



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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Horn-Eyed Ghost Crab

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Recently, researchers documented unique predatory behaviour of horn-eyed ghost crab at Rushikonda Beach.?

About Horn-Eyed Ghost Crab

It belongs to the genus *Ocypode*.

Their pale bodies blend seamlessly with the sand, and combined with their swift movements during dawn and dusk, this has led to their common name, "ghost crabs".

It is widely regarded as a keystone species and indicator of coastal health.

Six species of ghost crabs have been reported along the Indian coastline.

Habitat: It is usually found in the intertidal zones.

Distribution: It lives in the Indo-Pacific region (except the Red Sea); from the coast of East Africa to the Philippines and from Japan to the Great Barrier Reef.

Threats: Pollution, changes in sediment distribution, rising sea temperatures and altered tidal patterns may prompt species to explore new microhabitats in search of food.

Characteristics of Horn-Eyed Ghost Crab

It has traditionally been described as a scavenger within the intertidal food web.

Diet: They hunt clams, snails, worms, isopods, shrimps and a variety of insects. They also prey on other crabs, including smaller hermit crabs.

Ecological Role of Horn-Eyed Ghost Crab

It plays a crucial ecological role in sandy intertidal environments

They influence the distribution and abundance of smaller organisms through their feeding habits and the deep burrows they build

Kamaraj IAS Academy

Plot A P.127, AF block, 6 th street, 11th Main Rd, Shanthi Colony, Anna Nagar, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600040

Phone: 044 4353 9988 / 98403 94477 / Whatsapp : 09710729833