



International Leopard Day 2023

Why in News?

On **International Leopard Day** (May 3, 2023), the **Cape Leopard Trust (CLT)**, an active predator conservation working group, launched a new portal dedicated to **leopards to promote and celebrate leopards globally**.

- The portal was launched at the **Global Leopard Conference**.

What are the Characteristics of Leopard?



- **Scientific Name:**
 - *Panthera pardus*
- **About:**
 - Leopards are elusive and **nocturnal animals** whose size and colour depend on the habitat. They are great climbers and hide in trees, where they hide their prey to avoid competition.
- **Geographical Extent:**
 - **Members of the cat family**, leopards live in Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, Southern Russia, and the Indian subcontinent.
 - The Indian leopard (*Panthera pardus fusca*) is a leopard widely distributed on the Indian subcontinent.
- **Habitat:**
 - In comparison to other large carnivores, **leopards are quite adaptable with respect to their habitat needs** and food requirements, being found in:
 - Agro-pastoral landscapes

- Plantations
- Near human habitation (both rural and urban)

▪ **Population in India:**

- As per '[Status of leopards in India, 2018](#)' report released by MoEF&CC, there has been a **“60% increase in the population count of leopards in India from 2014 estimates”**.
 - The 2014 estimates placed the population of leopards at nearly 8,000 which has **increased to 12,852**.
- The **largest number of leopards have been estimated in Madhya Pradesh (3,421)** followed by **Karnataka (1,783) and Maharashtra (1,690)**.

▪ **Threat:**

- **Habitat loss**
- **Poaching**
- **[Human-wildlife conflict](#)**

▪ **Protection Status:**

- [IUCN Red List](#): **Vulnerable**
- [CITES](#): **Appendix I**.
- [Wildlife Protection Act 1972](#): **Schedule I**

▪ **Human-Leopard Conflict:**

- The areas that often witness leopard-human conflicts include Srinagar in the Kashmir Valley, the **Brahmaputra Valley** in Assam, **[Gir National Park](#)** in Gujarat, and **[Kalakkad-Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve](#)** in southern Tamil Nadu.

UPSC Civil Services Exam, Previous Year Questions (PYQ)

Q. Consider the following: (2012)

1. Black-necked crane
2. Cheetah
3. Flying squirrel
4. Snow leopard

Which of the above are naturally found in India?

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 only
 (b) 1, 3 and 4 only
 (c) 2 and 4 only
 (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Ans: (b)

Source: DTE