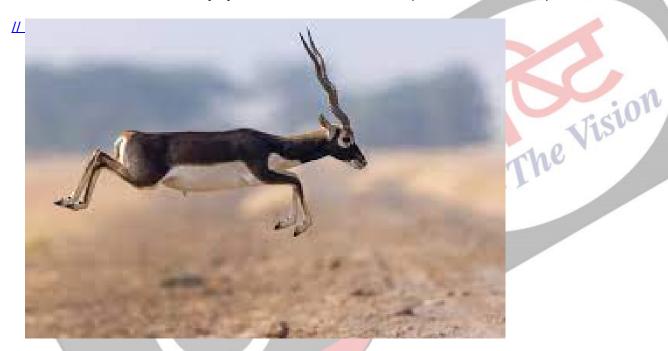


Increase in Blackbuck Population

Why in News?

According to a **new study from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc),** <u>blackbucks</u> in India have adapted well to natural and human-induced challenges to their survival.

In spite of immense losses in grassland habitats across India, the data showed an increasing trend in blackbuck population numbers as compared to the recent past.



What are Blackbucks?

- About:
 - The Blackbuck (Antilope cervicapra), or the Indian Antelope, is a species of antelope native to India and Nepal.
 - It is widespread in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, and other areas throughout peninsular India.
 - It is considered as the **epitome of grassland.**
 - The **blackbuck is a diurnal antelope** (active mainly during the day).
- Recognition:
 - It has been declared as the State Animal of Punjab, Haryana, and Andhra Pradesh.
- Cultural Importance:
 - It is a **symbol of purity for Hinduism** as its skin and horns are regarded as sacred objects. For <u>Buddhism</u>, it is a symbol of good luck.
- Protection Status:
 - Wildlife Protection Act 1972: Schedule I
 - IUCN Status: Least Concern

- **CITES**: Appendix III
- Threat:
 - Habitat Fragmentation, **Deforestation**, **Natural Calamities**, Illegal Hunting.
- Related Protected Areas:
 - · Velavadar Blackbuck Sanctuary Gujarat
 - Point Calimere Wildlife Sanctuary Tamil Nadu
 - In 2017, the Uttar Pradesh State Government approved the plan of setting up the Blackbuck <u>Conservation Reserve</u> in the trans-Yamuna belt near Prayagraj. It would be the first conservation reserve dedicated to the blackbuck.
 - **Tal Chhapar Sanctuary** Rajasthan

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Q1. Which one of the following protected areas is well-known for the conservation of a subspecies of the Indian swamp deer (Barasingha) that thrives well on hard ground and is exclusively graminivorous? (2020)

- (a) Kanha National Park
- (b) Manas National Park
- (c) Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary
- (d) Tal Chhapar Wildlife Sanctuary

Ans: (a)

Exp:

- Hard ground swamp deer or Barasingha (Rucervus duvaucelii), the state animal of Madhya Pradesh, is seeing a revival in the Kanha National Park and Tiger Reserve (KNPTR).
- Swamp Deer was close to extinction in the Kanha National Park. However, with the conservation efforts, the population currently numbers around 800.
- The deer is endemic to the Kanha National Park and Tiger Reserve on the Maikal Range of Satpura Hills. Measures like captive breeding and habitat improvement were used.
- Therefore, option (a) is the correct answer.

Source: TH

PDF Refernece URL: https://www.drishtiias.com/printpdf/increase-in-blackbuck-population