

Nilgiri Tahr

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Nilgiri Tahr Latest News

According to the third synchronised population survey the population of the endangered Nilgiri Tahr, has increased to an estimated 1,364.

About Nilgiri Tahr

- It is a **mountain ungulate** endemic to the **southern part of the Western Ghats**.
- It is also known by the **name Nilgiri Ibex or simply Ibex**. Locally the animal is called 'Varayaadu'.
- It is the **only mountain ungulate** in southern India.
- **Habitat:** It inhabits the **open montane grassland** habitat of the southwestern ghats montane rain forests Eco region.
- At elevations **ranging from 1200 to 2600 m**, the jungle opens into grasslands interspersed with pockets of stunted forests, known as 'sholas.'
- **Distribution:** It is found in a roughly 400 km stretch **in the Western Ghats**, which falls in the states of **Kerala and Tamil Nadu**.

- The **Eravikulam National Park** (Kerala) has the highest density and largest surviving population of Nilgiri tahr.
- **Features of Nilgiri Tahr**
 - These are **stocky goats with short**, coarse fur and a bristly mane.
 - The **males are found to be larger than the females**, and have a darker color when mature.
 - **Both sexes have curved horns**, which are larger in the males.
- **Conservation Status**
 - **IUCN:** Endangered
 - **Wildlife (Protection) Act of India, 1972:** Schedule I.
- **Threats:** Habitat loss due to rampant deforestation, competition with domestic livestock, hydroelectric projects in Nilgiri tahr habitat, and monoculture plantations.

Source: TH

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