



LIONESS GAVE FOSTER CARE TO LEOPARD CUB IN GIR NATIONAL PARK

Focus: GS-III Environment and Ecology

Why is news?

A lioness in Gujarat's Gir National Park gave foster care to a leopard cub for more than a month. A study has noted their short-lived bonding as a rare case of foster care between two competing feline species.

- Elephant seals and sea lions are known to adopt orphans of their own kind.
- The animal kingdom has ONLY two reported cases of cross-species adoption in the wild till now.

Gir National Park

- Gir National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary, also known as Sasan Gir, is a forest and wildlife sanctuary near Talala Gir in Gujarat, India.
- In the 19th century, the rulers of Indian princely states used to invite the British colonists for hunting expeditions. At the end of the 19th century, only about a dozen Asiatic lions were left in India, all of them in the Gir Forest, which was part of the Nawab of Junagarh's private hunting grounds.
- British viceroys brought the drastic decline of the lion population in Gir to the attention of the



Nawab of Junagadh, who established the sanctuary.

- Today, it is the only area in Asia where Asiatic lions occur and is considered one of the most important protected areas in Asia because of its biodiversity.
 - The Gir ecosystem with its diverse flora and fauna is protected as a result of the efforts of the government forest department, wildlife activists and NGOs.
 - It is now considered the jewel of Gujarat's ecological resources.
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- Gir National Park is closed from 16 June to 15 October every year as these Four months of monsoon are considered the best season for the breeding.

