

New species of bamboo-dwelling bat found in Meghalaya

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In news– Scientists have recently discovered a new species of bamboo-dwelling bat in Ri Bhoi district of Meghalaya.

About the new species-

- It was **found** near the forested patch of **Nongkhylllem Wildlife Sanctuary** and named **Glischropus meghalayanus**.
- The present discovery is the **first report of a thick-thumbed bat not only from India but also from South Asia**.
- Thick-thumbed bats of the genus *Glischropus* are currently composed of four recognised species from Southeast Asia.
- **The newly discovered species is small in size and has a dark brown colour with sulphur yellow belly.**
- The discovery **extends the known distribution range of the genus westward into South Asia by (approximately) 1,000 km.**
- Morphological examination of these specimens and comparison with all known species in this genus **revealed marked differences in colouration, dental characters** and bacular traits.
- From the same forested patches outside Nongkhylllem Wildlife Sanctuary, **they have found another species of disk-footed bat *Eudiscopus denticulus* which was a new record in India.**
- **Bamboo-dwelling bats are a particular kind of bats living in the internodes of bamboos** with specialised morphological characters that help them to adopt to the life inside a bamboo.

- With this new discovery, the **total number of bat species known from India stands at 131.**
- **Meghalaya harbours the highest bat diversity in the country** with 67 species, which is about 51% of total bat species in the country.
- The unique caves in the northeastern State provided roosting opportunities for a large number of bats.
- **The most common cave-dwelling bats species being Horseshoe bat and Leaf-nosed bats.**