

Indian Water monitor

Indian water monitor is one of the largest lizards found in India. It is known for its exceptional ability to swim in water, and that’s where it derives its name from. These fascinating creatures can grow up to a length of 1.5-2 meters and are often found basking on the banks of rivers and lakes. In this article, we will discuss the features, habitat, hunting patterns, states where they can be spotted, and their importance to the ecosystem.

Characteristics	Description
Name	Indian Water Monitor
Scientific Name	Varanus salvator
Colour	Dark grey or black with yellow spots
Length	Up to 6 feet
Habitat	Wetlands, marshes, riverbanks, and mangroves
Food habits	Carnivorous, feeding on small mammals, fish, reptiles, and birds
IUCN status	Least Concern

Features

Indian water monitor has a muscular body covered in tough, rough scales with a prominent neck, long tail, and sharp claws. They come in different shades of brown, grey, or black, and have yellow bands or spots on their body. They are known for their exceptional strength and can weigh up to 20 kg, making them one of the heaviest lizards in India. They can run at a speed of 25 km/hr and swim with great ease, thanks to their long, flattened tail, which helps them propel in the water.

Habitat details



Indian water monitors are widely distributed across the Indian subcontinent and can be found in various habitats, including forests, grasslands, wetlands, and coastal regions. They prefer areas close to water bodies, such as lakes, rivers, and marshes, as they need to stay hydrated.

How they hunt and food habits

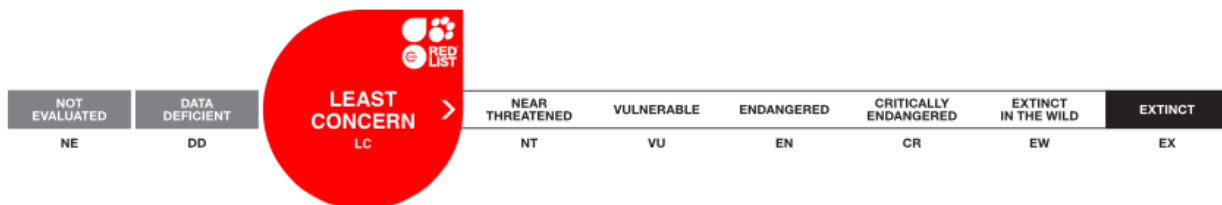
Indian water monitors are carnivorous and hunt a variety of prey, including fish, birds, small mammals, and insects. They are opportunistic feeders and have been known to scavenge on carrion as well. Their hunting patterns vary depending on the prey they are after. They often lie in wait for their prey to come to them or actively hunt them down.

Importance to ecosystem

Indian water monitors play a crucial role in maintaining the ecological balance of their habitat. As top predators, they help control the population of small mammals and insects,

which, if left unchecked, can cause significant damage to the ecosystem. They are also an important food source for larger predators such as crocodiles and birds of prey.

IUCN status



Indian water monitors are listed as “Least Concern” on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List. While their population is not under immediate threat, habitat loss and fragmentation, hunting, and poaching for their skin and meat are some of the significant threats they face.

Conclusion

Indian water monitors are fascinating creatures with unique features that make them stand out from other lizards. They are widely distributed across India and play a crucial role in maintaining the ecological balance of their habitat. While they are not under immediate threat, conservation efforts are necessary to ensure their long-term survival.