

Sistan sand boa

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Sistan sand boa Latest News

A new study reports the first confirmed record in India of the Sistan sand boa (*Eryx sistanensis*), a species formally described only in 2020 and previously known from Iran and Pakistan.

Why in News?

- The Sistan sand boa was **documented** from the **northern Thar Desert in Rajasthan**.
- It is the **first confirmed record in India** of the Sistan sand boa, formally described only in 2020 and **previously known from Iran and Pakistan**.
- The discovery effectively adds a **fourth species of sand boa to India**, alongside the **red sand boa** (*Eryx johnii*), **rough-scaled sand boa** (*Eryx conicus*), and **Whitaker's boa** (*Eryx whitakeri*).

About Sistan sand boa

- It is a species of **sand boa snake**.
- Scientific Name: *Eryx sistanensis*

- It can be distinguished from the red sand boa by its **persistent dark bands and a tail that gradually tapers towards the tip.**
- While red sand boas lose their body bands as they mature, the **Sistan sand boa retains its sooty bands throughout life.**
- **Juveniles** are **buff-coloured**, while subadults and **adults are tan to tan-brown.**
- The species has **not yet been evaluated by the IUCN.**

Key Facts about Sand Boas

- Sand Boas are a group of **non-venomous snakes** belonging to the genus Eryx.
- Unlike most snakes, the **tail** of a sand boa snake is almost as **thick as the body** and gives the reptile the **appearance of being “double-headed”.**
- These snakes **prefer dry, sandy, and loose soil environments** that support their fossorial lifestyle.
- Body **coloration is pale yellow to reddish to brownish**, depending on the type of soil in the region.
- **Most species** display a **mottled or blotched pattern that blends perfectly** with their sandy and pebbly surroundings, an adaptation known as **protective coloration.**
- Sand boas **spend most of their time buried** just below the surface in sand or loose soil, exposing only the eyes and nostrils.
- They **seize passing prey**, consisting of mostly mice and lizards, which they **kill by constriction.**

News: **MONG**

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