

# Species added to India's floral and faunal database in 2021

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**In news**—The Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has published the details of new discoveries and new records of fauna and flora in 2021 at the headquarters of the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) in Kolkata.

## Key updates -

- India added **540 species to its faunal database** in 2021 **taking the total number of animal species to 1,03,258.**
- The country also **added 315 taxa to the Indian flora during 2021**, taking the number of floral taxa in the country to 55,048.
- Of the 540 faunal species, **406 are new discoveries and 134 new records to India.**
- **Thirteen new genera** were also discovered in 2021.
- Among the new species discovered is one species from mammal, 35 reptiles and 19 species of pisces.
- **The new mammal species discovered is Crocidura narcondamica, a white-toothed shrew, from Narcondam Island** of the Andaman and Nicobar group of islands.
- Among the **reptiles** discovered in 2021, notable is **Boiga whitakeri, or Whitaker's cat snake**, from the **Western Ghats** in Tamil Nadu.
- **The most number of new discoveries was from the faunal group Hymenoptera, an order of insects**, comprising the sawflies, wasps, bees, and ants, in which 80 species, including one new genus, were discovered.
- The scientists from the **Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) had contributed to 68% of the animal discoveries in 2021.**

- **With 1.03 lakh species of fauna, India contributes to 6.1% of faunal diversity in the world.**
- **Forty-three per cent novelties published in various national and international journals are of vascular plants; the rest are non-vascular in nature.**
- **Regions such as the Western Ghats and the northeastern regions have contributed 28% of the total discoveries.**
- **In State-wise analysis, the most number of discoveries were made from Kerala with 51 taxa** followed by Maharashtra and Arunachal Pradesh.
- **In 2021, the floral discoveries include wild relatives of many potential horticultural, agricultural, medicinal, and ornamental plants such as begonia, impatiens (Balsams), legumes, zingibers and orchids.**

### **Zoological Survey of India(ZSI)-**

- It is a premier Indian organisation in zoological research and studies to promote the survey, exploration and research of the fauna in the country.
- The ZSI was **founded on 1 July 1916 by the Government of India Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to promote survey, exploration and research** leading to the advancement in our knowledge of various aspects of exceptionally rich life of the erstwhile British Indian Empire'.
- The survey has its **genesis in the establishment of the Zoological Section of the Indian Museum at Calcutta in 1875.**
- The history of ZSI begins from the days of the Asiatic Society of Bengal founded by Sir William Jones on 15 January 1784.
- The Asiatic Society of Bengal was the mother institution not only to the Indian Museum (1875) but also to institutions like the Zoological Survey of India and the Geological Survey of India.