



Tamhini Wildlife Sanctuary

Why in News?

The **Maharashtra Forest Department** partnered with **Microsoft** and **Pune-based CYDA (Centre for Youth Development and Activities)** to address the [eco-restoration](#) project in the **Tamhini Wildlife Sanctuary**.

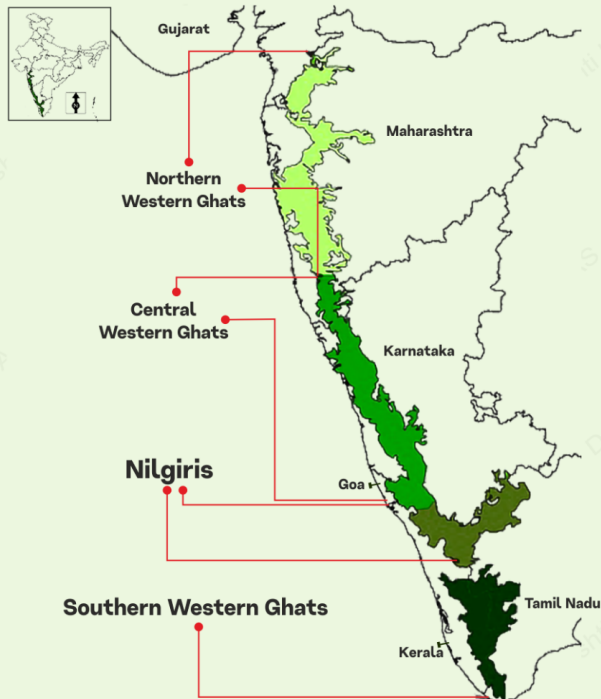
Key Points

▪ About Tamhini Wildlife Sanctuary:

- Located 70 km from Pune, Tamhini Wildlife Sanctuary is known for its **lush biodiversity and scenic landscapes**.
 - It was declared a **Wildlife Sanctuary in January 2013**.
- Situated along the crest of the [Western Ghats](#), the sanctuary features popular **eco-tourism spots** like **Andharban forest, Plus Valley, and Devkund**.
- It attracts a high number of visitors during the [monsoon season](#), especially trekkers, birders, and nature lovers.
- **Biodiversity:**
 - **Mammals:** Home to 28 mammal species, including the **endangered [Kondana Soft-furred Rat \(*Millardia kondana*\)](#)**.
 - **Birds:** Hosts 150 bird species, including 12 species endemic to India.
 - **Butterflies and Reptiles:** Records show 72 butterfly species and 18 species of reptiles.
 - **Invertebrates and Flora:** Includes 33 invertebrate species and a variety of rare and interesting plant life.
- **Notable Species:**
 - The [Indian Giant Squirrel \(*Shekaru*\)](#), **Maharashtra's state animal**, is commonly seen here.
 - The forests support rich bird life and endemic insect populations, making it a vital habitat for biodiversity conservation.

Western Ghats

One of the four biodiversity hotspots of India; recognised as a UNESCO WHS (2012)



Names

- » Sahyadri - northern Maharashtra; Sahya Parvatham - Kerala

Diverted views about Mt. type

- » View 1: Block Mt. formed due to down warping of a part of land into Arabian Sea
- » View 2: Not true mt. rather the faulted edge of Deccan Plateau

Major Rocks

- » Basalt, granite gneiss, khondalites, metamorphic gneisses, crystalline limestone, iron ore

Geographical Extent

- » Satpura (in north) to the end of TN at Kanyakumari (in south)

Mt. Ranges

- » Nilgiri ranges, Shevaroys and Tirumala range
- » Highest peak - Anamudi (Kerala)

Rivers (originating)

- » West-flowing: Periyar, Bharathappuzha, Netravati, Sharavathi, Mandovi
- » East-flowing: Godavari, Krishna, Kaveri, Tunga, Bhadra, Bhima, Malaprabha, Ghataprabha, Hemavathi, Kabini

Endemic Species

- » Nilgiri tahr (IUCN Status - EN)
- » Lion-tailed macaque (IUCN Status - EN)

Imp Protected Areas

- » Biosphere Reserves - Agasthyamala and Nilgiri
- » NP - Silent Valley, Bandipur, Eravikulam, Wayanad-Mudumalai, Nagarhole
- » TR - Kalakad-Mundanthurai, Periyar

Imp Passes

- » Thal Ghat Pass (Kasara Ghat)
- » Bhore Ghat Pass
- » Palakkad Gap (Pal Ghat)
- » Amba Ghat Pass
- » Naneghat Pass
- » Amboli Ghat Pass

Significance

- » Hydroelectricity production
- » Influences Indian monsoon weather patterns
- » Carbon sequestration (neutralise ~4 MT of carbon every year)
- » One of the 8 global hottest hotspots of biodiversity (due to richness in species and endemism)
- » Rich in iron, manganese and bauxite ores, timber, pepper, cardamom, oil palm and rubber
- » Sizeable indigenous population (including PVTGs)
- » Important tourism/pilgrimage centres

Major Threats

- » Mining, Industrialisation
- » Massive extraction of forest produce
- » Human-wildlife conflict, encroachment, illegal hunting
- » Livestock grazing, deforestation
- » Large hydropower projects
- » Climate change

Imp Committees

- » Gadgil Committee (2011) (Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel)
 - » Recommendation: All of WG be declared as Ecological Sensitive Area (ESA) with only limited development allowed in graded zones.
- » Kasturirangan Committee (2013)
 - » Recommendation: Instead of whole, only 37% of the total area of WG be brought under ESA + complete ban on mining, quarrying and sand mining be imposed in ESA.