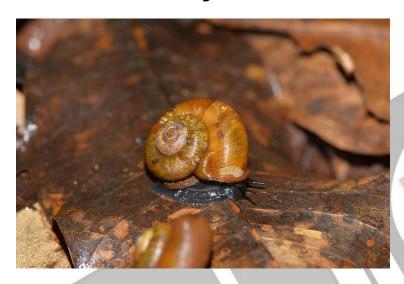


New Species of Land Snail in Maharashtra

Why in News?

A team of researchers from India and the UK has discovered a new species of <u>land snail</u> in **Maharashtra's Konkan region** and named it **Theobaldius konkanensis**.





Key Points

Research Publication and Team:

- Researchers published their findings in **the Molluscan Research journal** on 11th March 2025.
- The study titled "A new species of cyclophorid land snail from the coastal regions of Maharashtra".

Endemic Status and Conservation Significance:

- The species is endemic to the northern **Western Ghats**, a largely unexplored biodiversity hotspot.
- Researchers emphasized the snail's restricted distribution in Konkan, calling for urgent conservation efforts to preserve its ecological niche.

Habitat and Behaviour:

- The snail prefers tropical evergreen and semi-evergreen forests.
- Live snails were found from June to September in leaf litter and on damp branches; only shells were observed in other seasons.
- The species is active both day and night, especially under shaded forest canopies.

Distinctive Morphological Traits:

- The species has a thick, conoidally depressed, widely umbilicated shell with increasing whorls.
- It has a yellowish-brown shell with black striations and unique operculum features—triangular aperture notch, raised fold, and short spines.
- Its **spire is more elevated** compared to other Theobaldius species.
- Ecology and Reproductive Biology:

- Snails are most active in the monsoon and are **important bioindicators sensitive to** climate change.
- Most land snails are **hermaphrodites**; some have separate sexes.
- Reproduction involves courtship, dart-shooting, and both self- and cross-fertilisation.
- Eggs are laid in soil or under litter; they hatch in 2–4 weeks. Lifespan ranges from 2 to 7 years.

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