



Asian Gracile Skink

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- A team of herpetologists has discovered a **new species of 'Asian gracile skink' in Western Ghats, it belongs to the family Scincidae**. This new species is closely related to 'Subdoluseps pruthi' found in the parts of Eastern Ghats.
- **The new species was found in a dry deciduous area**, showing that even the dry zones of our country are home to unrealized skink diversity. **The species named 'Sundoluseps nilgiriensis'**.
- **Most skinks are diurnal and usually secretive**. Being elusive, not much is known about their natural and evolutionary history. This species is only **the third skink species discovered from mainland India in the last millennium**.
- **Skinks are non-venomous. They resemble snakes** because of the often-inconspicuous limbs and the way they move on land. Such resemblance has led to confusion often resulting in humans killing this harmless creature.
- The breeding and feeding habits of 'Sundoluseps nilgiriensis' are yet to study. **Currently it is considered a vulnerable species** as there are potential threats from seasonal forest fires, housing construction and brick kiln industries in the area.

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