



Painted Leopard Gecko

Why in News?

Recently, researchers have identified a new colorful species of leopard geckos named *Eublepharis pictus*, also known as the Painted Leopard Gecko, earlier it was thought to belong to a known species.



What are the Findings?

- The new species **differs from all members of the genus *Eublepharis* except for *E hardwickii*.**
 - *Eublepharis* is a genus of terrestrial geckos native to eastern and southwestern Asia.
- The new species lives in dry evergreen forests mixed with scrub and meadows. It is strictly **nocturnal, actively foraging along trails in the forest after dusk.**
- Researchers had **initially identified the specimen as an East Indian Leopard Gecko (*Eublepharis hardwickii*)**. This new species appears to be common in the forests of Andhra Pradesh and Odisha.
 - Geographically the two species **appear to be separated by the Brahmani River.**
- The gecko genus *Eublepharis* **now has 7 species.**
- Based on IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) conservation prioritization criteria, the researchers suggested it to list as Near Threatened (NT).
- More research may also encourage better protection of biodiversity in the area. The Eastern Ghats are severely under-surveyed, and dedicated efforts will help recognise it as a biodiversity hotspot.

What are Geckos?

- **About:**
 - Geckos are reptiles and are found on all 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: IE](#)

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