

Small Indian civet

The Small Indian Civet, also known as the Common Palm Civet, is a small carnivorous mammal that is found throughout South and Southeast Asia. It belongs to the Viverridae family and is closely related to other civets and mongoose species.

The Small Indian Civet has a long, slender body, short legs, and a pointed snout. Its fur is greyish-brown with black spots, and it has a white mask-like marking around its eyes. It is a nocturnal animal and feeds on a variety of prey, including rodents, birds, insects, and fruits.

The Small Indian Civet is adaptable and can thrive in a range of habitats, from forests and grasslands to urban areas. However, it is threatened by habitat loss, hunting for its meat and fur, and the capture of individuals for the pet trade. In some parts of its range, it is also hunted for its musk, which is used in traditional medicine and perfumes.

In this article, we explore more about the small Indian Civet.

Serial no	Characteristics	Description
1	Common Name	Small Indian Civet
2	Scientific Name	Viverricula indica
3	Length	38 to 51 centimeters
4	Color	Grayish-brown with black spots and stripes
5	Height/Girth	Height: up to 25 centimeters
6	Tail length (if mammal)	Tail length: up to 40 centimeters
7	Height till shoulder (if mammal)	N/A

8	Average Weight	2 to 5 kilograms
9	Food Habits	Omnivorous, feeding on small mammals, birds, insects, fruits, and vegetables
10	Habitat	Found in forests, grasslands, and agricultural areas throughout the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia
11	Interesting Facts	The small Indian civet is known for its musky scent, which is used in the production of perfumes and medicines. It is also a popular target for the illegal pet trade.

Feature

The small Indian civet (*Viverricula indica*) is a nocturnal mammal found in the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia. Both males and females of this species have a greyish-brown fur with black spots on their body, which provides them with effective camouflage in their natural habitat.

Small Indian civets have a pointed snout, small ears, and a long tail that measures almost the same length as their body. They are relatively small in size, with males typically weighing between 1.8-2.8 kg, while females weigh around 1.4-2.0 kg.

One of the distinctive features of the small Indian civet is the musk gland located near the base of their tail. The gland produces a strong-smelling secretion that the civet uses for marking its territory and attracting mates. Additionally, the civet has sharp claws and teeth, which are used for hunting prey, such as small rodents, insects, and reptiles.

Small Indian civets are solitary animals and are mostly active at night, spending their daytime hours resting in dens or trees. They have a wide range of vocalisations, including barks, hisses, and grunts, which they use for communication.

Food Habits

Small Indian civets are omnivorous and have a varied diet that includes small mammals, birds, reptiles, insects, fruits, and seeds. They are known to be opportunistic feeders and will adapt their diet to the available food sources in their environment. In agricultural areas, they are known to consume crops such as sugarcane, bananas, and coconuts. They have also been known to carry away Poultry and fish when they get a chance.

Habitats

Small Indian civets are widely distributed across the Indian subcontinent, Southeast Asia, and southern China. In India, they can be found in various habitats, including forests, grasslands, agricultural fields, and urban areas. They are most commonly found in the states of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and West Bengal.

Initially they were found in all areas in India. Due to development, they have been reduced to less areas and now they are found in national parks, forest ranges with declining populations.

Vulnerable Species

The small Indian civet is classified as “Least Concern” on the IUCN Red List, which means that it is not currently considered a threatened species. However, it is still subject to various

threats, particularly in India, where its population is declining due to habitat loss and fragmentation, hunting for its musk gland, and roadkill.

Exact numbers of small Indian civets in India are not known, but their population is believed to be decreasing. According to a study conducted in Karnataka, India, the population of small Indian civets has declined by 35% over the past 10 years due to habitat loss and hunting.

Habitat loss due to deforestation, urbanisation, and agricultural expansion is a major threat to the small Indian civet's survival. Human activities such as hunting, trapping, and poisoning are also a significant threat to their populations, particularly for their musk gland, which is used in traditional medicine and perfume production.

Protected Areas

Small Indian civets are found in several national parks and wildlife sanctuaries across India.

Bandhavgarh National Park, located in Madhya Pradesh, is known for its high density of tigers and diverse wildlife, including small Indian civets.

Sariska Tiger Reserve, located in Rajasthan, is known for its tiger population and diverse flora and fauna, including small Indian civets.

Nagarhole National Park, located in Karnataka, is known for its diverse flora and fauna, including small Indian civets, tigers, leopards, and elephants.

Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary, located in Tamil Nadu, is known for its varied topography and diverse wildlife, including small Indian civets, tigers, and elephants.

Simlipal National Park ,located in Odisha, is known for its rich biodiversity, including tigers, elephants, and small Indian civets.

Conservation

To conserve Indian Civet cats, a number of conservation efforts are being undertaken. Some of these include:

Protection of habitat: The Indian Civet relies on a variety of habitats, including forests, grasslands, and urban areas. Protecting and restoring these habitats is important to maintain viable populations of the species.

Law enforcement: Hunting and trade of the Indian Civet is illegal in many countries, but illegal trade still persists. Effective law enforcement is necessary to curb illegal hunting and trade and to protect the species.

Awareness and education: Raising public awareness about the importance of conserving the Indian Civet and its role in maintaining ecological balance is important to reduce demand for hunting and the pet trade.

Research: Research on the Indian Civet's ecology, population status, and threats can help guide conservation efforts and improve our understanding of the species.

Captive breeding and reintroduction: Captive breeding and reintroduction programs can help increase the population of the species in the wild, but these efforts need to be carefully planned and monitored to ensure success.

Overall, a multi-faceted approach is needed to conserve Indian Civet cats and to ensure their survival for future generations.