

## Nothobranchius Sylvaticus

### Why in News?

A team of international scientists have recently discovered and described a new type of 'killifish', *Nothobranchius sylvaticus* that is endemic to a Kenyan forest.

- **Scientific name** - *Nothobranchius sylvaticus*, from the Latin meaning "pertaining to the forest".
- It is also the **1<sup>st</sup> known endemic killifish** to persist in a forest.
- **Genus** - *Nothobranchius*
  - Known as "annual killifish" because they live in temporary pools that dry up seasonally, with their eggs surviving in the dry mud until the next rainy season.
- **Distinction** - *N. sylvaticus* lineage diverged from its sister species about 7.09 million years ago.
  - Phylogenetic analysis of mitochondrial sequences, along with nuclear genes, identifies the new species as a distinct evolutionary lineage.
- **Morphology** - Light blue scales on its trunk extend to cover its body, and the head is grey with distinct red lobes and brown-red oblique bars.
- Dorsal and anal fins are golden, marked with dark grey dots and stripes, which merge into a uniform dark grey zone; the caudal fin is dark red to red, slender black distal band.



- **Sexual dimorphism**
  - **Males** - They are generally larger than females.
- **Threats** - Increasing impacts on land and water resources will continue to cause habitat degradation.
- **Conservation Status** - It is **critically endangered** and may become extinct soon.

- Killifish are oviparous or egg-laying fish.
- There are around 1,270 species of killifish.
- **Size** - Most killifish species are relatively small, typically reaching a length of 1-2 inches (2.5-5 cm), although some can grow larger.
- **Appearance** - Generally, male killifish will be far more colorful and have much more developed finnage than females.
- **Habitat** - Killifish live in small pools of water in the wild, which may occasionally dry up.
- This means that some species are not particularly long-lived and are unlikely to live for over 2 years.
- **Distribution** - They are mainly found in the fresh or brackish waters of the Americas, southern Europe, much of Africa, the Middle East and Asia.
- **Diet** - In the wild, killifish eat small crustaceans, insects, and seeds, while in aquariums, they can be fed live or frozen foods like brine shrimp, daphnia, and mosquito larvae.

## References

1. [Down to Earth | Nothobranchius sylvaticus](#)
2. [Phys Org | Nothobranchius sylvaticus](#)
3. [Zootaxa | Nothobranchius sylvaticus](#)

