

BSc Part III, Paper-7, Unit 2.3

Characteristics and peculiar fauna of Ethiopian Region



Ethiopian region - In this realm Africa, Sahara Desert, Southern part of Arabia, Madagascar Island are included.

This region shows extensive desert on the North side. It is called “Sahara Desert”. On its Western side thick forests are present. Rest of Africa shows Greenland. This Ethiopian region was divided into four sub regions.

1. East African sub region
2. West African sub region
3. South African sub region
4. Malagassy sub region

East African Sub-Region: This region includes Tropical Africa and tropical Arabia are present, because of high temperature desert conditions are available. Sahara desert is included in the

region. In this region desert animals are included. Giraffe, Zebra, Camel, Ostrich etc., are common.

West African Sub-Region: This region shows thick forest. River Congo is included in this region. This region shows heavy rainfall. Because of its rich flora which supports good fauna.

1. Gorilla, Gibbon, Great Apes are present,
2. Pittidae family of Birds are common,
3. Elephants, Panthers, Lions are present.

South African Sub-Region: This Southern part of the African continent is included in this region. It shows peculiar fauna.

1. Secretary birds,
2. African moles,
3. Rats,
4. Bandicoots,
5. South African lung fish (Protopterus).

Malagasy Sub-Region: It includes Madagascar and nearby islands. Darwin separated this Madagascar from Ethiopian region. In this region Chameleons are more popular.

This island was separated from the main land after the development of Lemurs. It has no connection with the main land. African continent Evolution is continued. Many Eutherians have invaded in that place. But in Madagascar there is no fresh Evolution, only old animals are represented. Hence this sub-region shows dissimilarity in Fauna when compared to the main land.

Fauna of Ethiopia:

Mammals in Ethiopian Region:

1. Aye aye (Hyaena),

2. Galeopithicus,
3. Gorilla gorilla,
4. Chimpanjee,
5. Gibbon,
6. Equus equus (Horse),
7. Elephant,
8. Panthera tigris (Tiger),
9. Panthera leo (lion),
10. Assionomyx (Leopard),
11. Camelus (Camel),
12. Deer,
13. Sus (Pig),
14. Equus acinus (Donkey).

Ethiopian region mammals will show resemblances with th mammalian fauna of Oriental region. It is because they have a land connection previously.

Birds in Ethiopian Region: The most important birds of this region are two toed Ostrich-Struthio camelus.

1. Horn bills,
2. Heron,
3. Pigeons,
4. Parrot,
5. Cuckoos,
6. Storks,
7. Finches etc.

In this region some exclusive birds are present. They are.

1. Ostriches,
2. Pittidae,
3. Hammer headed birds, Mouse birds etc.

Reptiles in Ethiopian region: Crocodiles and Reptiles are very numerous.

1. Testudo,
2. Trionyx,
3. Chamaeleon. Itis the char-acteristic of this region.
4. Geck. It is a flying lizard.

In this region many Snakes are present.

1. Rattle snakes,
2. Cobras,
3. Vipers,
4. Pythons,
5. Typhiops etc., are common in this region.

Amphibians in Ethiopian Regions: This fauna is distinctive, It is represented by Cicaelians, Anura.

1. Rhacophorus,
2. Hyla,
3. Microhyla,
4. Xenopus (Clawed Toad). It is exclusively in this region.
5. Cicaeans are abundant.
6. Tailed amphibians are absent.

Fishes in Ethiopian Region: Fish fauna is diverse.

1. Protopterus African fresh water lung fish is seen in this region,
2. Sharks,
3. Tuna fishes,
4. Cat fishes,
5. Cyprinids,
6. Electric fishes are common in this region.

Threatened species

Historically, throughout the African continent, wildlife populations have been rapidly declining owing to logging, civil wars, hunting, pollution, poaching and other human interference. A year-long civil war along with severe drought, negatively impacted Ethiopia's environmental conditions leading to even greater habitat degradation. Habitat destruction is a factor that leads to endangerment. When changes to a habitat occur rapidly, animals do not have time to adjust. Human impact threatens many species, with greater threats expected as a result of climate change induced by greenhouse gas emissions.

Ethiopia has a large number of species listed as critically endangered, endangered and vulnerable by the IUCN. To assess the current situation in Ethiopia, it is critical that the threatened species in this region are identified.

There are 31 endemic species of mammals, meaning that a species occurs naturally only in a certain area, in this case Ethiopia. The African wild dog prehistorically had widespread distribution in Ethiopia; however, with last sightings at Fincha, this canid is thought to be potentially extirpated within Ethiopia. The Ethiopian wolf is perhaps the most researched of all the endangered species within Ethiopia. This, however, is likely not the case as a breeding pack has been seen, and photographed by Bale Mountain Lodge guests inside the park's Harena Forest in 2015.

Several conservation programs are in effect to help endangered species in Ethiopia. A group was created in 1966 called The Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society, which focuses on studying and promoting the natural environments of Ethiopia along with spreading the knowledge they acquire, and supporting legislation to protect environmental resources.

There are multiple conservation organizations one can access online, one of which connects directly to the Ethiopian wolf. Funding supports the World Wildlife Fund's global conservation efforts. The majority of the funds received (83%) goes towards conservation activities, while only 6% goes towards finance and administration. The remaining 11% of funds are allocated for fundraising, which is much needed. The WWF Chairman of the Board, Bruce Babbitt holds this organization accountable for the best practices in accountability, governance and transparency throughout all tiers within the organization.

A critical way to help threatened animals survive would be to protect their habitat permanently through national parks, wilderness areas and nature reserves. By protecting the places where animals live, human interference is limited. Protecting farms, and any place along roadsides that harbor animals helps encourage protection

References :

<https://www.bioscience.com.pk/topics/zoology/item/627-zoogeography-ethiopian-region>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wildlife_of_Ethiopia