

Zoological Survey of India's (ZSI) Animal Discoveries–2024

The Zoological Survey of India's publication Animal Discoveries-2024 details the discovery of 683 new faunal species in India during 2024, including 459 new to science and 224 new to India. The majority of these discoveries were made in India's biodiversity hotspots, particularly the Western Ghats and the North-Eastern regions.

Key Points

- **Total Discoveries:** 683 new faunal species were documented in India.
- **New to Science:** 459 of these were new to science globally.
- **New to India:** 224 were species recorded in India for the first time.

Top States for Discoveries

- Kerala: 101 species
- Karnataka: 82 species
- Arunachal Pradesh: 72 species
- Tamil Nadu: 63 species
- West Bengal: 56 species

Significant discoveries

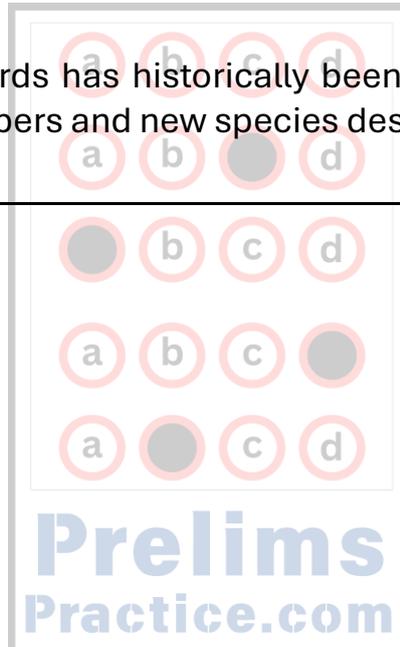
- **A snake named for Leonardo DiCaprio:** A new species of snake from Himachal Pradesh was named *Anguiculus dicaprioi* to honour the actor and environmental advocate.
- **Two new reptile genera:** The findings included two new genera of reptiles, such as *Dravidoseps gouensis*.
- **More reptiles and amphibians:** In total, 37 new species of reptiles and 5 new species of amphibians were discovered.
- **A "Starry Night" gecko:** A tiny, artistic-looking gecko, *Cnemaspis vangoghi*, was discovered in the South Western Ghats.
- **A new snake species:** The newly described snake species *Anguiculus dicaprioi* belongs to the Colubridae family.

Explanation of Exam Oriented Key Terms

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The Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) and its flagship publication

1. The Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) is an organization under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC). The MoEFCC is the parent ministry for ZSI and its flagship publications.
2. The Zoological Survey of India's (ZSI) flagship publication is Records of the Zoological Survey of India—A Journal of Indian Zoology.
3. It is a quarterly, in-house journal that serves as a medium for zoological communications dealing with taxonomy, faunistics, biology, and ecology.
4. The journal was first published in 1907 as Records of the Indian Museum and was renamed in 1968.
5. Significance: The Records has historically been a vital platform for publishing taxonomic research papers and new species descriptions by scientists from the ZSI.



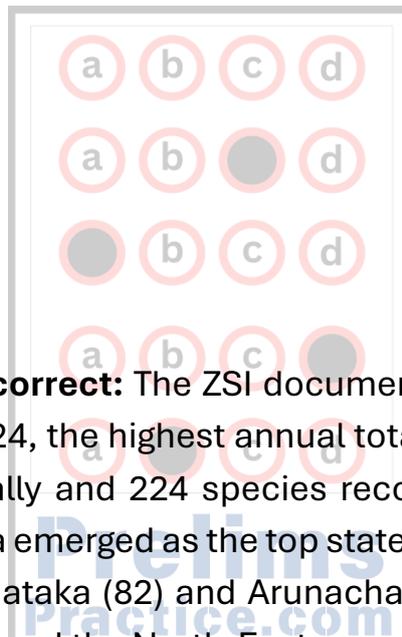
Practice Questions:

1. Consider the following statements regarding the Zoological Survey of India's (ZSI) "Animal Discoveries 2024" report:

- I. India recorded a total of 683 new faunal discoveries (new species and new records) in 2024
- II. The highest number of new faunal discoveries were recorded from the state of Kerala
- III. The Western Ghats and North-Eastern regions combined contributed less than 25% of the total discoveries

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) Only one
- b) Only two
- c) All three
- d) None



Answer: b

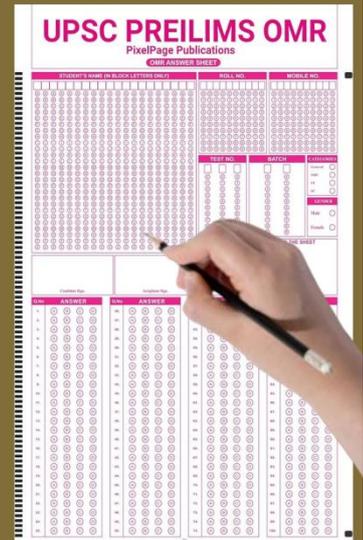
Explanation: Statement I is correct: The ZSI documented a record-breaking 683 new species and subspecies in 2024, the highest annual total since 2008. This included 459 species new to science globally and 224 species recorded for the first time in India. **Statement II is correct:** Kerala emerged as the top state for new faunal discoveries, with 101 species, followed by Karnataka (82) and Arunachal Pradesh (72). **Statement III is incorrect:** The Western Ghats and the North-Eastern regions are significant biodiversity hotspots and together contributed over 35% of the total faunal and floral discoveries.

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