

Titanidiops Kolhapurensis

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Titanidiops Kolhapurensis Latest News

A new species of trapdoor spider named *Titanidiops kolhapurensis* has been recently discovered in the grasslands of Kolhapur district by a joint team of researchers from the Thackeray Wildlife Foundation and Shivaji University, Kolhapur (SUK).

About *Titanidiops Kolhapurensis*

- It is a new species of **trapdoor spider**.
- It has been discovered in the **grasslands of the Kolhapur district, Maharashtra**.
- This spider **builds vertical or slanted burrows in flat or sloping grassy meadows**.
- These **entrances** are **masterfully camouflaged to blend with the soil**, making them nearly invisible to the naked eye.
- While researchers found a **healthy presence** of the species **in natural forests and native grasslands**, they were notably **absent in areas overtaken by exotic tree plantations**, such as *Gliricidia sepium* (commonly known as Undirmari).

- It is on the verge of local extinction due to rapid habitat degradation.

What are Trapdoor Spiders?

- They are a unique **group of large-bodied, burrowing spiders** found across several taxonomic families.
- They **construct burrows in the ground**, the **entrance** of which **features a silken-hinged door**.
- They burrow up to 6 inches (15 centimeters) deep in the soil.
- The reclusive spider **feeds by quickly opening the trapdoor and grabbing an insect** or other arthropod that is passing close by.
- They are generally **timid and quickly retreat into the burrow if frightened**.
- Their **bite is not considered medically significant to humans**.
- They are found in climates with **tropical, subtropical, and warm temperatures**.
- These spiders typically grow to about **one inch (2.5 centimeters) long**, with some larger species reaching up to 1.5 inches (4 centimeters).
- Despite their protective burrows, trapdoor spiders are often **threatened by spider-hunting wasps**.
- They **typically do not disperse far from their mother's burrow**, making **populations vulnerable to human development** or other land-use changes.

Source: **TOI**

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