

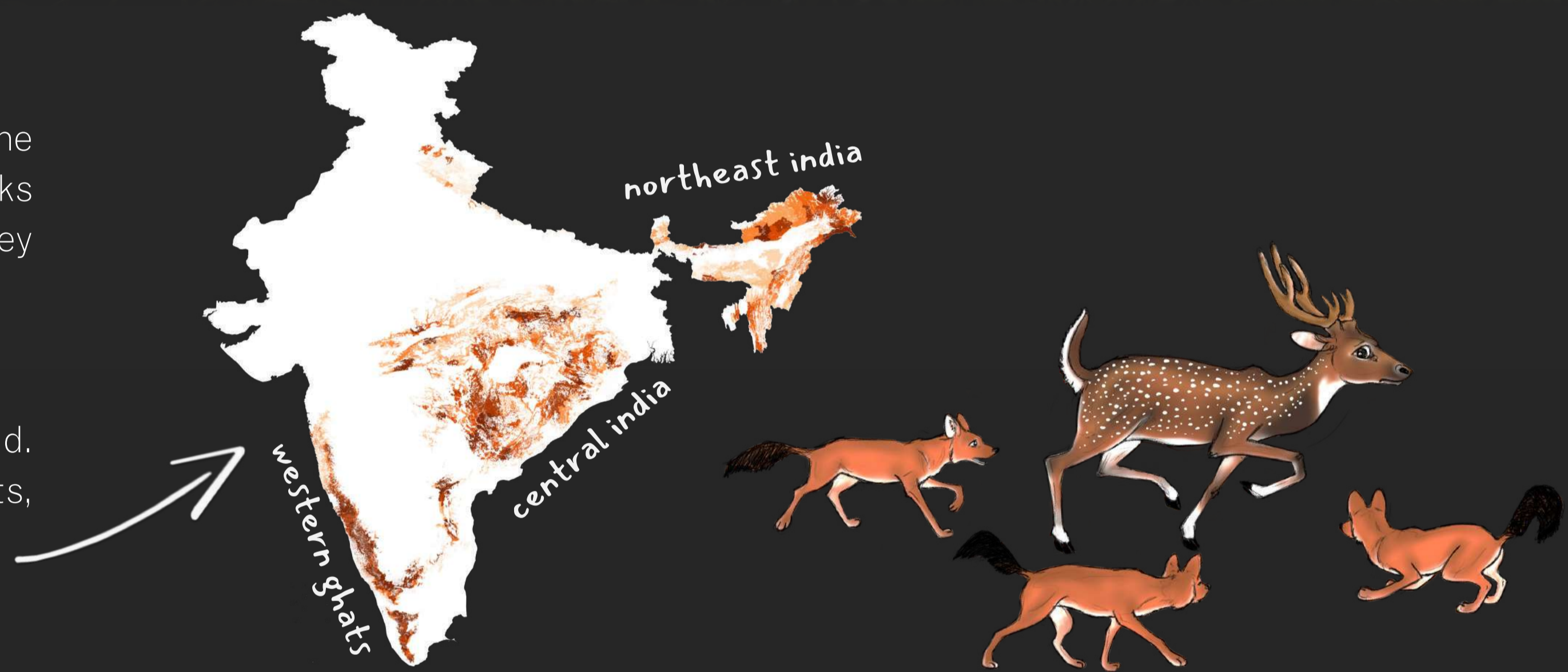
Dholes of Kerala



WHAT IS A DHOLE ?

Dholes (Asiatic wild dogs) are carnivores found in the forests of south and southeast Asia. They live in packs of 2 to 25 individuals. Dholes eat a wide variety of prey animals—from the tiny hare to the massive gaur.

India has the highest number of dholes in the world. Most dhole populations are found in the Western Ghats, Central India and Northeast India.

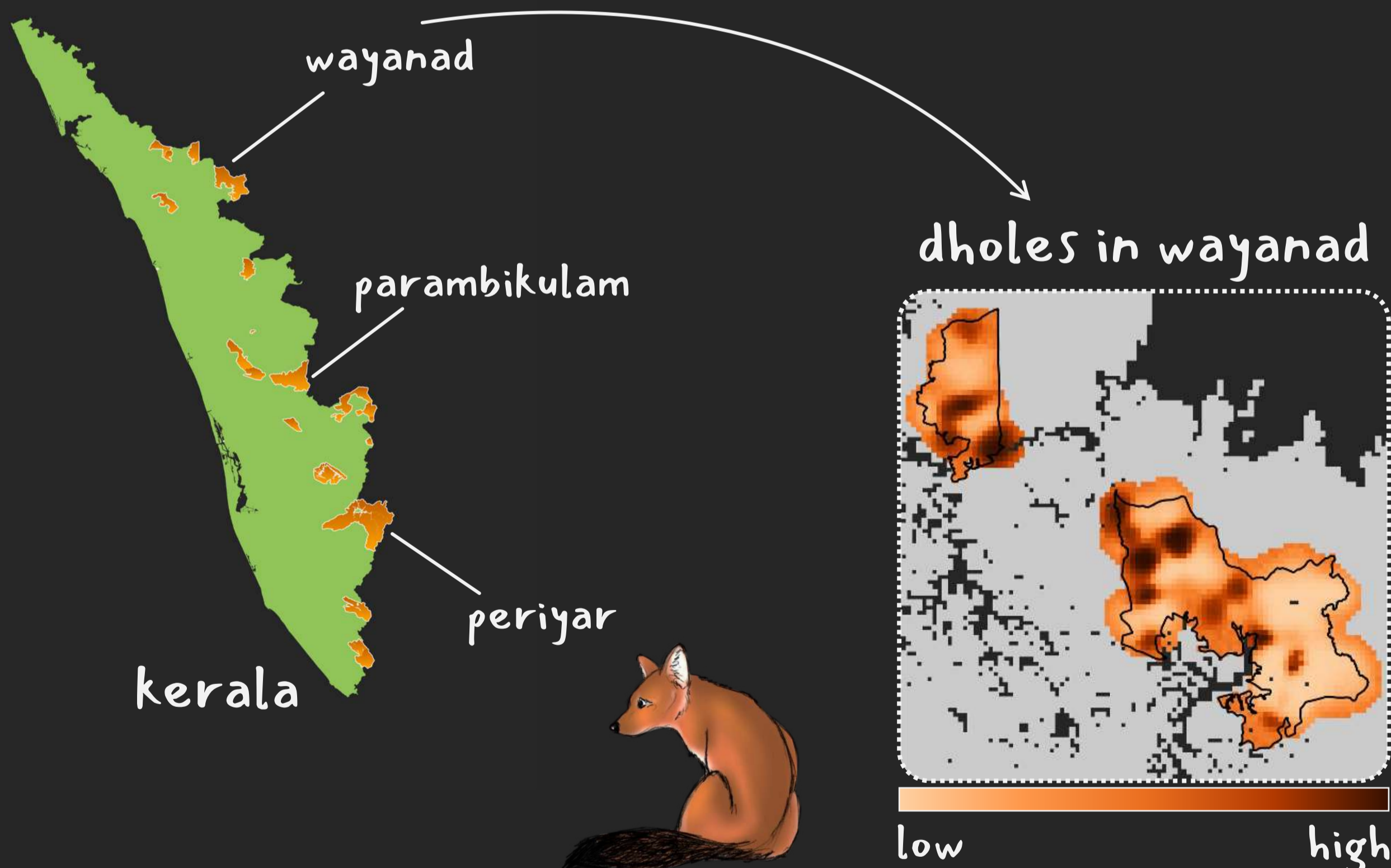


DHOLES IN KERALA

The Western Ghats in Kerala is very important for dholes (called *Chennayi* or *Kaatupatti* in Malayalam). The state of Kerala ranks #5 in terms of dhole status in the country.

Protected Areas like Wayanad, Parambikulam and Periyar support good dhole populations. Coffee, tea and cardamom plantations support smaller dhole populations which maintain landscape connectivity.

In 2019, our surveys in Wayanad resulted in the world's first dhole population estimate. Based on genetic information obtained from dhole scats, we found that Wayanad sanctuary currently has around 50 dholes.



WHY SHOULD WE SAVE DHOLES ?

Dholes are among the most threatened carnivores in the world. Their numbers continue to decline because of habitat loss, reduction in prey animals, and potential threats from domestic dogs.



Dholes play an important role in keeping the forests healthy. Our research work across Wayanad, Parambikulam, Nemmara, Periyar, Kottayam and Ranni is designed to help the Kerala Forest Department in monitoring and protecting dholes.