



Discovery of New Spider and Parasitic Wasp Species

Why in News?

In a remarkable development, scientists from the [Zoological Survey of India \(ZSI\)](#) have announced the discovery of a new species of **wolf spider** and four new species of **spider-egg parasitic wasps** in the state of West Bengal, India.

Key Points

- **About:** The findings highlight the **region's rich yet largely unexplored biodiversity** and have been documented in recent publications in esteemed international journals.
 - The discovery of both the *Piratula acuminata* spider and the *Idris* wasps underscores the importance of systematic taxonomy and molecular tools in unveiling India's hidden biodiversity.
- **New species of wolf spider- *Piratula acuminata*:**
 - One of the standout discoveries is the identification of *Piratula acuminata*, **a new species of wolf spider**. This marks the **first record of the genus *Piratula* in India**.
 - The spider was found on Sagar Island, which is part of the **ecologically sensitive [Sundarbans delta](#)**—a region that is home to diverse wildlife and complex ecosystems.
 - The newly discovered spider belongs to the *Lycosidae* family, commonly known as wolf spiders.
 - Unlike other spiders that weave webs, wolf spiders are known for their agile and nocturnal hunting skills. They are **ambush predators**, capturing prey with incredible precision and speed.
 - This medium-sized spider, measuring approximately 8 to 10 millimeters, is easily distinguished by its creamy-white body adorned with brown and chalk-white spots.
 - Its unique genital structures further set it apart as an undocumented species, signaling its novelty to the scientific community.
- **Four New Species of Parasitoid Wasps- *Idris*:**
 - In a separate study, another group of ZSI researchers, led by K. Rajmohana, described **four new species** of parasitoid wasps belonging to the genus *Idris* (Hymenoptera: Scelionidae).
 - These wasps, identified as ***Idris bianor*, *Idris furvus*, *Idris hyllus*, and *Idris longiscapus***, were collected from agroecosystems and semi-natural habitats across West Bengal between 2021 and 2023.
 - Parasitoid wasps, especially those in the *Idris* genus, play an essential role in controlling spider populations.
 - As **primary egg parasitoids of jumping spiders (*Salticidae*)**, these wasps exhibit gregarious parasitism, where multiple wasps emerge from a single spider egg sac. This unusual behaviour highlights the fascinating and complex relationships within ecosystems.

Zoological Survey of India (ZSI)

- ZSI is a **subordinate organization** of the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)** and was established in 1916 as a national center for the faunistic survey and

exploration of the resources, leading to the advancement of knowledge on the exceptionally rich faunal diversity of the country.

- It has its headquarters at Kolkata and 16 regional stations located in different geographic locations of the country.

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