



# Arittappatti Biodiversity Heritage Site

## Why in News?

Recently, the **Tamil Nadu Government** issued a notification declaring **Arittappatti in Melur block, Madurai district, a Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS)**.

- It is Tamil Nadu's first and India's 35<sup>th</sup> Biodiversity Heritage Site.

## What are the Key Facts about Arittappatti?

- Arittappatti village is **rich in ecological and historical significance**, it houses around **250 species of birds** including three important **raptors, birds of prey** namely:
  - Laggar Falcon
  - Shaheen Falcon
  - Bonelli's Eagle
- It is also home to wildlife such as the **Indian Pangolin, Slender Loris** and **Pythons**.
- The biodiversity-rich area is surrounded by a **chain of seven hillocks or inselbergs** that serve as a watershed, charging **'72 lakes, 200 natural springs and three check dams.'**
  - **The Anaikondan Lake**, built during the reign of [Pandiyan kings](#) in the 16<sup>th</sup> century is one among them.
- Several **megalithic structures, rock-cut temples, Tamil Brahmi inscriptions and Jain beds** add to the historical significance of the region.

## What is a Biodiversity Heritage Site?

- **About:**
  - Biodiversity heritage sites are well-defined areas that are unique, ecologically fragile ecosystems with **high diversity of wild and domesticated species, presence of rare and threatened species, and keystone species**.
- **Legal Provision:**
  - As per provision under **Section 37(1) of 'Biological Diversity Act, 2002'**. The **State Government may**, from time to time in **consultation with the local bodies**, notify in the Official Gazette, **areas of biodiversity importance** as under this Act.
- **Restrictions:**
  - Creation of BHS may **not put any restriction on the prevailing practices and usages** of the local communities, other than those **voluntarily decided by them**. The purpose is to **enhance the quality of life of the local communities** through conservation measures.
- **First BHS of India:**
  - **Nallur Tamarind Grove** in Bengaluru, Karnataka was the first Biodiversity Heritage Site of India, declared in 2007.
- **Last Five Additions to BHS:**
  - Debbari or Chabimura in Tripura (September 2022)
  - Betlingshib & its surroundings in Tripura (September 2022)
  - Hajong Tortoise Lake in Assam (August 2022)
  - Borjuli Wild Rice Site in Assam (August 2022)
  - Amarkantak in Madhya Pradesh (July 2022)

## Infographic

[Source: TH](#)

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/arittapatti-biodiversity-heritage-site>

