



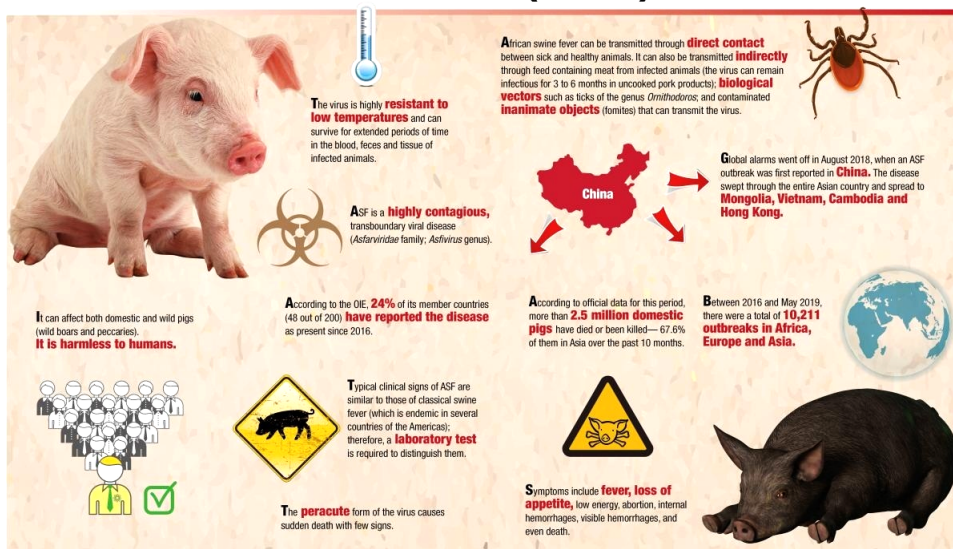
# African Swine Fever and Pygmy Hogs

## Why in News?

According to an article published in the journal 'Science', the [African Swine Fever](#) could fatally affect the population of [pygmy hogs](#), the world's rarest and smallest pigs.

- The disease has already decimated porcine (related to pigs) populations across Asia since its advent in China in 2018.

## // African swine fever (ASF)



## Note:

- **ASF was first detected in Africa** in the 1920s; however, the disease has been **reported across Africa, Asia and Europe, in both domestic and wild pigs**.
- The **mortality rate is close to 95% - 100%** and since the fever has no cure, the **only way to stop its spread is by culling the animals**.
- ASF is a disease listed in the [World Organisation for Animal Health \(OIE\)'s Terrestrial Animal Health Code](#).

## What are the Characteristics of Pygmy Hog?

- **Scientific Name:**
  - *Porcula Salvania*
- **Features:**
  - It is **one of the very few mammals that build its own home**, or nest, complete **with a**

**'roof'.**

- It is also an **indicator species**. Its presence reflects the health of its primary habitat, the tall, wet grasslands of the region.

▪ **Habitat:**

- It thrives in wet grassland.
- Once, it used to be found along a narrow strip of tall and wet grassland plains on the Himalayan foothills – from UP to Assam, through Nepal's terai areas, Bhutan and Bengal's duars.

- **Today, it is found only in India (Assam)**

▪ **Protection Status:**

- [IUCN Red List](#): **Endangered**
- [CITES](#): **Appendix I**
- [Wildlife \(Protection\) Act, 1972](#): **Schedule I**

▪ **Threats:**

- Habitat (grassland) loss and degradation
- Illegal hunting

▪ **Conservation Effort - Pygmy Hog Conservation Programme 1995:**

- Once thought to be extinct, it was **rediscovered in 1971**. The Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, UK, initiated the Pygmy Hog Conservation Programme in 1995 in collaboration with **IUCN, Assam Forest Department and MoEF&CC**.
  - It is currently being implemented by NGOs - Aaranyak and EcoSystems India.
- Between 2008 and 2022, 152 of them were reintroduced into four **protected areas (PAs) in Assam**, including the recent release of 36 individuals in **Manas National Park**.
  - Between 2011 and 2015 animals were reintroduced into the **Orang National Park**.
  - By 2025, the PHCP plans to release 60 pygmy hogs in **Manas NP**.

## UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

### Prelims:

#### Q. Consider the following: (2013)

1. Star tortoise
2. Monitor lizard
3. Pygmy hog
4. Spider monkey

**Which of the above are naturally found in India?**

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

**Ans: (a)**

**Source: DTE**