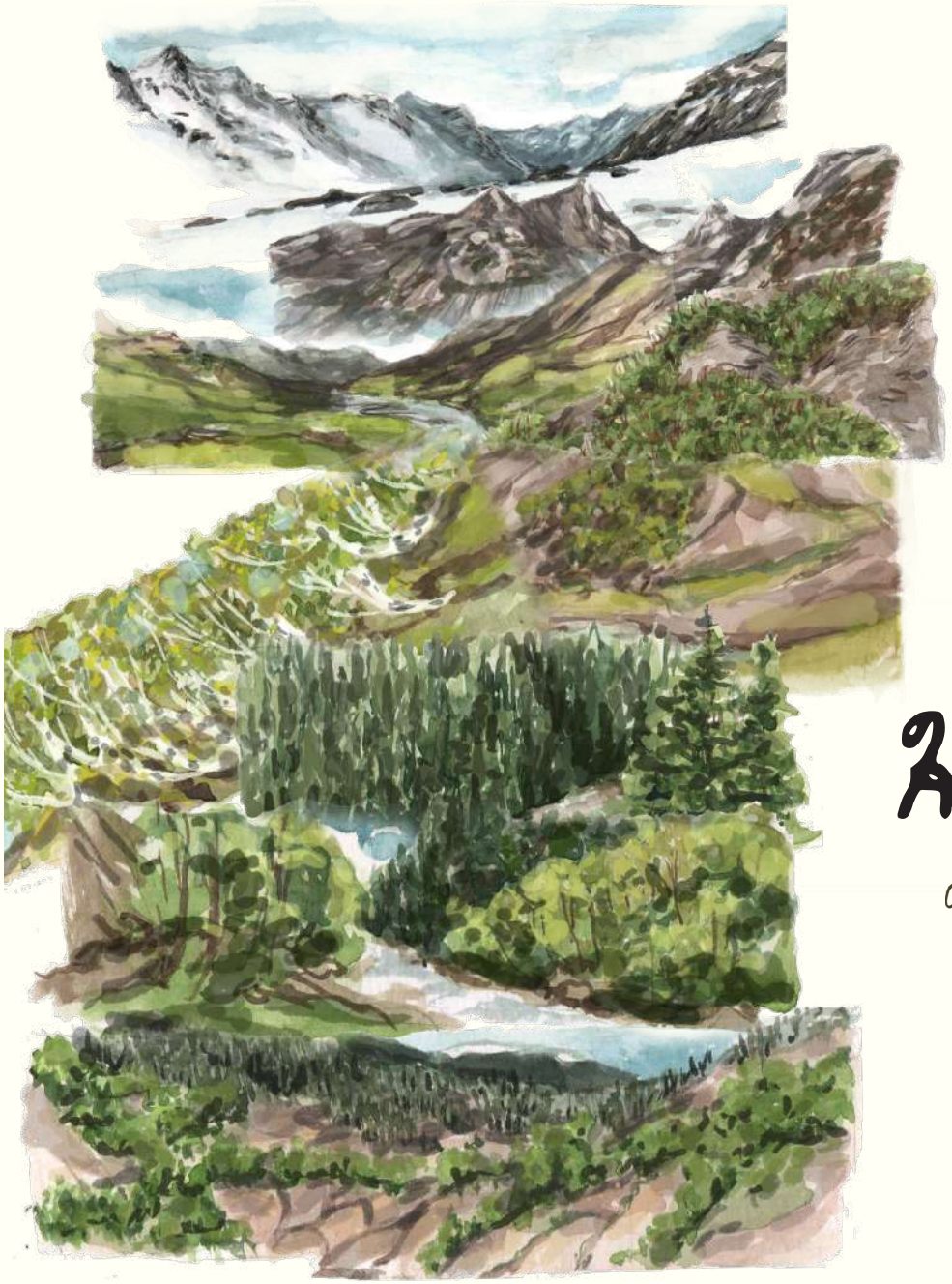


Hamsaai

Our neighbours from the high Himalayas of Jammu & Kashmir



Our neighbours from







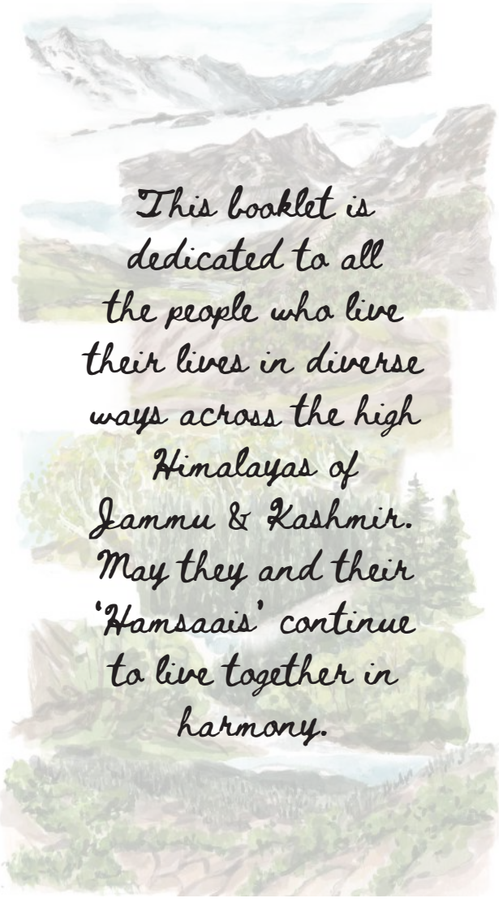


the high Himalayas of Jammu & Kashmir



Hamsaai

Kashmiri word for 'neighbour'



This booklet is dedicated to all the people who live their lives in diverse ways across the high Himalayas of Jammu & Kashmir. May they and their 'Hamsaais' continue to live together in harmony.

nature conservation foundation

ROYAL ENFIELD

EXISTENCE CONSORTIUM

Index

1.
Mountain peaks and glaciers

These are the highest points in the valleys, covered by thick glaciers and rocky mountain peaks. Glaciers are a major source of water in the region, forming life-giving streams and rivers.

~Typically found above *4,500 m.*

2.
Rocky glacier moraines

Rocky glacial moraines are ridges or mounds of rock and sediment deposited directly by glaciers, formed from material scraped from the landscape as ice moves. These areas often contain numerous glacial lakes.

~Typically found above *4,000 m.*

3.
High-altitude alpine grasslands and shrublands

Treeless areas found above the treeline, dominated by grasses, sedges, and small shrubs such as *Juniperus* and *Rhododendron*. These habitats are critical for high-altitude specialists.

~Typically found between *3,200 – 4,200 m.*

4.
Birch forests

Dominated by Himalayan birch (*Betula utilis*), these high-altitude forests form the uppermost treeline vegetation. Open-canopied woodlands provide critical habitat, help control erosion on steep slopes, and mark the transition between subalpine conifer forests and alpine meadows.

~Typically found between *3,000 – 3,800 m.*

5.
Conifer forests

Dominated by West Himalayan fir (*Abies pindrow*), Deodar (*Cedrus deodara*), and Himalayan blue pine (*Pinus wallichiana*), these dense, moist forests form a crucial mid-elevation zone that regulates watersheds, supports diverse wildlife, and provides essential ecosystem services to mountain communities.

~Typically found between *2,000 – 3,200 m.*

6.
Deciduous forest

Composed of broadleaf trees such as Oaks (*Quercus spp.*), Horse chestnut (*Aesculus indica*), maple (*Acer caesium*), & Walnut (*Juglans regia*), these seasonally leaf-shedding forests provide important habitat for wildlife and play a vital role in maintaining soil fertility and watershed stability.

~Typically found between *1,500 – 2,500 m.*

7.
Villages and human settlements

Typically concentrated in valleys and lower mountain slopes, often along rivers and fertile terraces. Villages, ranging from small hamlets to larger towns, are hubs of agriculture, livestock grazing, and cultural activities, and they frequently interface with surrounding forests and grasslands, influencing local biodiversity and resource use.

~Typically found below *2,200 m.*

So, what does a high-altitude region in Jammu & Kashmir look like?

Note

The illustration depicts the altitudinal sequence of habitats in the valleys of *Jammu & Kashmir*, arranged from the mountain tops down to human settlements.

Starting from glaciers at the highest elevations, the landscape transitions through rocky glacier moraines, high-altitude alpine grasslands and shrublands, birch forests, conifer forests, and deciduous forests, before reaching villages and other human settlements.
This arrangement mirrors the natural flow of water through the valleys, with meltwater and streams descending from the glaciers, shaping both the habitats and human use of the landscape.

The "*river-like*" layout emphasizes the connectivity of these habitats and how species may move or occur across different elevations depending on local valley conditions.

And which species inhabit the high-altitude regions of Jammu & Kashmir?

1. Mountain peaks and glaciers

2. Rocky glacier moraines

3. High-altitude alpine grasslands and shrublands

4. Birch forests

5. Conifer forests

6. Deciduous forest

7. Villages and human settlements

Note

The habitats listed here represent key or typical habitats for each species. However, in certain areas, some species may occur in different habitats depending on the local configuration and availability of vegetation types within a valley.

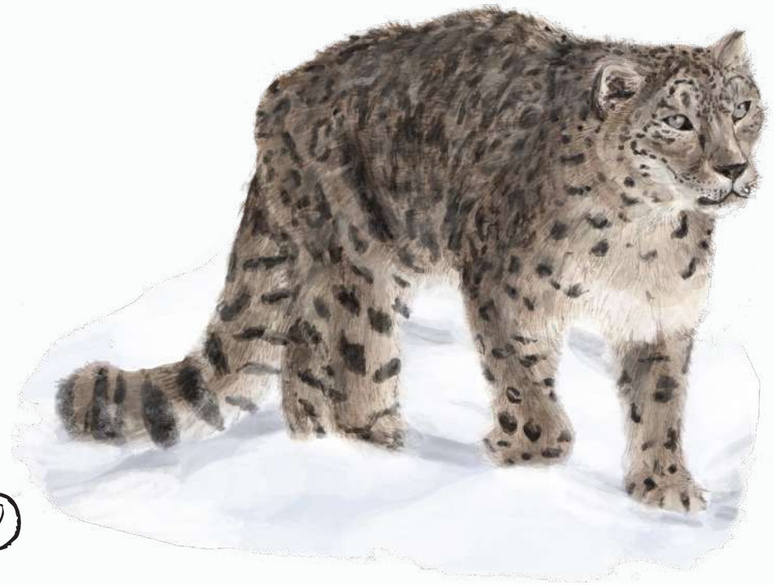
Please note there are a few others species of mammals across the high-altitudes of Jammu & Kashmir that are not represented in this book.

For each species in the following pages:

1. IUCN Status refers to the conservation status of the species which is categorized from “Least Concern” to “Extinct”

2. WPA refers to the schedules of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, which categorizes wildlife into different levels of protection. For example, Schedule I and II have the highest level of protection, while Schedule V lists animals that can be hunted under certain conditions.

1. Snow Leopard
/Panthera uncia



IUCN Status: Vulnerable (*Globally*)

WPA: Schedule I

Habitat: Alpine/sub-alpine regions above treeline, *3000–5000 m*

Activity: Nocturnal/Crepuscular

Size: *~90–120 cm* (exc. tail); *25–55 kg*

Did you know?

Snow leopards can't roar—
they *hiss and chuff*.
Their bushy tails help them balance
on cliffs and keep warm.

Role in the Ecosystem

Apex predator—controls
marmot, ibex populations.

Common Misconceptions

✗ They attack humans.

✓ There are *NO* known cases
of attacks on humans.

Threats

- Livestock retaliatory killings
- Poaching
- Habitat fragmentation
- Climate change

What you can do?

- Encourage livestock
guarding dogs.
- Support community
programs & spread
awareness.

Where can you find them?

- Rocky glacier moraines
- High-altitude alpine
grasslands and shrublands
- Birch forests

2. Common Leopard
/Panthera pardus

IUCN Status: Vulnerable (*Globally*)

WPA: Schedule I

Habitat: Wide—subtropical forests to scrub and fringes of settlements. Also, in Alpine regions.

Activity: Mostly nocturnal but can be occasionally active during the day.

Size: *~90–160 cm; 30–90 kg*

Did you know?

Leopards are extremely adaptable—they can thrive near villages and even raid livestock occasionally.

Role in the Ecosystem

A key predator, controlling populations of deer and small ungulates, in particular.
Has a wide dietary width.

Common Misconceptions

✗ They drink the blood of their prey.

✓ They usually kill their prey by biting their neck or throat.

Threats

- Conflict over livestock
- Poaching
- Occasional loss of humans
- Prey depletion

What you can do?

- Encourage livestock guarding dogs
- Habitat corridors
- Awareness campaigns

Where can you find them?

- High-altitude alpine grasslands and shrublands
- Birch forests
- Conifer forests
- Deciduous forests
- Villages/Human settlements

3. Himalayan Wolf / *Canis lupus chanco*

IUCN Status: Vulnerable (*Globally*); Population declining in India.

WPA: Schedule I

Habitat: Grasslands, Alpine plateaus *(2,500–4,500 m)*

Activity: Mostly nocturnal

Size: *~ 90–110 cm; ~25–45 kg*

Did you know?

Wolves are the wild cousins of the domestic dog.

Role in the Ecosystem

Keeps prey populations like marmots and wild ungulates in balance.

Common Misconceptions

✗ Wolves kill for fun.

✓ Wolves kill to survive and maintain pack needs.

Threats

- Retaliatory killing
- Poisoning
- Habitat destruction

What you can do?

- Promote predator-friendly livestock management.
- Reduce conflict through awareness.

Where can you find them?

High-altitude alpine grasslands and shrublands

4. Jackal / *Canis aureus*

IUCN Status: Least Concern

WPA: Schedule II

Habitat: Grasslands, scrub, and villages (*up to 2,500 m*)

Activity: Nocturnal

Size: *~60–80 cm; ~8–12 kg*

Did you know?

Jackals live in monogamous pairs and often howl at dusk to communicate.

Role in the Ecosystem

Scavenger that helps clean the environment of carrion.

Common Misconceptions

- ✗ They kill livestock.
- ✓ Jackals mostly scavenge and rarely take live prey.

Threats

- Poisoning
- Habitat encroachment
- Vehicular collisions

What you can do?

- Promote coexistence through awareness.
- Avoid leaving food waste in open areas.

Where can you find them?

- Conifer forests
- Deciduous forests
- Villages/Human settlements

5. Red Fox / *Vulpes vulpes*

IUCN Status: Least Concern

WPA: Schedule II

Habitat: Deciduous, coniferous forest and alpine meadows

Activity: Mostly nocturnal

Size: *~~50–90 cm; 4–7 kg*

Did you know?

Red foxes cache food in many locations and remember each one!

Role in the Ecosystem

Scavenger and rodent controller.

Common Misconceptions

✗ Foxes howl like wolves.

✓ They make high-pitched yelps and screams.

Threats

- Habitat loss
- Disease (rabies) risk.

What you can do?

- Avoid feeding foxes near settlements.
- Vaccinate local dogs to prevent disease spillover.

Where can you find them?

- High-altitude alpine grasslands and shrublands
- Birch forests
- Conifer forests

6. Himalayan Black Bear
/Ursus thibetanus

IUCN Status: Vulnerable (*Globally*)

WPA: Schedule I

Habitat: Broad-leaf and coniferous forests;
sometimes close to settlements and agricultural areas *~1,500–3,000 m*

Activity: Diurnal to crepuscular

Size: *~140-200 cm; 80–140 kg*

Did you know?

Also called "*moon bear*" for its white chest mark. Excellent tree-climbers. They have an excellent sense of smell.

Role in the Ecosystem

Seed disperser;
helps maintain forest health.

Common Misconceptions

- ✗ They like to attack people.
- ✓ Not aggressive unless surprised or protecting cubs.

Threats

- Poaching for gall bladder/fat
- Habitat loss
- Conflict

What you can do?

- Encourage bear-smart livestock and food storage.
- Forest preservation.
- Avoid going into the forest alone in the dark.

Where can you find them?

- Conifer forests
- Deciduous forests
- Villages/Human settlements

7. Himalayan Brown Bear
/Ursus arctos isabellinus

IUCN Status: Least Concern Globally (*but considered critically endangered locally*)

WPA: Schedule I

Habitat: Alpine scrub & meadows above tree line *~3,000 m*

Activity: Diurnal

Size: *Up to ~300 kg*

Did you know?

One of India's largest terrestrial mammals. At high altitudes, they dig marmots for food, however, are usually herbivorous.

Role in the Ecosystem

Regulates marmot populations; soil aeration via digging.

Common Misconceptions

✗ They like coming close to people.

✓ Rare and shy, they tend to avoid humans.

Threats

- Poaching
- Habitat disturbance
- Climate change

What you can do?

- Support high-altitude reserve management.
- Respectful ecotourism.
- Garbage waste management

Where can you find them?

- High-altitude alpine grasslands and shrublands
- Birch forests

8. Leopard Cat
/Prionailurus bengalensis

IUCN Status: Least Concern

WPA: Schedule I

Habitat: Forests, shrublands, near agriculture (*1,000–3,000 m*)

Activity: Nocturnal

Size: *~45–65 cm; 3–6 kg*

Did you know?

Although they don't tend to be in and around water much, the partial webbing on their feet makes them good swimmers.

Role in the Ecosystem

Controls rodent populations in farmlands and forests. This allows forest regeneration and can also control spread of diseases.

Common Misconceptions

- ✗ They're tame or hybrid cats.
- ✓ They're solitary wild hunters and cannot be domesticated.

Threats

- Habitat loss
- Hybridization and disease transmission risks, especially from feral cats.

What you can do?

- Reduce feral cats through sterilization and vaccinations.

Where can you find them?

- Conifer forests
- Deciduous forests
- Villages/Human settlements

9. Kashmir Musk Deer
/Moschus cupreus

IUCN Status: Endangered

WPA: Schedule I

Habitat: Deciduous and conifer forest, along with some extensions into alpine meadows *2,500–4,200 m*

Activity: Crepuscular

Size: *~60–80 cm at shoulder; 10–18 kg*

Did you know?

Male musk deer have tusk-like canines and a musk gland used in perfumes. Musk collection has caused their decline.

Role in the Ecosystem

Herbivore maintaining vegetation dynamics; key prey for predators.

Common Misconceptions

✗ "All deer have antlers."

✓ Musk deer lack antlers; males use canines in combat.

Threats

- Poaching for musk
- Forest fragmentation

What you can do?

- Report illegal wildlife trade
- Support community-based monitoring and promote locally led tourism initiatives.

Where can you find them?

- Birch forests
- Conifer forests

10. Asiatic Ibex / *Capra sibirica*

IUCN Status: Near Threatened (*Globally*)

WPA: Schedule I

Habitat: Alpine cliffs and meadows (3,200–5,500 m)

Activity: Diurnal

Size: *~ 90–110 cm at shoulder; 60–100 kg*

Did you know?

Ibex are incredible climbers, capable of scaling vertical rock faces to escape predators.

Role in the Ecosystem

A key prey species for snow leopards; important grazer shaping alpine plant communities.

Common Misconceptions

- ✗ They're wild goats and don't need protection.
- ✓ Their populations are declining due to overgrazing and hunting.

Threats

- Hunting for meat.
- Competition with livestock.
- Habitat degradation.

What you can do?

- Support community-led conservation.
- Promote responsible tourism in Ibex habitats.

Where can you find them?

- High-altitude alpine grasslands and shrublands

11. Markhor
/ Capra falconeri cashmiriensis

IUCN Status: Near threatened (*Globally*); Critically endangered in India.

WPA: Schedule I

Habitat: Dry cliffs and riverine oak-pine slopes *(1,200–3,500 m)*

Activity: Diurnal

Size: *~90–105 cm at shoulder; 70–100 kg*

Did you know?

Male Markhor have majestic spiral horns that can grow over 1.5 meter long!

Role in the Ecosystem

Primary prey of leopards and wolves; grazer that shapes vegetation.

Common Misconceptions

- ✗ They're extinct in India.
- ✓ Small populations still survive in Kashmir's Northern frontier cliffs.

Threats

- Poaching
- Overgrazing
- Habitat encroachment

What you can do?

- Support community conservation.
- Discourage hunting for trophy or meat.

Where can you find them?

- High-altitude alpine grasslands and shrublands
- Birch forests
- Conifer forests

12. Hangul (Kashmir Stag) / *Cervus hanglu hanglu*

IUCN Status: Critically Endangered

WPA: Schedule I

Habitat: Mixed conifer-oak forests and connected alpine grasslands (*1,600–3,600 m*)

Activity: Crepuscular

Size: *~150–180 cm; ~130–180 kg*

Did you know?

Hangul is India's only true red deer and survives only in Kashmir.

Role in the Ecosystem

Browse forest understory, influences vegetation diversity in the region.

Common Misconceptions

✗ Hangul are like chital

✓ Hangul are high-altitude deer adapted to snowy forests.

Threats

- Habitat fragmentation
- Inbreeding
- Livestock competition

What you can do?

- Grassland management.
- Raise awareness of Hangul's status and needs.

Where can you find them?

- Conifer forests
- Deciduous forests
- Grassland and Meadows

13. Himalayan goral /Naemorhedus goral

IUCN Status: Near Threatened

WPA: Schedule I

Habitat: Steep wooded hillsides *(1,000–3,000 m)*

Activity: Diurnal

Size: *~70–90 cm; ~20–30 kg*

Did you know?

Gorals are shy and blend perfectly with steep cliffside vegetation.

Role in the Ecosystem

Key prey species for leopards in the lower altitudes.

Common Misconceptions

- ✗ They're livestock.
- ✓ They are wild ungulates and crucial to the food web.

Threats

- Habitat encroachment
- Competition from domestic goats
- Poaching

What you can do?

- Help create grazing-free buffer zones.
- Report illegal hunting.

Where can you find them?

- Conifer forests
- Deciduous forests

14. Himalayan Serow
/ Capricornis sumatraensis thar

IUCN Status: Vulnerable

WPA: Schedule I

Habitat: Dense forests and steep rocky terrain (*1,000–3,000 m*)

Activity: Mostly crepuscular and solitary

Size: *~85–110 cm; 50–90 kg*

Did you know?

Serows are excellent climbers—moving nimbly even on near-vertical cliffs.

Role in the Ecosystem

Mid-elevation browsers that help maintain forest understory balance and serve as prey for leopards.

Common Misconceptions

- ✗ They are part of domestic goat herds.
- ✓ Serows are elusive wild species which is a mix between a goat and antelope.

Threats

- Disturbance from human activity
- Habitat degradation
- Poaching

What you can do?

- Support community-based forest protection and awareness programs.

Where can you find them?

Deciduous forests

15. Himalayan Tahr / *Hemitragus jemlahicus*

IUCN Status: Near Threatened

WPA: Schedule I

Habitat: Rugged cliffs, alpine meadows, and rocky slopes (*2,500–4,000 m*)

Activity: Mostly crepuscular

Size: *90–140 cm; 35–90 kg*

Did you know?

Their thick, reddish-brown coat and impressive mane help them survive harsh Himalayan winters.

Role in the Ecosystem

Important alpine grazers—control vegetation and support nutrient cycling in high-altitude grasslands.

Common Misconceptions

✗ They are wild goats.

✓ Actually, tahrs are a distinct species of mountain ungulate, more closely related to sheep.

Threats

- Hunting for meat and trophies
- Competition with livestock
- Habitat loss

What you can do?

- Support regulated grazing and anti-poaching measures in alpine areas.

Where can you find them?

- High-altitude alpine grasslands and shrublands
- Birch forests
- Conifer forests

16. Kashmir gray Langur/ *Semnopithecus ajax*

IUCN Status: Endangered

WPA: Schedule I

Habitat: Temperate deciduous and coniferous forests (*2,000–3,500 m*)

Activity: Diurnal

Size: *~60–75 cm body; ~90 cm tail; ~12–20 kg*

Did you know?

This langur is found only in Jammu & Kashmir and parts of Himachal Pradesh.

Role in the Ecosystem

Folivorous—regulates tree canopy foliage and aids seed dispersal.

Common Misconceptions

✗ All langurs are the same.

✓ This is a distinct high-altitude endemic species under serious threat.

Threats

- Habitat fragmentation
- Climate change

What you can do?

- Support forest conservation
- Raise awareness

Where can you find them?

- Conifer forests
- Deciduous forests

17. Yellow-throated Marten
/Martes flavigula

IUCN Status: Least Concern

WPA: Schedule II

Habitat: Mixed forests and high-altitude woods (*1,500–3,500 m*)

Activity: Diurnal

Size: *~55–70 cm (body); ~30–40 cm tail; ~ 1.5 - 6 kg*

Did you know?

Usually yellow-throated martens are found in groups of *3-4* individuals.

Role in the Ecosystem

Omnivore that eats fruits, rodents, birds, and carrion—important seed disperser.

Common Misconceptions

✗ It attacks pets and poultry often.

✓ It rarely approaches villages and prefers forest prey.

Threats

- Deforestation
- Road development

What you can do?

- Promote forest restoration.
- Protect corridors linking forest patches.

Where can you find them?

- Conifer forests
- Deciduous forests
- Villages/Human settlements

18. Stone Marten
/Martes foina

IUCN Status: Least Concern (*Globally*)

WPA: Schedule II

Habitat: Rocky scrublands, forest edges, human settlements, high-altitude alpine meadows (*1,800–4,200 m*)

Activity: Nocturnal

Size: *~45–55 cm (body); tail ~25 cm; ~ 1-2 kg*

Did you know?

Stone martens are known to raid chicken coops and granaries. Despite their mischief, they control rodent populations effectively.

Role in the Ecosystem

Important scavenger and small vertebrate predator.

Common Misconceptions

- ✗ Always kills poultry.
- ✓ They prefer rodents; poultry raiding is rare and usually opportunistic.

Threats

- Persecution as a pest

What you can do?

- Use secure poultry shelters.
- Educate communities on its ecological role.

Where can you find them?

- Rockey glacier moraines
- High-altitude alpine grasslands and shrublands

19. Mountain Weasel /Mustela altaica

IUCN Status: Least Concern (*Globally*)

WPA: Schedule II

Habitat: Rocky slopes, alpine grasslands (*2,800–4,500 m*), especially rocky crevices

Activity: Diurnal

Size: *~25–30 cm; ~200–300 g*

Did you know?

Mountain weasels are agile hunters that can squeeze into marmot or pika burrows. Their slender bodies and sharp reflexes make them skilled predators at high altitudes.

Role in the Ecosystem

Important predators of small mammals like voles, pikas, and ground birds, keeping prey populations in check.

Common Misconceptions

- ✗ They are harmful to livestock.
- ✓ They're too small to harm anything larger than a rodent.

Threats

- Habitat loss from overgrazing
- Unintentional trapping or persecution

What you can do?

- Avoid using chemicals in alpine meadows.
- Spread awareness about its role in controlling pests.

Where can you find them?

- Rockey glacier moraines
- High-altitude alpine grasslands and shrublands

20. Himalayan Stoat /Mustela erminea

IUCN Status: Least Concern

WPA: Schedule IV

Habitat: Alpine meadows and shrubland (*3,000–4,800 m*)

Activity: Mostly nocturnal

Size: *~18–25 cm; ~150–300 g*

Did you know?

In winter, stoats grow a white coat with a black-tipped tail. Historically prized for royal robes.

Role in the Ecosystem

Highly effective predator of pikas, voles, and small birds; influences prey population cycles.

Common Misconceptions

✗ The summer-brown morph and winter-white morph are two different species.

✓ It's a distinct species adapted to extreme cold.

Threats

- Climate change altering snow patterns.
- Loss of prey base due to overgrazing.

What you can do?

- Support climate-resilient rangeland management.
- Avoid disturbance of talus and pika colonies.

Where can you find them?

- Birch forests
- High-altitude alpine grasslands and shrublands

21. Pika
/Ochotona roylei

IUCN Status: Least Concern

WPA: Schedule II

Habitat: Alpine scree slopes and pastures (*3,000–5,000 m*)

Activity: Diurnal

Size: *~15–20 cm; 150–200 g*

Did you know?

Pikas don't hibernate. Instead, they stockpile hay in their burrows for winter—a behaviour called "haying."

Role in the Ecosystem

Primary prey for foxes, weasels, stoats, and snow leopards.

Common Misconceptions

✗ They are rodents.

✓ Pikas are lagomorphs—relatives of rabbits!

Threats

- Climate change
- Overgrazing
- Accidental poisoning

What you can do?

- Protect talus slopes from development.
- Support grassland conservation.

Where can you find them?

- Rockey glacier moraines
- High-altitude alpine grasslands and shrublands
- Birch forests

22. Indian Crested Porcupine / *Hystrix indica*

IUCN Status: Least Concern

WPA: Schedule II

Habitat: Rocky hills, forests, grasslands, plantations, agricultural fields (*up to 2,400 m*)

Activity: Nocturnal

Size: *70–90 cm; tail 8–10 cm; 11–18 kg*

Did you know?

To defend themselves they charge backwards and drive their sharp quills into the approaching threat.

Role in the Ecosystem

They work as ecosystem engineers with their digging and foraging behavior affecting soil, plant communities, and providing shelter for other animals.

Common Misconceptions

✗ It shoots its quills.

✓ Quills detach upon contact.

Threats

- Human hunting
- Conflict over agriculture

What you can do?

- Improved protection of crops in agricultural areas to reduce conflict.

Where can you find them?

Villages/Human settlements

23. Long-tailed Marmot
Marmota caudata

IUCN Status: Least Concern

WPA: Schedule IV

Habitat: Alpine meadows & scree (*3,000–5,000 m*)

Activity: Diurnal

Size: *~50–60 cm; 4–8 kg*

Did you know?

Marmots whistle loudly to warn others of predators. They hibernate for over six months!

Role in the Ecosystem

Key prey for snow leopards and brown bears.

Common Misconceptions

✗ They're oversized rats.

✓ They are highly social alpine rodents.

Threats

- Hunting
- Habitat degradation
- Burrow flooding

What you can do?

- Respect marmot colonies during treks.
- Discourage hunting for meat.

Where can you find them?

High-altitude alpine grasslands and shrublands

24. Wooly Flying Squirrel
/Eupetaurus cinereus

IUCN Status: Endangered

WPA: Schedule II

Habitat: High-altitude coniferous forests and cliffs (*2,400–3,500 m*)

Activity: Nocturnal and arboreal

Size: *Over 1 m; 1.5–2.5 kg*

Did you know?

One of the world's largest flying squirrels—can glide over 100 meters between trees!

Role in the Ecosystem

Seed disperser and pollinator of high-altitude forest plants; contributes to forest regeneration.

Common Misconceptions

- ✗ It's a bat or bird.
- ✓ It's a gliding mammal that uses a membrane between limbs to soar.

Threats

- Deforestation
- Fragmentation of high-altitude forests
- Hunting for fur

What you can do?

- Promote conservation of coniferous forests.
- Minimize human disturbance in its habitat.

Where can you find them?

- High-altitude alpine grasslands and shrublands
- Conifer forests

25. Small Kashmir Flying Squirrel / *Eoglaucomys fimbriatus*

IUCN Status: Least Concern

WPA: Schedule II

Habitat: Temperate broadleaf and mixed forests (*1,500–3,000 m*)

Activity: Strictly nocturnal

Size: *~25–35 cm; tail ~30–40 cm; ~ 500 - 600 g*

Did you know?

The Kashmir flying squirrel doesn't actually fly — it glides using a membrane called a patagium stretching from its wrist to ankle. When leaping between trees, it can glide up to 20–30 meters!

Role in the Ecosystem

Flying squirrels are important seed dispersers and contribute to forest regeneration.

Common Misconceptions

✗ It's a bat or a bird.

✓ The flying squirrel is neither — it's a tree-dwelling rodent with a unique adaptation for gliding.

Threats

- Habitat fragmentation due to logging and development.

What you can do?

- Protect old forests with connected tree canopies.

Where can you find them?

- Deciduous forests
- Conifer forests

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This book is an illustrated guide of select mammals
from the high-altitude region of
Jammu & Kashmir.
We hope this book inspires awe and curiosity among
our readers; so we can work together towards the
conservation of these magnificent species.

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