

Skinks

October 19, 2020

In news

Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) lists 62 species of skinks in its publication

About skinks

- With long bodies, relatively small or no legs, no pronounced neck and glossy scales, skinks are common reptiles around homes, garages, and open spaces such as parks and school playgrounds, and around lakes.
- Although they are common reptiles and have a prominent role in maintaining ecosystems, not much is known about their breeding habits, and ecology because identification of the species can be confusing.
- Skinks are highly alert, agile and fast-moving and actively forage for a variety of insects and small invertebrates.
- The reduced limbs of certain skink species or the complete lack of them make their slithering movements resemble those of snakes, leading people to have the incorrect notion that they are venomous.
- This results in several of these harmless creatures being killed.
- With 1,602 species of skinks across the world, making it the largest family of lizards, their occurrence in India is less than 4 % of the global diversity.

ZSI's publication on Skinks

- ZSI's publication mentions that India is home to 62 species of skinks and says about 57% of all the skinks found in India (33 species) are endemic
- The publication, Skinks of India, was released earlier this month by Union Minister of State, Ministry of

Environment Forest and Climate

- It is the first monograph on this group of lizards, which are found in all kinds of habitats in the country, from the Himalayas to the coasts and from dense forests to the deserts