The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 passed by the Parliament under article 252 of the Constitution at the request of eleven states, was intended to provide a comprehensive national legal framework for Wild Life protection. The Act adopts a two prolonged conservation strategy:

i) Specified endangered species are protected regardless of location

ii) All species are protected in specified areas.

Section 2 of the Wild Life Act, 1972 deals with definitions. Some of the important definitions as they exist after Amendment Act of 2002 are as under:

“Animal” includes mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish and other chordates and invertebrates and also includes their young eggs.

“Animal articles” means an article made from any captive animal or wild animal, other than vermin, and includes an article or object in which the whole or any part of such animal has been used, and ivory imported into India and article made there from

“Captive animal” means any animal, specified in Schedule 1, Schedule 2, Schedule 3 or Schedule 4, which is captured or kept or bred in captivity.

“Forest officer” means the Forest officer appointed under clause (2) of section 2 of the Indian Forest Act, 1927 (16 of 1927) or under any other Act for the time being in force in a state.

“Forest produce” shall have the same meaning as in sub-clause (b) of clause (4) of section 2 of the Indian Forest Act, 1927 (16 of 1927)

“Habitat” includes, land, water or vegetation which is the natural home of any wild animal.

“Hunting” with its grammatical variations and cognate expressions, includes-

(a) Killing or poisoning of any wild animal or captive animal and every attempt to do so.

(b) Capturing, coursing, snaring, trapping, driving or baiting any wild or captive animal and every attempt to do so.
(c) Injuring or destroying or taking any part of the body of any such animal or, in the case of wild birds or reptiles damaging the eggs of such birds or reptiles or distributing the eggs or nests of such birds or reptiles.

“Livestock” means farm animals and includes buffaloes, bulls, bullocks, camels, cows, donkeys, goats, sheep, horses, mules. Yaks, pigs, ducks, geese, poultry and their young but does not include any animal specified in Schedules 1 to 5.

“National park” means an area declared, whether under section 35 or section 38, or deemed, under sub-section (3) of section 66, to be declared as a National Park.

“Protected area” means a National Park, a sanctuary, a conservation reserve, or a community reserve notified under Section 18, 35, 36-A and 36-C of the Act.

“Reserve Forest” means the forest declared to be reserved by the State Government under section 20 of the Indian Forest Act, 1972 (16 of 1927) or declared as such under any other State Act.

“Sanctuary” means an area declared as a sanctuary by notification under the provisions of Chapter 4 of this Act and shall also include a deemed sanctuary under sub-section (4) of Section 66.

“Specified Plant” means any plant specified in Schedule 4.

“Vermin” means any wild animal specified in Schedule.

“Weapon” includes ammunition, bows and arrows, explosive, firearms, hooks, knives, nets, poison, snares and traps and any instrument or apparatus capable of anaesthetizing, decoying, and destroying, injuring or killing an animal.

“Wild animal” means any animal specified in Schedules 1 to 4 and found wild in nature.

“Wild Life” includes any animal or land vegetation which forms part of any habitat.