

Georissa mawsmaiensis

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In news- Recently, researchers have discovered a micro micro snail species named *Georissa mawsmaiensis* in Mawsmai Cave in Meghalaya.

About the new snail species-

- These snails are so small in size that an adult measures less than 2 millimetres in length.
- These new species were discovered by researchers from Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE), Bengaluru.
- It has been discovered after 170 years.
- It was **in 1851 that *Georissa saritta*, a member of the same genus as the latest find**, was collected and described from the Musmai (Mawsmai today) valley near Cherrapunjee.
- The members of the ***Georissa* genus** are widely **distributed across** and reported from **Africa, Asia, and the Pacific**.
- However, they are **confined to microhabitats consisting of limestone caves or karst landscapes** formed by the dissolution of limestone.
- ***Georissa* is found in soil or subterranean habitats in lowland tropical forest** as well as high altitude evergreen forests or on rock surfaces rich in calcium.
- Compared to the earlier one, the **new species is different in its shell morphology, starting from shell size variation to the presence of four very prominent spiral striations on body whorls of the shell**.
- Until now, five snail species have been found from the caves of Meghalaya.

Mawsmai cave-

- It is situated in the small village of Mawsmai, around four kilometres from Cherrapunjee (Sohra) in the **East**

Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya.

- The term 'Mawsmi' means 'Oath Stone' in the Khasi language.
- The Khasi people use the local term 'Krem' for the cave.

Mawsmi cave is located at an altitude of 1,195 metres above sea level and is indirectly influenced by the streams of the Kynshi river originating from the East Khasi Hills.