



**KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY**  
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# The Galaxy Frog (*Melanobatrachus indicus*)

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**News:** A January 2026 study in *Herpetology Notes* reported that a population of seven rare **Galaxy Frogs** in the Western Ghats likely died due to "unethical photo tourism."

## Biological & Conservation Facts:

- **Appearance:** Glossy black with blue-white spots (starry sky) and orange streaks (supernova effect).
- **Endemicity:** Found only in high-altitude (1000m+) moist evergreen forests of **Kerala's Western Ghats**.
- **Status:** **Vulnerable (IUCN)** and an **EDGE Species** (Evolutionarily Distinct and Globally Endangered). It is the only species in its genus.
- **The Threat:** Photographers seeking the "perfect shot" overturned logs (their only habitat), used high-intensity flashes (damaging their sensitive skin), and handled them without gloves (causing dehydration/disease).
- **Mains Value-Add:** Use this as a case study for "**The Perils of Social Media-driven Wildlife Tourism**" and the need for ethical guidelines in biodiversity hotspots.

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