

Ocelot

Why in News?

Recently, fewer than 100 ocelots in the United States are feline species which are in the face of extinction.

A **feline** is a member of the cat family *Felidae*, which includes lions, tigers, cheetahs, leopards, pumas, and lynxes.

- **Ocelot** - It is a **medium-sized wildcat**, which is twice the size of the average house cat.
- **Scientific Name** - *Leopardus Pardalis*.
- **Habitat** - Tropical and subtropical rainforests, mangrove swamps, savannas, semi-arid thorn scrub, brushlands, tree branches, or inside a hollow tree.
- **Distribution** - Found in **Mexico, Central America and Northern Argentina in South America.**
- **Morphology** - It has **beautiful fur coats** covered with a pattern of rosettes, stripes & spots, and fur is golden with black or dark brown doughnut-shaped spots that are tan in the middle.
- Eyes have a layer that reflects light, the neck and belly are white, rounded ears, and a short tail ringed with black or black bars.



- **Sexual dimorphism** - Male is slightly lighter and longer than female.
- **Behaviour** - It is a typically **solitary and nocturnal cat.**
- It is good swimmer, climber & jumper.
- They communicate with each other using body language, scent marking, and vocalizations.
- **Diet** - Feed on rabbits, rodents, iguanas, fish, frogs, crabs, snakes, lizards, baby peccaries, young deer, monkeys or birds.

- **Threats:**

- Hunted for their fur or skins.
- Human encroachment, large cities being built and roadways.

- **Conservation status**

- **IUCN** - Least Concern.
- **CITES** - Appendix I.(Species that are the most endangered)

Ocelot subspecies, known as the Texas ocelot (Leopardus pardalis albescens), is endangered.

References

1. [The Hindu| Decrease in Ocelots Population in the US](#)
2. [National Geographic| Ocelot](#)
3. [SDZWA| Ocelot](#)

