

Mange disease

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In news- Recently, wildlife conservationists have expressed concern after locals spotted a few desert foxes, found in the scrub forests of Rajasthan's Jaisalmer district, suffering from a loss of fur due to the mange skin disease.

About mange disease-

- **Mange is a skin disease of animals caused by mite infestations, characterized by inflammation, itching, thickening of the skin, and hair loss.**
- As various species of mites also infect plants, birds and reptiles, the term "mange" is sometimes reserved for pathological mite-infestation of nonhuman mammals.
- Since mites belong to the arachnid subclass Acari (also called Acarina), another term for mite infestation is **acariasis**.
- Parasitic mites that cause mange in mammals embed themselves in either skin or hair follicles in the animal, depending upon their genus.
- **Some form of mange is known in all domestic animals,** although many varieties of mange mites infest only one species.
- **They are transmitted between animals by direct contact and by objects** that have been in contact with infested animals.

There are **two types** of the disease—

Demodectic mange-

- **Also called demodicosis or red mange,** it is caused by a sensitivity to and overpopulation of Demodex spp.
- The **two types of demodectic mange are localized and generalized,** localized consists of four spots or less.
- Demodex is not zoonotic and is not transferable across

species.

- Each host species has its own species of Demodex.
- For example, dogs are hosts to Demodex canis and cats are hosts to Demodex cati. A type of demodectic infection in humans is known, but is less commonly symptomatic.

Sarcoptic mange-

- **Sarcoptic mange, also known as canine scabies, is a highly contagious infestation of Sarcoptes scabiei var. canis, a burrowing mite.**
- **The canine sarcoptic mite can also infest cats, pigs, horses, sheep, and various other species.**
- **The human analog of burrowing mite infection, due to a closely related species, is called scabies (the “seven-year itch”).**
- Burrowing mites are in the family Sarcoptidae.
- They dig into and through the skin, causing intense itching from an allergic reaction to the mite’s feces, and crusting that can quickly become infected.
- Skin damage can occur from the dog’s intense scratching and biting.
- Secondary skin infection is also common.
- **In both animals and humans, immune suppression from starvation or any other disease causes this type of mange to develop into a highly crusted form.**

About desert foxes-

- The white-footed fox (*Vulpes vulpes pusilla*), also known as the desert fox, is a small, Asiatic subspecies of red fox which occurs throughout most of northwestern Indian subcontinent, Pakistan’s desert districts from Rawalpindi to Rajasthan and Kutch in India, Baluchistan, southern Iran, and Iraq.
- It is mostly found on sand-hills or in the broad sandy beds of semi-dry rivers, and only very rarely in fields,

and then in the vicinity of sandy tracts.

- Like the Turkmenian fox, the white-footed fox has a primitive, infantile skull compared to those of its northern cousins.
- It closely resembles the unrelated Bengal fox in size, but is distinguished by its longer tail and hind feet.
- **IUCN status-** Least Concern