Environment & Ecology · GS - III

Why is the conservation of lesser-known carnivores such as the Bengal fox and golden jackal important for ecological balance? Examine the challenges and suggest suitable conservation measures.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 04/11/2026	GS - III	Environment & Ecology

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Ecological roles; predator–scavenger functions; scrubland conservation; habitat fragmentation; human–wildlife interactions; scientific population monitoring; community participation; landscape-level protection.

Model Answer

Introduction

Wildlife conservation often focuses on charismatic megafauna, while smaller carnivores receive comparatively less attention. Tamil Nadu's initiatives for the Bengal fox and golden jackal highlight the importance of conserving lesser-known species and their habitats.

Ecological Significance

Both species contribute to ecosystem functioning through predation and scavenging. They help regulate populations of smaller animals, utilise carrion and participate in food-web processes. Their conservation also draws attention to threatened scrublands and other open habitats.

Major Challenges

Habitat conversion for agriculture and infrastructure fragments populations and restricts movement. Illegal hunting, road mortality, conflicts with people and diseases transmitted by domestic or feral dogs may further affect survival. Inadequate population data makes it difficult to identify priority habitats and evaluate conservation

outcomes.

Way Forward

Authorities should undertake systematic population surveys, habitat mapping and telemetry studies where appropriate. Scrublands and ecological corridors must be protected both inside and outside designated protected areas. Community awareness, responsible management of free-ranging dogs, anti-poaching measures and coordination between forest and local authorities can strengthen conservation.

Conclusion

Conserving lesser-known carnivores is essential for maintaining ecological balance. Evidence-based, landscape-level strategies can protect these species while safeguarding the wider biodiversity of India's open ecosystems.