

Neelus sikkimensis

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Neelus sikkimensis Latest News

Scientists from the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) recently discovered 'Neelus sikkimensis', the first of its genus in India, in the high-altitude region of Sikkim.

About Neelus sikkimensis

- It is a **new species of Collembola**—tiny, soil-dwelling micro-arthropods.
- It was discovered in the high-altitude landscapes of **Sikkim**.
- It marks the **first-ever record** of the **genus Neelus in India**.
- It brings the total number of known species under this genus worldwide to eight.
- It exhibits several **distinctive biological characteristics**.
 - **Microscopic Size:** An extremely small body **adapted for life deep within soil** and moss.
 - **Sensory Adaptation:** A complete **absence of eyes**, typical of species living in dark, subterranean environments.

- **Unique Morphology:** A specific “labral chaetotaxy” (arrangement of bristles on the mouthparts) that distinguishes it from its global relatives.

Key Facts about Arthropods

- Arthropods are **invertebrates with jointed legs**.
- They make up about **75% of all animals on Earth** and have a major role in maintaining ecosystems as **pollinators, recyclers of nutrients, scavengers, and food for other animals**.
- They include many animals we come across in our gardens, such as spiders, ants, centipedes, and slaters.
- Arthropods are divided into **four major groups**:
 - **insects;**
 - **myriapods (including centipedes and millipedes);**
 - **arachnids (including spiders, mites, and scorpions);**
 - **crustaceans (including slaters, prawn, and crabs)**

Key Facts about Collembola

- Collembola are among the most **abundant and diverse soil microarthropods**, which are found in almost **all (semi) terrestrial environments**.
- They are among the **oldest and most abundant hexapods on Earth** and play a crucial **role in soil health and nutrient cycling**.
- They are commonly **known as “springtails,”** because of their **ability to jump using a tail-like appendage**.
- There are around 8,200 named species.
- They live in **all types of soil** and **feed on algae, fungi, plant roots, and decaying organic matter**.

Source: **TELE**

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/neelus-sikkimensis/>

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