

# Wild cats and their colour morphs

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**Why in news?**

Indian scientists from the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) and University College London (UCL) have discovered six colour morphs of the golden cat in Dibang Valley of Arunachal Pradesh. **Six colour morphs include tightly-rosetted, cinnamon, melanistic, grey, golden, and ocelot types.**

**What are Colour morphs?**

- Colour morphs are basically occurrences of two or more discrete colour forms of the animal within a population. E.g. Black panther is a colour morph of the common leopard.
- They arise from random genetic mutations.
- **Dibang Valley hosts the world's most diverse range of colour morphs of a wild cat species ever reported on one site.**

***Asiatic Golden Cat***

- It is a wild cat native to the north-eastern Indian subcontinent.
- IUCN status – **Near threatened**
- It is placed in Schedule 1 of the Wildlife protection act.