

Animal discoveries 2020 report by ZSI

August 30, 2021

In news– Recently, the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) published a document called Animal Discoveries 2020.

About the report-

- The document reveals that **India has added 557 new species to its fauna, which includes 407 new species and 150 new records.**
- The number of faunal species in India has climbed to 1,02,718 species with the discovery of the news species.
- The scientists of the ZSI contributed to 34% (948 species) of the newly described and 68% (898) of the newly recorded species in the last 10 years.
- **The ZSI has been publishing Animal Discoveries since 2007.**
- The ZSI publication shows that India is a mega biodiverse country, with 23.39% of its geographical area under forest and tree cover.
- As per the document, India is **positioned 8th** in mega biodiversity countries in the world.

Among the new species, some interesting species discovered in 2020 are-

- **Trimeresurus salazar**, a new species of green **pit viper** discovered from **Arunachal Pradesh.**
- **Lycodon deccanensis**, the Deccan **wolf snake** discovered from **Karnataka.**
- **Sphaerotheca Bengaluru**, a new species of **burrowing frog** named after the city of **Bengaluru.**
- **Xyrius anjalai**, a new deep water species of **snake eel** from **Kerala.**
- **Glyptothorax giudikyensis**, a new species of **catfish** from

Manipur and

- **Clyster galateansis**, a new species of **scarab beetles** from the **Great Nicobar Biosphere**.

New records-

- **Myotis cf. Frater**, a **bat species** earlier known from China, Taiwan and Russia, has been reported for the first time from Uttarakhand in India.
- **Zoothera citrina gibsonhilli**, an **orange-headed thrush** earlier known from southern Myanmar to south Thailand (central Malay peninsula), which was reported for the first time from India based on a collection made from the Narcondam island in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands.
- Of these 557 species, invertebrates constitute the majority with 486 species, while 71 species belong to vertebrates.
- Among invertebrates, insects dominated, with 344 species, whereas pisces and reptiles dominated among vertebrates.

State Wise discoveries-

- Among the States, the **highest number of new species were discovered from Karnataka (66 species), followed by Kerala (51 species)**.
- Also in 2020, 46 new species were discovered from Rajasthan and 30 from West Bengal.
- In terms of new records or species recorded in the country for the first time, Arunachal Pradesh had the highest (20 new records).
- In the Andaman & Nicobar Islands, 25 new species were discovered and 16 new records documented in 2020.

Zoological Survey of India (ZSI)

- ZSI was **set up by British zoologist Thomas Nelson Annandale in 1916** to encourage survey, discovery, and research in order to improve knowledge of the British

Indian Empire's flora and fauna.

- It is India's **top animal taxonomy organisation.**
- The survey has its genesis in the establishment of the Zoological Section of the Indian Museum at Calcutta in 1875.
- The ZSI began with eight regional centres spread throughout India.
- There are currently 16 regional centres located throughout the country.
- **Its headquarters-Kolkata.**
- According to Section 39 of the National Biodiversity Act of 2002, it has been designated as a designated repository for the National Zoological Collection.