

Himalayan Ibex

The Himalayan Ibex (*Capra sibirica hemalayanus*) is a species of wild goat found in the trans-himalayan regions of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

Earlier thought to be a subspecies of the Siberian Ibex, it was proven by the Zoological Survey of India in March 2020 that the Himalayan Ibex is a distinct species.

This article will give more details about the Himalayan Ibex within the context of the IAS Exam.

Details about the Himalayan Ibex

The Himalayan Ibex is a member of the Ibex species, a type of wild goat that roams the mountain ranges around the world. They are easily recognised by the curved horns and beards.

The females horns are relatively small in comparison to the male measuring about 27 cm long. The horns of a fully grown male is entirely black and measures about 115 cm and in some cases can grow to 145 cm.

Females are grey brown and have dark markings on their legs. Both males and females have a dark dorsal stripe running down the length of their back.



Further details of the Himalayan Ibex is discussed in the table given below:

Characteristics of Himalayan Ibex	
Size	103-132 cm (male)
	85-101 cm(female)
Weight	60-130 Kg (Male)

	30-56 kg (Female)
Habitat	Steep crags above the tree line in the Himalayas up to 5500 m. In Himalayas frequents at 3400-4400 m.
Species name	Capra sibirica hemalayanus
Local name	Tangrol

Behaviour and Diet

They are usually found in small herds, that number about 50 together. In winter, they come down to lower elevations in search of food as the mountains get covered in snow. In summer they move back upward as the snow melts.

Himalayan Ibex is a herbivore whose diet consists of alpine grasses and herbs. In summer and spring grasses and sedges form the majority of their diet, while in winter they consume tall herbs and the twigs of trees like juniper and willow

Heavy snow on the mountains brings down the Himalayan Ibex near warmer pastures, but it also brings its predator as well - the snow leopard.

Conservation Status of the Himalayan Ibex

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) lists the Himalayan Ibex as 'least concerned'. A least-concerned designated species is not a focus of species conservation as their population is widespread and not threatened with extinction.

Regardless the ibex population is still vulnerable due to illegal hunting, habitat loss and competition for forage with domestic livestock.

Relevant Questions related to Himalayan Ibex

How do Ibex traverse their mountain habitats?

Compared with other ungulates, Ibex are extraordinary climbers, perfectly adapted to steep slopes thanks to the particular shape of their cloven hooves.

What is the status of the Ibex population of the world?

Most wild goat species are doing well, but two are facing extinction. The Nubian ibex is considered vulnerable by the International Union for Conservation of Nature because its numbers are decreasing; it is estimated that there are fewer than 10,000 mature individuals.