



Endangered species of India

- ♣ The International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) publishes the Red Data Book which includes the list of endangered species of plants and animals.
- ♣ The red data symbolizes the warning signal for those species which are endangered and if not protected are likely to become extinct in near future.
- ♣ In India, nearly 450 plant species have been identified in the categories of endangered, threatened or rare.
- ♣ Existence of about 150 mammals and 150 species of birds is estimated to be threatened while an unknown number of species of insects are endangered.
- ♣ A few species of endangered reptiles, birds, mammals and plants are given below:
 - **Reptiles:** Green sea turtle, tortoise, python
 - **Birds:** Great Indian bustard, Peacock, Pelican, Great Indian Hornbill, Siberian
 - **Carnivorous Mammals:** Indian wolf, red fox, red panda, tiger, leopard, Indian, lion, golden cat, desert cat
 - **Primates:** Hoolock gibbon, capped monkey, golden monkey
 - **Plants:** A large number of species of orchids, Rododendrons, medicinal plants like Rauwolfia serpentina, the sandal, wood tree santalum, cycas beddonei etc

The Zoological Survey of India reported that Cheetah, Pink headed duck and mountain quail have already become extinct from India.

- A species is said to be extinct when it is not seen in the wild for 50 years at a stretch eg. Dodo, Passenger pigeon.
- A species is said to be endangered when its number has been reduced to a critical level. If such a species is not protected and conserved, it is in immediate danger of extinction.
- A species is said to be in vulnerable category if its population is facing continuous decline due to overexploitation or habitat destruction.



- Species which are not endangered or vulnerable at present, but are at a risk are categorized as rare species.

Endemic species:

- The species are only found among a particular people or in a particular region are known as endemic species.
- Out of about 47,00 species of plants in our country 7000 are endemic.
- Some of the important endemic flora includes orchids and species like *Sapria himalayana*, *Uvaria lureda*, *Nepenthes khasiana* etc.
- A large number out of total of 81,000 species of animals in our country is endemic.
- The western ghats are particularly rich in amphibians and reptiles.
- About 62% amphibians and 50% lizards are endemic to Western Ghats.
- Different species of monitor lizard, reticulated python are some important endemic species of our country.