



# Dholes

[Source: DTE](#)

**28<sup>th</sup> May** is celebrated as **World Dhole Day** to promote the **conservation of dholes**—endangered **Asian wild dogs**—who play a **crucial role as apex predators** in maintaining **forest ecosystem balance**.

- **About Dholes:** Dholes (*Cuon alpinus*) are **wild dogs native to southern and eastern Asia**, including India's Western Ghats (e.g., **Valparai plateau**).
- **Characteristics:** Dholes have **auburn fur, black tails, amber eyes**, and **upright rounded ears**, living socially in **packs of 2 to 25**.



- **Habitat:** Adaptable to **forests, shrublands, and high mountain steppes**.
  - In India, dholes are found in three main areas i.e., the [Western and Eastern Ghats](#), the **central Indian landscape**, and **Northeast India**.
- **Diet and Hunting:** Dholes are **carnivores** that **hunt cooperatively** in groups of **3-5**, and communicate with **yaps, growls**, and distinctive **whistles**, earning them the nickname "**whistling dogs**."
  - Dholes **do not** have the **jaw strength** to deliver a **fatal bite** to their prey, so the **pack eats the prey alive**.
- **Reproduction:** A pack usually has one **dominant monogamous breeding pair**, while the non-breeding members support by **bringing food** and **caring for the pups**.
- **Conservation Status:**
  - [IUCN](#): **Endangered**.
  - [CITES](#): **Appendix II**.
  - [Wildlife \(Protection\) Act, 1972](#): **Schedule II**.

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtiias.com/printpdf/dholes-1>

