

Sheathia Rosemalayensis

Syllabus

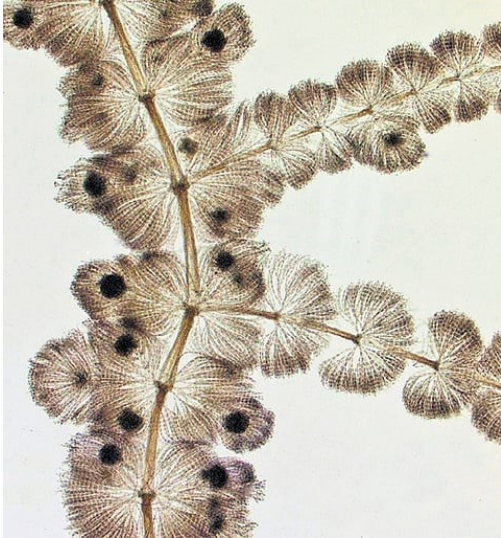
Prelims - General issues on Environmental ecology, Bio-diversity and Climate Change.

Mains - GS- III | Conservation

Why in the News?

A team of researchers from Mar Athanasius College, Kothamangalam, have discovered a new species of freshwater algae.

- **Sheathia Rosemalayensis** - It is a new species of ***freshwater red algae*** from the Western Ghats.
- **Discovered in** - Rosemala in Kollam district, Kerala.
- **Taxonomy**
 - **Family** - Batrachospermaceae.
 - **Scientific name** - Sheathia Rosemalayensis, which has been named after the place where it was found.
 - **Genus** - Sheathia.
- The Sheathia species are *extremely rare in India*.
- **Habitat** - It has been documented ***only in the southern Western Ghats***, a geographically distinct region.
- It is the *4th new species* of the Batrachospermaceae family described from this region.
- **Distinguished from other species** - It is distinguished based on *morphology and molecular sequence* data from previously identified 3 other new species of freshwater red algae:
 - Kumanoa chaugulei, Kumanoa periyarensis, and Macrosporophycos sahyadricus.
- **DNA barcoding** - It was performed on all 4 newly discovered species, confirming their unique identity.



- **Significance** - It is crucial to study the freshwater red algae which thrive only in pristine (fresh) water and undisturbed habitats.
- Their presence has significant bio-geographical and environmental implications.

References

1. [The New Indian Express|New freshwater algae species discovered in Western Ghats](#)
2. [Phycologia| Sheathia Rosemalayensis](#)

