

BSc Part III, Paper-7, Unit 2.3

Characteristics and peculiar fauna of Oriental Region

ORIENTAL REGION

This region includes Indian sub-continent Ceylon Burma Philippines. Formosa and Scathe China, form the North of this region Himalayas are present. On the West of it Arabian sea is present. In the South east corner physical boundary is absent This region includes 4 sub regions. This region shows tropical and temperate zones. In the North East Asia rain forest is present towards the west desert is present The remaining part shows plains and rivers hence this region show different types of conditions. Hence more vegetation is present and more fauna is seen.



The 4 sub regions are

1. Indian sub-region,
2. Ceylon sub-region.
3. Indo-China sub-region,
4. Indo-Malayan sub-region.

Indian Sub-Region: It includes North India and Central part. It starts from the root of Himalaya and extend up to Malabar Coast. This region shows plains and deserts. It shows temperate and tropical conditions.

In this region Antelopes, Peacock, Indian Bison, Black Elephant, Equas and some important snakes are present.

Ceylonian Sub-Region :- It includes Ceylon, Small Indian Peninsula. It shows Loris, Elephants, Equas, Rat, Bandicoots and Snakes.

Indo-China SubRegion :- It includes China south of Palaeartic region. It includes Gibbons, Lemurs, Rhinoceros, Salamanders, Disc tongued frogs are present.

Indo-Malayan Sub Region : It includes Malayan peninsula and surrounding Islands. This region supports 132 families of fauna Gibbon, Rhinoceros, Badger, Broad bills etc. are very common in this region.

Mammals. There are 30 families of mammals out of which 5 are endemic that include *Cynocephalus* (= *Galeopithecus*), which is called Calugo, a gliding mammal with furred membrane stretched between fore limb and hind limb. Tree shrews (Tupaiaidae) and arboreal tarsiers (Tarsiidae) of Philippines are restricted primates. Spiny dormouse is arboreal rodent.

Twenty five percent of the fauna is shared with Africa that includes, old world monkeys, lorises, apes (Gibbon and Orang-Utan), pangolin or scaly anteater (*Manis*), bamboo rat (Rhizomyidae), Elephant (*Elephas maximus*), *Rhinoceros unicornis* and a lion population in Gir forest.

Fauna shared with Palaeartic includes hedge hog, porcupine, civets, Lynx, hyenas, pigs, bear (*Ursus arctos*), red panda.

Tapir (*Tapirus*) found in Sumatra and Borneo is Neotropical element.

There are moles, tapirs, bears and deers which are absent in Africa.

Aves. Out of 66 families of birds 53 are eurytopic or widespread. Woodpeckers and barbets are widespread. There are also peacocks, argus pheasants, cattle egrets (*Bubulcus ibis*) and jungle fowl.

Sunbirds, hornbills, parrots and cuckoos and shared with Africa.

Shared with Palaeartic are pheasants.

Exclusive birds are fairy blue bird (*Irena puella*) which is found in Philippines where it follows troupes of monkeys to feed on insects disturbed by their movement. There are 4 genera and 14 species of leaf birds.

Whitehead's trogon (*Harpactes whiteheadi*) is found in Indonesia and monkey-eating eagle is endangered species found in the dense forests of Philippines.

Reptiles. There are plenty of lizards, turtles, poisonous snakes, pythons and crocodiles. Lizards belong to Agamidae and Varanidae and include geckos, skinks, calotes, draco and chameleon. There are king cobras, common cobras, typhlops, xenopeltid snakes, uropeltid snakes and sea snakes (Hydophidae).

Crocodiles include *Crocodylus porosus*, *C. palustris*, *Gavialis gangeticus*. *Tomistoma* is found in Sumatra and Borneo. *Alligator sinensis* is found in southern China.

Amphibia. Frogs and toads bound. Caecilians are represented by *Ichthyophis* and *Gegenophis* found in Indo-Malayan region. Tree frogs belong to family Polypedatidae and Hylidae family is absent. Flying frog, *Rhacophorus malabaricus* found in Western Ghats in India. Tailed Amphibia are few and found in northern Indo-china.

Fire-bellied toads are exclusive and extend to Palaearctic range.

Fishes. Fishes are dominated by carps and catfishes (Cypriniformes). Loaches, mullets and mud-eels are exclusive to this region. One species of the Chondrosteian paddlefish (*Polyodon*) occurs in Yangtze River of China. Another species of this group occurs in American rivers.

Fauna shows similarity with the Ethiopian Region because of their proximity and similar environmental conditions.

References :

<https://www.iaszoology.com/oriental-region/>

<http://www.biozoomer.com/2011/01/oriental-regions-charecters.html>