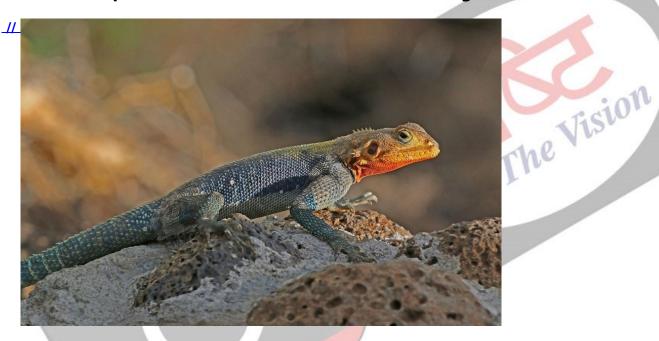


Peninsular Rock Agama

Why in News?

Recently, a study has been carried out by researchers from **Indian Institute of Science (IISc)**, Bengaluru to understand several **environmental factors** (including urbanisation) that could affect the **presence of the Peninsular Rock Agama/ South Indian Rock Agama.**

What are Important Facts about Peninsular Rock Agama?



About:

- The Peninsular Rock Agama (Psammophilus dorsalis) which is a type of garden lizard has a strong presence in southern India.
- This lizard is a large animal, strikingly coloured in orange and black.
- They do not generate their own body heat, so they need to seek warmth from external sources like a warm rock or a sunny spot on the wall.

Geography:

- It is majorly found in India (Asia).
 - Indian states of Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Bihar hosts the population of the lizard.

Habitat:

- It belongs to the **Precocial Species.**
 - Precocial species are those in which the young are relatively mature and mobile from the moment of birth or hatching.

Protection Status:

- IUCN Red List: Least Concern
- CITES: N/A
- Wildlife Protection Act 1972: N/A

What has the Study Revealed about the Lizard?

- Rock Agama can indicate which parts of the city are warming, and their numbers show how the food web is changing.
 - Lizards need to **seek warmth from external sources** like a warm rock or a sunny spot on the wall as they do not generate their own body heat.
- These lizards eat insects and are in turn eaten by raptors, snakes and dogs, they cannot live in places where there are no insects.
 - Insects are critical components of a healthy ecosystem as they provide many services, including pollination.
 - Hence, the presence of rocky agamas presents a good model system to understand other aspects of the ecosystem.

Source: TH

