



New Frog Species in Maharashtra

Why in News?

Researchers from Maharashtra have discovered a new endemic frog species, '*Minervarya ghatiborealis*' at Mahabaleshwar.

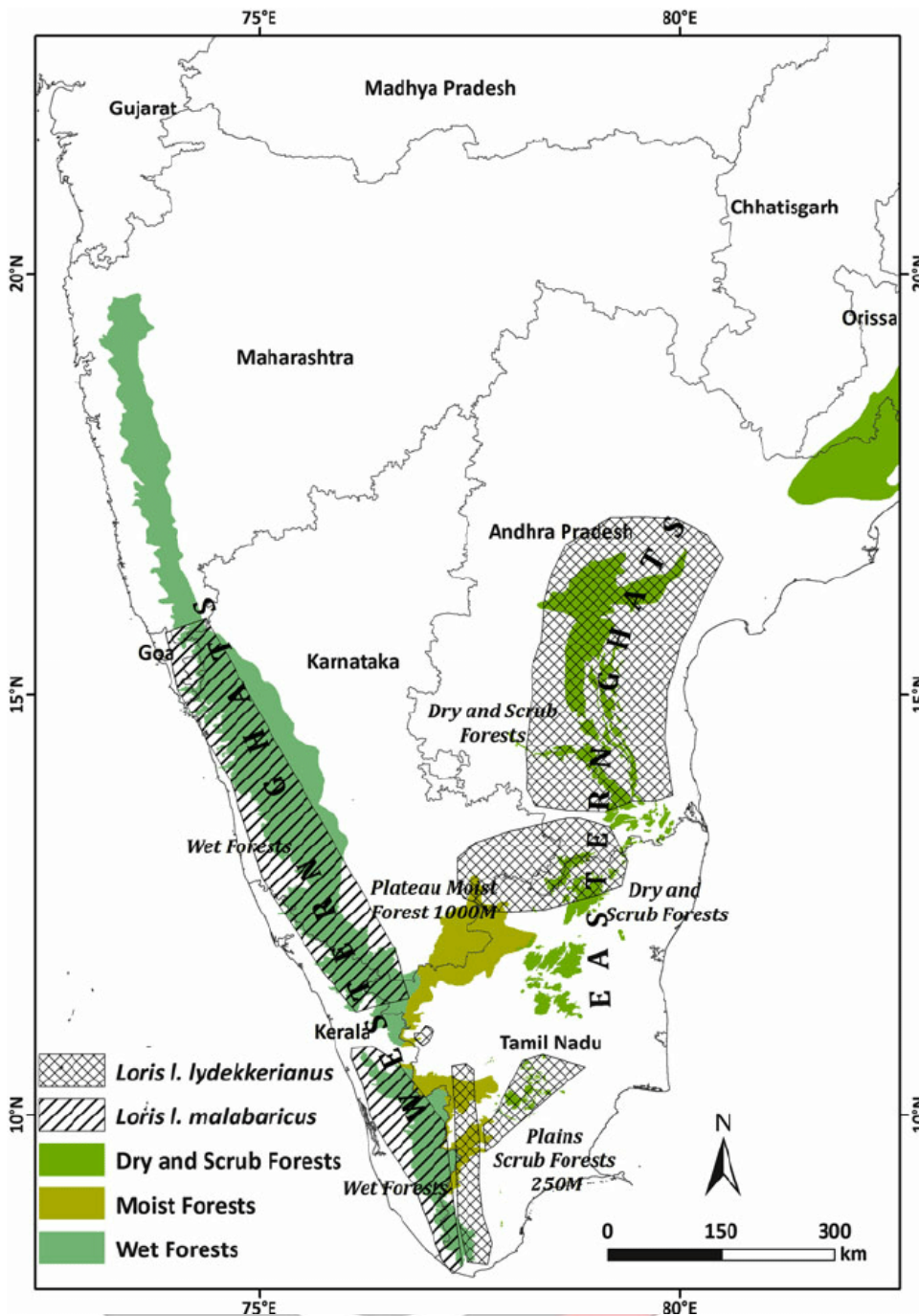
- They included it in the genus **Minervarya**, commonly known as the '**Cricket frog**'. The international journal **Zootaxa** has published their study on this species.



Key Points

- **Etymology and Meaning:**
 - The species' name combines the **Sanskrit word 'Ghati' (Western)** and the **Latin word 'Borealis' (Northern)**.
 - It translates to '**from the north-western Ghats**', reflecting its habitat.
- **Distinctive Features:**
 - Frogs of the *Minervarya* genus have **parallel lines on their abdomens**, making them easy to identify.
 - They **nest near standing water or small springs**.
 - Their **calls resemble nightingale sounds**, a unique trait among frogs.
 - **Male frogs** of this species produce **distinct breeding calls**, which set them apart from other *Minervarya* species.
- **Conservation Importance:**
 - The need for continuous conservation efforts in **the Western Ghats** was emphasized.
 - **The Mahabaleshwar Plateau** is now recognized as a key area for endemic species, requiring enhanced conservation measures.

The Western Ghats



▪ **About:**

- These are the **mountain ranges** running parallel **along the western coast of India starting from Gujarat and ending in Tamil Nadu.**
- Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala are the six Indian states covered by Western Ghats.
- The mountain range is also a **“Hottest Hotspot” of biodiversity.**
- The Ghats are often called the **Great Escarpment of India** and are also a **UNESCO World Heritage Site.**
- **High Biodiversity and Endemism** are special features of Western Ghats along with the presence of Evergreen Forests.

▪ **Significance:**

- The Ghats **influence the Indian monsoon weather patterns** that mediate the warm tropical climate of the region.
- They **act as a barrier to rain-laden monsoon winds** that sweep in from the south-west.
- Western Ghats are **home to tropical evergreen forests, as well as to 325 globally**

threatened species.

- Plateaus **are the dominant landscapes in the Western Ghats**, significant because of the predominance of endemic species.

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