



# Daily current affairs

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## **Neelakurinji**

- Kurinji or Neelakurinji is a shrub that is found in the shola forests of the Western Ghats in South India.
  - Nilgiri Hills, which literally means the blue mountains, got their name from the purplish blue flowers of Neelakurinji that blossoms only once in 12 years.
  - Kurinji grows at an altitude of 1300 to 2400 metres.
  - Kurinji once used to cover the Nilgiri Hills and Palani Hills like a carpet during its flowering season. Now plantations and dwellings occupy much of their habitat.
  - Besides the Western Ghats, Neelakurinji is also seen in the Shevroys in the Eastern Ghats, Anamalai hills Idukki district and Agali hills in Palakad in Kerala and sandur hills of Bellary district in Karnataka.
  - In 2006, Neelakurunji flowered again in Kerala and Tamil Nadu after a gap of 12 years.
  - Kurinjimala Sanctuary protects the kurinji in Idukki district of Kerala.
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## **Nilgiri Tahr**

- The Nilgiri tahr known locally as the Nilgiri ibex or simply ibex is endemic to the Nilgiri Hills and the southern portion of the Western Ghats in the states of Tamil Nadu and Kerala in Southern India.
  - Listed as Endangered in IUCN redlist because its population size is estimated to number fewer than 2,500 mature individuals, there is an observed continuing decline in the number of mature individuals, and no subpopulation contains more than 250 mature individuals.
  - Nilgiri tahrs are stocky goats with short, coarse fur and a bristly mane. Males are larger than the females, and have a darker colour when mature. Both sexes have curved horns, which are larger in the males.
  - The Nilgiri tahr inhabits the open montane grassland habitats at elevations from 1200 to 2600 m (generally above 2000 m) of the South Western Ghats.
  - Their range extends over 400 km from north to south, and Eravikulam National Park is home to the largest population.
  - The other significant concentration is in the Nilgiri Hills, with smaller populations in the Anamalai Hills, Periyar National Park, Palni Hills and other pockets in the Western Ghats south of Eravikulam, almost to India's southern tip.
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### **Pigment in Goa mushroom may help fight cancer**

- The mycological laboratory of the Department of Botany, Goa University on Wednesday reported the discovery of a new pigment from local wild mushrooms.
  - A new sulphur-rich melanin biopigment of immense bioindustrial, biomedical (anti-cancer, anti-tumour) and biotechnological potential from local Roen alamis (wild variety of Goan mushrooms that grows on termite hills) or Termitomyces species
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