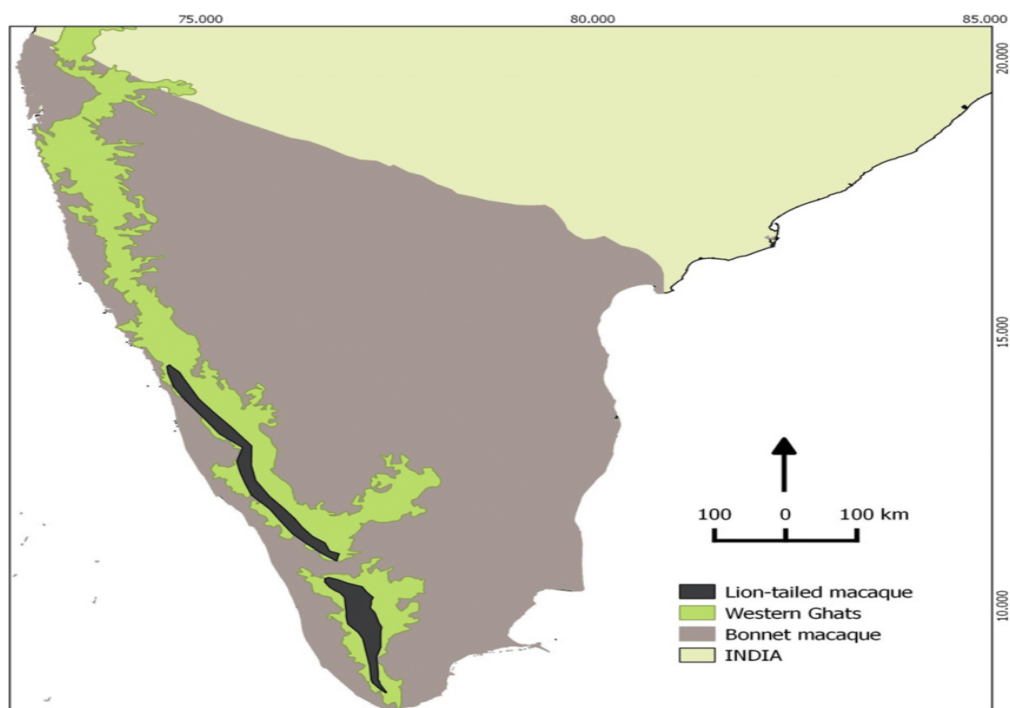


Lion Tailed Macaque

Why in News?

Recently, the researchers from Kerala Forest Research Institute (KFRI) said that human interactions threaten endangered lion-tailed macaque.

- **Lion-Tailed Macaque** - It is one of the smaller macaque species and an *Old-World monkey*.
 - **Scientific name** - *Macaca s. leonina*.
 - **Genus Macaca** - known for its adaptability to human-altered environments.
- **Habitat** - Evergreen, semi-evergreen rainforests & monsoon forests.
- **Distribution** - Found **only in India** in the Western Ghats.
- **Distribution in Western Ghats** - Anamalai Hills, Nelliampathy, Nilambur Ghats, Sholayar, Gavi, Sabarimala, Vallimalai Hills, Valparai and Agumbe.



- **Morphology** - Its body is covered with black fur and tail is long, thin, and naked, with a tuft of black puffy hair at the tip.
- Both males and females have a *grayish lion-like mane of fur* that surrounds the face and the face itself is bare and black.



- **Behavior** - It is *arboreal* (pertaining to trees) and *diurnal*.
- It is a social animal, living in groups of 30-40 animals.
- It is *polygynous*, having more than 1 wife or female mate at a time.
- **Uniqueness** - They are the *only macaques in which males use loud call* to let entering troops know their territorial boundaries.
- **Threats** - With only **about 4,200 individuals** remaining, they face severe *risks due to food provisioning*, which leads to malnutrition, and disease.
- The long-term consequences of increased human interaction include
 - Increased exposure to *zoonotic diseases* and diet-related illnesses
 - Behavioural changes like *reduced foraging* in natural habitats and increased reliance on human-provided food
 - Rise in *injuries, roadkill incidents*, and stress-induced mortality

Approximately 25% of the macaque population in habitat areas engage in interactions with humans where hotspots like Valparai, Nelliyampathy, and Sabarimala have seen rising interactions, especially due heightened tourist and pilgrim footfall.

- **Conservation status**
 - **IUCN Status** - Endangered (as of IUCN Redlist 2023)
 - **CITES** - Appendix I.
 - **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972** - Schedule I.

References

1. [The Hindu| Human Interactions threaten to lion-tailed macaque](#)
2. [Animal Diversity Web| Lion-Tailed Macaque](#)



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