



Increase in Blackbuck Population

Why in News?

According to a **new study from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc)**, [blackbucks](#) in India have **adapted well to natural and human-induced challenges to their survival.**

- In spite of immense losses in grassland habitats across India, the **data showed an increasing trend in blackbuck population numbers** as compared to the recent past.



What are Blackbucks?

- **About:**
 - The Blackbuck (*Antelope cervicapra*), or the **Indian Antelope, is a species of antelope native to India and Nepal.**
 - It is **widespread** in Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, and **other areas throughout peninsular India.**
 - It is considered as the **epitome of grassland.**
 - The **blackbuck is a diurnal antelope** (active mainly during the day).
- **Recognition:**
 - It has been **declared as the State Animal of Punjab, Haryana, and Andhra Pradesh.**
- **Cultural Importance:**
 - It is a **symbol of purity for Hinduism** as its skin and horns are regarded as sacred objects. For [Buddhism](#), it is a **symbol of good luck.**
- **Protection Status:**
 - [Wildlife Protection Act 1972](#): Schedule I
 - [IUCN Status](#): Least Concern

- **CITES:** Appendix III
- **Threat:**
 - Habitat Fragmentation, [Deforestation](#), [Natural Calamities](#), Illegal Hunting.
- **Related Protected Areas:**
 - Velavadar Blackbuck Sanctuary - Gujarat
 - Point Calimere Wildlife Sanctuary - Tamil Nadu
 - In 2017, the Uttar Pradesh State Government approved the plan of setting up the Blackbuck [Conservation Reserve](#) in the trans-Yamuna belt near Prayagraj. It **would be the first conservation reserve dedicated to the blackbuck.**
 - [Tal Chhapar Sanctuary](#)- Rajasthan

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Q1. Which one of the following protected areas is well-known for the conservation of a sub-species of the Indian swamp deer (Barasingha) that thrives well on hard ground and is exclusively graminivorous? (2020)

- (a) Kanha National Park
- (b) Manas National Park
- (c) Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary
- (d) Tal Chhapar Wildlife Sanctuary

Ans: (a)

Exp:

- Hard ground swamp deer or Barasingha (*Rucervus duvaucelii*), the state animal of Madhya Pradesh, is seeing a revival in the Kanha National Park and Tiger Reserve (KNPTR).
- Swamp Deer was close to extinction in the Kanha National Park. However, with the conservation efforts, the population currently numbers around 800.
- The deer is endemic to the Kanha National Park and Tiger Reserve on the Maikal Range of Satpura Hills. Measures like captive breeding and habitat improvement were used.
- **Therefore, option (a) is the correct answer.**

Source: TH

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