

# Indian Desert Cat

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**In news-** An Indian Desert Cat has been spotted for the first time in Madhya Pradesh's Panna Tiger Reserve (PTR) recently.

## **About Indian Desert Cat-**

- Indian Desert Cat also **known as the Asian steppe wildcat and Indian desert cat.**
- This cat is found in deserts and can survive without water.
- It is an **African wildcat subspecies** that occurs from the eastern Caspian Sea north to Kazakhstan, into western India, western China and southern Mongolia.
- **The toes of the species have cushion-like hair** which help it balance the fluctuating desert temperatures.
- It mostly eats fish as its food.
- **Its fur is light sandy, and small rounded spots cover its upper body.**
- **IUCN status:** Least Concern.
- It is included on CITES Appendix II.
- It is also protected under schedule I of the Wildlife protection Act 1972.
- **In India, it mainly inhabits the Thar Desert and is associated with scrub desert.**
- The name of the Indian Desert Cat was mentioned in old documents of the PTR, but the photographic presence of this species was not recorded earlier.
- Earlier, the presence of a desert cat was recorded in the state's Nauradehi sanctuary.