



Butterfly Survey

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Why in News

The Kerala government has carried out a butterfly survey in the **Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary (WWS) and Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary (CWS)** located in **Western Ghats region**.

- The survey **aims** at assessing the butterfly diversity in the forest areas of the western ghats region, which is vulnerable to climatic changes.
- The survey coincides with the **annual butterfly migration in south India from the plains to the Western Ghats areas**.
- The butterfly is an **indicator species** thus a survey will help to study the **interrelation and effects of climate change on ecology**.

An indicator species provides information on the overall condition of the ecosystem and of other species in that ecosystem. They reflect the quality and changes in environmental conditions as well as aspects of community composition.

Key Findings

- The survey spotted **191 species of butterflies** in the area, out of which **12** are **endemic** to the region. It shows a **healthy butterfly habitat** in the region
- The survey observed **rare species of butterflies** such as **Silver forget me not, Common three-ring, and Brown onyx, etc.**
- The **diversity of butterflies** was **very low** in the forest areas where **alien invasive plants** such as **Senna spectabilis** are found.

Senna spectabilis suppresses the growth of many host plants of butterflies.

Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary

- It is part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve along with Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary, Bandipur National Park, Nagarhole National Park, Mukurthi National Park, and Silent Valley.

- Wayanad Wildlife sanctuary is significant because of ecological and geographic continuity with other protected areas such as Bandipur Tiger Reserve and Nagarhole N.P., of Karnataka in the north-eastern portion and Mudumalai Tiger Reserve of Tamil Nadu in the south-east.
- It has the world's largest recorded population of the Asiatic elephant.
- Almost the entire Wayanad district is drained by Kabini and its three tributaries, the Panamaram, Mananthavady, and Kalindy rivers.

The Kabini River, one of the three east flowing rivers of Kerala, is an important tributary of the Kaveri River.

Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary

- Chinnar Wildlife Sanctuary is one of the 13 sanctuaries in the protected areas of the state of Kerala.
- It is located in the Idukki district of Kerala near the Annamalai hills.
- It comes under the jurisdiction of Eravikulam National Park.

Source:TH