



New Gecko Species: Odisha

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Why in News

Recently, Odisha's forest officials have announced measures to preserve the **newly discovered tiny gecko species** of the **genus Hemiphyllodactylus**.



Key Points

- **About:**
 - This was **first spotted in Ganjam district, Odisha in 2014**. The new species of Hemiphyllodactylus minimus is the **smallest member of the genus** with a maximum body size of little over six cm.
 - It is called **Ganjam Slender Gecko**.
 - The new species is the **seventh Indian species** of the genus, the **second from the northern Eastern Ghats** and 41st globally. It is the **first non-island species** of the genus which is distributed in lowland habitats.

- **Geckos:**
 - Geckos are reptiles and are **found on all the continents except Antarctica**. These colorful lizards have **adapted to habitats from rainforests, to deserts, to cold mountain slopes**.
 - **Most geckos are nocturnal**, which means they are active at night, but day geckos are active during the day and **depend on insects, fruits, and flower nectar**.
 - **Geckos are spread across six families:** Carphodactylidae, Diplodactylidae, Eublepharidae, Gekkonidae, Phyllodactylidae, and Sphaerodactylidae.
- **Other Species of Gecko in India:**
 - **Indian Golden Gecko** (family Gekkonidae) is native to India (Tamil Nadu, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh). It is **listed in Schedule 1 of WPA (Wildlife Protection Act)**.
IUCN Red List: Least Concern (LC)
 - **Tokay Gecko** (family Gekkonidae) is widespread in the Indo-Malayan region
Protection Status:
 - **Schedule 4** of WPA.
 - **IUCN Red List:** Least Concern (LC).

Source: DTE