



PHOTO CREDIT: PARTH JHA

## HELP SAVE TIGERS

Tigers are threatened by habitat loss and poaching, and today, they inhabit merely 7% of their historical range. Madhya Pradesh is home to 25% of India's tigers and nearly 10% of the world's tiger population.

The Madhya Pradesh Tiger Foundation Society is a not-for-profit organisation working towards conservation of wildlife (with a special emphasis on tigers). All its income is tax free under section 12 of the Income Tax Act. Donations entitle the donor to claim income tax exemption under section 80 (g) of the Income Tax Act.

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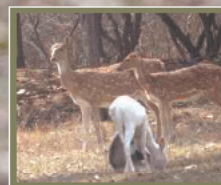
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# PENCH

STRIPES

Annual  
Edition  
2015

WILDLIFE MAGAZINE



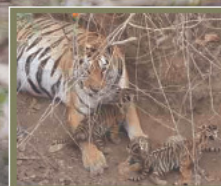
## WHITE BEAUTY

"can be only termed as one of the rarest of rare incident, an albino cheetah is sighted in the Guntara range of Pench."



## KNOW OUR PEOPLE

Indramani Tiwari  
Shanta Bai



## THE GOD MOTHER

The Superstar of Pench,  
the story of Collarwali, The  
God Mother.

THE OFFICIAL PENCH TIGER RESERVE MAGAZINE

PHOTO COURTESY: SANJAY SHUKLA





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### Know Our People



WHITE BEAUTY

### Wild Diaries

E-base: Educating children,  
Sustaining Future

Photographs By :  
Sanjay Shukla  
Aniruddha Dhamorikar  
Monu Dubey

Designed By :



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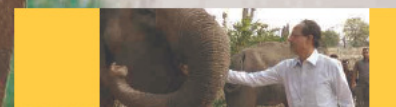
Harmonizing ways  
with nature: BCRLIP

### Training by WTI

Organic Farming,  
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## Message from the Director



“Pench Stripes” is an endeavor to compile the important events that take place throughout the year in the Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR). We intend for this magazine to convey all managerial issues, wildlife related issues, eco-development aspects, tourism and protection concerns and other social and cultural happenings of the reserve to the public.

This magazine will help the media, policy makers and planners to know the actual happenings in at Pench. It will also serve as an important database for future managers, being a repository of all major events happening at Pench. Pench Stripes will serve as a channel for disseminating information and ideas, so that successful activities can be replicated at other areas of operation with suitable modifications. We hope that this medium will help us spread our knowledge to the world and at the same time enable us to and introspect about suggestions and ideas received from a wide spectrum of society.

Alok Kumar  
Field Director

## Message from the Deputy Director



I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the dedication, commitment and hard work of the Pench team, led by Field Director Mr. Alok Kumar, which has contributed to the success of Pench Tiger Reserve. “Pench Stripes” is a venture to compile events, management practices, ecotourism and eco-development initiatives, protection issues and wildlife awareness programs along with other important information.

At Pench, we have carried out some of the best practices and some are yet to be implemented. We succeed only when we are clear about our directions, have accurate background information and plan out our strategy before implementing them. All successful plans start with studying the facts, inviting possibilities and altering the things that don't work. “Pench Stripes” is a platform to seek suggestions from and to highlight our management practices to the outside world.

Dr. Kiran Bisen  
Deputy Director



## Editorial

After the successful launch of half yearly edition of Pench Stripes, we are ready with our Annual edition. This edition is dedicated to the foot soldiers of our natural heritage, who go miles and miles on foot to safeguard the marvelous mother nature.



Forest guards of Pench, with bare minimum facilities at their end, safeguards our natural heritage as true heroes of conservation. They are the soldiers committed to the task of defending this paradise in the deepest forests; heroes compelled to face the danger, but never feared it.

Statistics from International Ranger Federation reveals an alarming trend that India loses more forest guards every year than any other country in the world. Our Forest guards face the threats like attacks by wild animals, illness and poachers, who by the way, come with the latest arms and ammunitions. They have the duty of monitoring health of wild animal-s and their habitat, in conditions where their own health is at stake and their families apart.

Forest guards in our Tiger Reserves, lead a very difficult life with basic facilities in the most interior parts of the jungle. Surviving in the wild with limited interaction with outside world, they patrol the forest on foot risking their lives on the daily basis. They all have their deep dark fears based on past experiences of wild encounters, but they believe that the triumph over fear is real victory. Forest guards when put their foot forward to patrol their area, they have little more than lathi in their hands but with ample courage in their hearts, they do their job. They have dedicated their whole lives in the care and concern of wild creatures, least concerned about their own wellbeing.

Even in such harsh situations, Pench management has been nurturing a generation of guards who are committed to its protection. Boosting their morale, supporting them in every way possible, appreciating their efforts and encouraging them are the ways by which management tries to do its bit towards these heroes. For them life doesn't get any easier with time, only they get stronger and more resilient. We dedicate this annual edition of Pench Stripes to our real heroes.

-Pragati Mandloi

# ILLUSTRATIONS

Paintings by Rohit Kumar Shukla, a very talented Forest guard.



Illustrations by Ms. Janhavi Rajan, a budding conservationist who uses her creativity to inspire for wildlife conservation.





# Blogger's park

## A Walk in the Jungle

© Suhas Kumar, 2009

A walk is the best way to start your day in the jungle for it takes you through so many twist and turns and you work on the way revealing what the animals were up to last night or where they are and what they might be doing at present. The dirt tracks and the sandy beds around pools and rivers in the jungle record those signs and evidences that usher you gently into the realm of the wild and uncover a world so far unknown to you. Let's go for a walk in the jungle.

Karmajhiri, December 2006, at 6.00 AM, I am up and about. The sun is peeping from the east to light up the horizon, air is cold, crisp and piercing – I feel it on my already numb cheek – and the ground is still wet with dew. A herd of chital has just finished grazing in the meadow in front of the log huts and on seeing me emerge they move unhurriedly towards a

patch of forests beyond the fire line. One of the stag suddenly stands on its hind legs and rubs his face against the leaves of a drooping branch of an Indian laburnum tree – he is marking his domain with the scent of his facial glands placed below each eye – scent is a strong means of communication in deer world.

Now, I am on to the foot path that, after a short walk, brings me to the forest road to Alikatta (an erstwhile forest village now resettled outside the park as it was sitting within a prime wildlife habitat) and which now has developed into an impressive grassland touching the mid-east bank of the Totaladoh reservoir that submerged about 75 square kilometers of forest area once lush with stately teak trees. The felling of trees from such a huge area created a much needed edge habitat which was almost

absent within Pench national park. This artificially developed edge helped chital to thrive more than any other species for chital is an animal of such transitional habitat. The edge also becomes a congregation ground for almost all animals of the park during the summer season when food and water become limited elsewhere.

And in winter the apparently seamless reservoir attracts flocks of migratory birds and makes it a paradise for bird watchers.

As I approach the causeway that leads to the old rest house, towards the left, I see a pair of Malabar pied hornbill busy devouring juicy fruits on the fig tree. These birds love fig fruits and make so much noise with their rattling piercing gibberish. Here, near the newly built machan house (a house built on high pillars)

- from here you can watch animals, birds and butterflies without alarming them – I wait for Soni. We have planned a morning trek into the nooks and corners of Pench.

Soni is a fine forester, deeply interested in wildlife and loves his job. I recall how some 24 years ago he had applied to the post of wildlife guard and missed it by a few marks, but as he was young and smart the ranger hired him as a barrier help at Turia – the gateway to the Pench National Park. I, then the director of this park often met this boy at the barrier and every time he fascinated me for he displayed rare understanding of the ways of the wild and was always eager to learn – he deserved better. And soon came an opportunity to give him his due, and he got it soon for he was appointed a regular wildlife guard, when a vacancy arose.

My walk down the memory lane is interrupted and I hear whirring of a motorcycle – Soni has arrived from Alikatta. Alighting from the bike, he gives me a customary salute and smartly unpacks his haversack, tak-

es out two pairs of binoculars and a bird book; we begin our walk towards Gurshal ghat. Grasses under the tress are yellow and coarse and the seeds all shed by this time; the deer like chital and barking deer that mainly eat grass go through a tough time in winter as forage gets scarce, but in the park they have some respite as there is a felt of soft green grass along both side of the forest road. The green grass has come up as the staff has burned the roadside strips of dry grass recently – this is a strategy to control forest fires and as a bonus the deer get green grass – for the night dew has caressed the growing tissues and aided production of fresh sprouts on this burned strip that now acts as a fire break and a favourite grazing ground for deer.

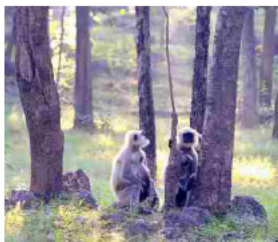
We leave the main road and take a right turn into thick lantana bush, as Soni finds an animal track, we plunge into it, my tall frame is not suitable for such dashes into a tangle of thorny bushes but this is a jungle walk and Soni is a hard task master, I bend and bow, turn and twist and wriggle my way through this thorny jungle and while doing so see the footprints of chital and sambar on the dirt track and two bulbul's nests in the bushes – bulbul loves to eat lantana berries for lantana – an alien from central and south America introduced to Sri Lanka long back and brought to India through the agency of birds – is now naturalised in our country and many indigenous birds and animals love its juicy berries and the shelter it offers to them for resting, ambush and breeding.

Out of the bush we are now on the fire-line which runs from north to south and ends up on Bodanala road, where we shall be going soon after climbing up the Khairvan matta – matta is the local name for a plateau – for we hope to see bears or their signs here. Trudging up the murrum – road to the plateau we find fresh tracks of a leopard and then a day old droppings of a hyena, – you may ask how we know for sure that the pug of the leopard is fresh and the droppings of hyena a day old – good question, for questioning is a precursor to learning. The pug is clear on the fine gravel its edges intact and the hollow made by its pad and toes have no litter (twigs, dry leaves) in it, and the lines which are impressed on the pad is intact, if the print were old you would have found worn out edges, no lines within the pad and some litter inside the trough of the pad, one more thing that these lines or their absence within the hollow tell you is that whether the animal is young or old – a young animal will have a smooth pad which would leave a smooth impression on the soil, the lines are seen if the animal is old – as the animal grows old its pad wears out over time due to friction with the ground and then the pad leaves these marks on soil; as for hyena's droppings – a fresh dropping is moist and some times in winter you may see vapours rising from it and a very old dropping would be brittle or already disintegrated, the one we see today is intact and still slightly moist which tells me clearly that the dropping is a day old and it is of a hyena for the whiteness comes from its ability to crush and eat bones of its prey.





On the flats of Khairvan matta we finally come across the foot prints of a bear and this bear has feasted on the bel fruits is obvious for we see bear droppings at several places, quite slushy and full of bel seeds. We begin to go down at the other side of plateau towards the natural spring which the locals have named Pandri aier (white water) for its water is turbid with some dissolved mineral that makes it look like diluted milk. This spring was embanked to store water for earlier water from this spring trickled down the slope without being availed by the wild animals except bees – after containing the water with a mud wall a pipeline was installed to siphon water down to the meadow in the valley below. This improvisation worked well - the sambar and wild pig got their wallows and other animals and birds a watering hole.



While coming down we spend some time at the spring, Soni cleans up the debris (pebbles and leaf litter) heaped at the mouth of the pipe to restore smooth flow of water, and then we walk down into the valley – a herd of five sambar (one stag and four does), two tree pies and a troop of langur are around the water hole. The stag is in the wallow for in this part this is the time of the year when sambar stag - become raffish and to impress the does with its scent, gain does favor it wallows in the mud leaving its strong scent (pheromones) that its

From the valley we return to the Karmajhiri road. As we move along, our eyes scan the gravelly road for footprints, the trees for birds and the woodlands for animals. Though it is difficult to find clear footprints on a road strewn with pebbles but a regular flow of vehicles on this one has created spots on the road where the soil has become fine grained and perfect to record the movement of the forest denizens, besides the staff have laid impression pads (a 2mx2m strip of fine soil) at several places on the road to record the foot prints of animals. While going uphill to Gurshal ghat, in the fine dirt we see tiny footprints which is overlaid by a trail of parallel furrows – a porcupine had used the road in the night - and a few yards ahead on the flat portion of the ghat we see a deep brown beaded string, its droppings.

As we descend from the ghat a sambar bells and then a doe and two young sambar in velvety winter coats dart across the road and clear a ditch on the other side in graceful bounds; sambar of Pench are so handsome. At this place the jungle reverberates with all kinds of sounds – continuous clamour from the seven sisters ( jungle babblers), distant and monotonous kutroo-kutroo of the brown headed barbet, a piercing ascending pea-kahan – pea kahaan of the brain fever bird and occasional wake up calls from the jungle fowl and high pitched meow-meow of the peacock – that reminds us we are not alone - and then suddenly from our right, about 200 yards away, a langur sitting in the tendu tree begins to holler, - this is no ordinary call – it is a typical signal to all denizens of the forest that a predator is on the mo-

ve. But soon afterwards we hear the sawing sound and know that it is a leopard going back to rest after night's work and he doesn't mind if his fellow beings know of his presence - for last night he had a hearty meal.

The sawing goes feeble and fades, as we move on and reach the Sajajhori pond. We tip-toe up the embankment and we are lucky for seven gaur are drinking on the south most tip of the pond bordering the forests and a sounder of twenty pigs are raking over the – mud not far from us. This group includes some newborn piglets – adorned in shiny pale yellow coats covered with dark brown stripes - they look adorable and nothing like their abominable seniors in their black mud smeared coats. A common kingfisher is perched on a snag in the middle of the pond, he takes off like a rocket and plunges into water and next second he is on the snag again – a small fish neatly wedged in its tiny bill. A racket tailed drongo dashes above flashing his beautiful shiny black feathers and two stout wires projecting from its tail, each wire ends up in a club like feather. Racket tailed drongos are master mimics, they copy the calls of a variety of birds and sometimes animals also, this one we see here keeps to himself.

We leave the main road and take a right turn into thick lantana bush, as Soni finds an animal track, we plunge into it, my tall frame is not suitable for such dashes into a tangle of thorny bushes but this is a jungle walk and Soni is a hard task master, I bend and bow, turn and twist and wriggle my way through this thorny jungle and while doing so see the

footprints of chital and sambar on the dirt track and two bulbul's nests in the bushes - bulbul loves to eat lantana berries for lantana - an alien from central and south America introduced to Sri Lanka long back and brought to India through the agency of birds - is now naturalized in our country and many indigenous birds and animals love its juicy berries and the shelter it offers to them for resting, ambush and breeding.

After spending sometime with the ant lions we walk further and enter Bans nala - a damp, moist place overgrown with bamboo, here on the wet ground we see the spoor of a tiger – we examine it closely, the tiger came from the direction from which we are coming, in the depressions of the pugs there are no leaf litter or twigs - means pug impressions are fresh From the size of the pugmarks we conclude that it is a grown up male tiger and perhaps not very far from us. And then we hear a low growl coming from a dark bower – about 20 yards away - created by drooping bamboo culms have created. We have been duly warned and so, remembering a good advice from childhood, 'there is only a thin line that separates adventure from foolishness', we retreat to the main road taking care not to disturb his highness, and decide to walk back to Karmajhiri. As we reach gursal ghat, we see my jeep coming towards us, Bhaiyalal has a message to deliver – I am needed at Bhopal - the wildlife HQ – urgently.

Saying thanks to Soni, I hop into the jeep and drive towards Nh7. Good bye my dear Pench. Such forays into the jungle are great teach-

ers and I learn something new every time I tread on the dirt roads, trudge up the ridges and jostle through bush. Though, reading this jungle book demands keeping my eyes sharp as a scanner, ears tuned to slightest sound, and nostrils clear to discern different aromas that the jungle emanates at various places and more importantly my brain alert to act smartly in the face of danger lest an aberrant tiger catches me unaware and decides to send me to arcadia. I will end this story with the beautiful thought by Foss that captures the essence of jungle and its seekers. The woods were made for the hunters of dreams, The brooks for the fishers of song; To the hunters who hunt for the gunless game The streams and the woods belong.  
~Sam Walter Foss

## The Jungle ©Suhas Kumar

Until the dark  
let the kakad bark  
as the sun slips down where  
horizon ends  
and the darkness descends  
the jungle wakes up  
to the howls of the jackals, the  
music of the crickets,  
the hoots of the owl,  
and then suddenly  
to the pook of the cheetal  
and the ponk of the sambar  
I stiffen in my track  
now as the twigs crack  
under the footfalls of 'Baagh'  
for the king who lurked hiding  
from his prey  
in brown and grey  
has been seen  
and the jungle reverberates with  
life saving calls.

everyone of them alarming others  
Beware don't fall  
a zephyr rustles  
through the moyan leaves  
touching gently my cheeks  
a snake slithers past my toes  
brings sweat to my brows  
Oh! it was so close  
then like it all had begun,  
suddenly the jungle goes quiet  
Now it is only me and the heavenly light

not even a murmur is heard  
Except the crickets' chord  
and at this time I imagine the  
ghosts,  
hear banshee behind my back  
stopping in my track  
brushing aside the game my mind  
wants to play  
I find a ledge overlooking the valley  
from where I see the silhouettes of  
hills, thickets and trees,  
a huge lake spread before me  
washed in the silver that pours  
from the sky  
and, looking at the hoary moon  
and counting countless stars, I  
listen to the whispers of a gentle  
breeze  
and all this happens in my crease  
I am the jungle of Pench



Suhas Kumar- Shri. Suhas Kumar is an IFS officer of Madhya Pradesh Cadre, 1980 batch. He is currently posted as Additional Principal Chief Conservator of forest (Wildlife).



## The Penchant for the Wild.

©Aniruddha  
Dhamorikar

Traversing through the four-lane highways from Nagpur feels quite unusual. Especially if you belong to the kuchha roads of India, or have travelled the beleaguered roads long enough to remember the coordinates of the potholes on what was once puk-ka. When I travelled through this exact same road as a kid, I felt the road. It was just a busy single-lane strip of tar meant for to-and-fro traffic, and we lumbered across craters that are probably the reason why slipped discs are so common in India, until we reached a ghat that bent gracefully, offering us verdant views of Central India's ancient Satpuda Ranges. A few more miles ahead lies Pench Tiger Reserve, a lesser-known stronghold of tigers and countless other life-forms of India.



Lovingly called Pench or Mowgli's Land, this tiger reserve lies in the hills and valleys of the central Indian highlands, surrounded by a sea of agricultural fields and human settlements, save a narrow channel up north that carves around its own path to join the much larger Kanha Tiger Reserve like an umbilical cord. My journey to this land as a child was solely to see wild animals, and we reaped the rewards of enduring a painstaking tour through the old road only in Pench. I distinctly remember sitting on top of an elephant, probably over four-decades old, thumping on the forest floor through dense thickets to a spot

where a family of tigers sat for an afternoon siesta after a wholesome meal. And I remember a vulture that took off from a bare Teak tree as our fuel-guzzling Sumo approached. And I also remember the pains the earnest Forest Guards and Nature Guides took to show us what we were here for. It was my first ever visit to a National Park and a Tiger Reserve along with my family.

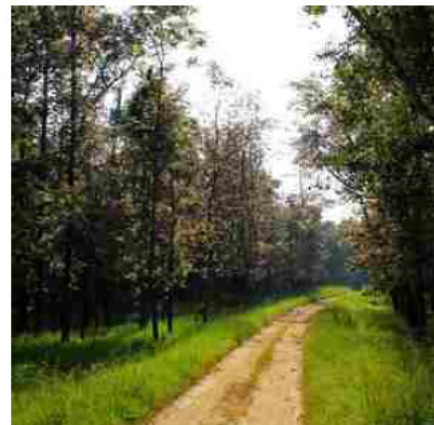
More than ten years later, I had the opportunity to spend a week in the lap of Pench, where I met, talked, and walked with a wonderful group of people keenly and deeply interested in the biodiversity and conservation of their forests. I was a part of The Corbett Foundation's team, and during our sojourn in Pench, we interacted, shared information, and learned a legion of things from the Nature Guides of the Tiger Reserve.

We were stationed at a really old rest house at Karmajhiri Gate, the same place I had visited as a kid, and we trod on one of the finest kuchha roads in the black of the night and light of the morning

star, seeing Chital, signs of tigers, and owls wearily watching us move.

Having spent a year roaming Kanha's wilderness, I was deeply curious to explore the Teak (*Tectona grandis*) forests of Pench – those broad-leaved, translucent, half-eaten trees emerging from a bed of the most lush green grass that I have ever seen. This forest and its inhabitants reminded me of the forests of the Sahyadri, particularly the dry-deciduous regions of escarpments, and the golden-green light that bathed the ground from noon to

evening was reminiscent of spring time in the Carolinian forests of Canada.



I believe I share a bond of some sort with Teak trees that is different from my bond with Sal trees. While I look at Sal trees and the forests they dominate as mighty and a little intimidating, although in a sort of a way that awakens awe and praise, Teak trees with their small stature feel homely, for I have seen them almost throughout my life, and they remind me of the little time I've spent in westward forests.

This training-session was to serve as a refresher course to Nature Guides, and emerged as a great learning experience for me. We talked a lot about insects and spiders, and snakes and frogs, trees and mammals, and the forests and all its inhabitants and their roles. And we walked through the old Teak plantations of Pench, through tall grass following tiger pugmarks, and stalked butterflies on our knees on riverbeds.

Nature Guides are the torchbearers of conservation and are a vital link between people and nature. Nature has entrusted them with knowledge, as an accolade for their years of experience, both cultural as well as natural. The job of Nature Guides is to inform people about the biodiversity of a place, entertain them with all sorts of information – from a little spider to a mighty tiger, and at the same time ensure that they cause minimum disturbance while

passing through forests. They bear the burden of a researcher and a manager, and they bear the brunt of economic and social requirements of their families.

Most of the Nature Guides from India come from local communities living around Protected Areas. And although it is a great opportunity for employment and also ensures their participation in wildlife conservation by creating public awareness, their lives are very different from what they share with tourists who have rarely ever visited forests before during their brief safari rides. And what they live with and experience near a forested area can be startlingly contrary to what they speak about.

Living with animals such as the tigers, leopards, bears and the deer raiding your cattle and your crop for years evokes a feeling that is very different from that of awe and wonder. Nature Guides, who may be facing damages from wild animals, have to often suppress this feeling to evoke feelings of excitement and thrill amongst tourists to spot the tigers and deer. And that job, I think, is the most difficult, for it is in deep conflict with their emotions. I however think that this also shows a strong connection and commitment towards nature and its conservation, for if the measure of resentment towards wildlife was higher amongst these people, we wouldn't have had such a strong and dedicated team of Nature Guides with us. And this fills me with hope.



Aniruddha Dhamorikar- "I use words and photography as a medium of expression, and I use the platform of Sahyadrica to convey my interactions with the natural world. I believe that it is the responsibility of every dweller of this planet to open their ears and eyes and feel the world around – to see the little ants and the bees, birds and beasts, the trees, the mountains and the oceans – to see the world through their eyes – and realise that we are not above them, but a part of them."



# SUPERSTAR OF PENCH: STORY OF COLLARWALI, THE GOD MOTHER



Badimada with Collarwali

Photo Courtesy : NS Dungriyal

Ever heard of a tigress with 22 cubs in her life time? Probably it's the first time in the history of wild that such a tigress is witnessed. It's a story of the infamous Collarwali of the Pench. In year 2000, a Tigress with three cubs, one male and two female, was seen in the tarai area of kalapahad, Pench. Nobody knew that this tigress in future will be known as the mother of all mothers in Pench. She was Badimada, who in year 2005 gave birth to the miraculous tigress, the infamous collarwali, who is fondly known as heroine of the Pench. Collarwali, the superstar of pench is called so for a reason. She is the reason for thriving tiger population of the landscape, she is the reason for maintaining the beauty of these jungles, she is the reason why thousands of tourists are attracted to the park, and she is reason of our pride. She has given 6 litters till now, in total adding 22 cubs to the Pench Tiger Population. Beginning with the story, let's begin with the mother of this godmother first. Collarwali was born to Badimada along with three other cubs, two males and another female in year 2005. For the first time on 9th of September 2005, Elephant mahawats witnessed this family of five in the Adjalmatta area of bison beat of karmajhiri range. At that time, the cubs were only a week old and didn't even have their eyes open. Badimada used to carry them in her mouth to take them from one place to another for their safety. That was the naturally beautiful sight of motherhood in the wild. When cubs were 3 months old, then only, their mother started taking them out of the cave. The mother used to hunt and leave the kill on the spot to go back and bring the cubs for eating the kill. When they are done, she will escort them back to the cave. That's how she raised them for first few months. The forest guards used to monitor them from elephants time to time. When Badimada was raising these four beautiful cubs, team BBC documented this in a movie named "Spy in the jungle". The future of these jungles can be seen adapting to the jungle life in this wonderfully captured movie..

When the cubs grew to the age of around one year, the mother started training the cubs to survive in the wild. Once when the patrolling team was monitoring the family from elephant, they witnessed this astonishing training. Badimada brought a cheetal fawn of around 6 months and put it in front of the cubs. The fawn was hurt in the fore limb so he couldn't run away. When one of the cubs approached the fawn to kill it, it started making loud noises that scared the cub away. The mother again brought the fawn in her mouth to the cubs; the cubs again went near the fawn to kill, fawn again made loud noises and again cubs ran away. It went for a while. Then a male cub got hold of a fawn and finally killed it and started eating it, other cubs also went to enjoy the feast but the hunter cub roared and didn't allowed anyone else to come near unless he is done. Once he is done, others also feasted on the fawn. This behavior showed the confidence he gained after killing his meat for the first time. At the age of one to one and a half year, the cubs were accompanied by their mother everywhere, after that mother gradually started leaving them in different areas. That's how by the age of two, they marked their own territories.



First time collaring of T-15 on 11th March 2008



First litter of Collarwali

The territory of Collarwali is kalapahad and the region around lantana 1 and lantana 2 of Alikatta . These areas are open for tourism, so tourists get to see her frequently. The territory of her sister is near the baghinnala region, so she got famous as "Baghinnala wali". She is also sighted frequently as her territory also falls in tourism zone.

## First litter of Collarwali

At the age of around two and a half year, collarwali delivered her first litter. In the region of kalapahad, she gave birth to three cubs, one male and two females in the bhalu ki gufa (Bear's cave) in front of the badi gufa (Big cave) of the area. Collarwali was sighted with her cubs for the first time on 25.05.2008. But unfortunately none of the cub survived more than two months and died due to pneumonia.



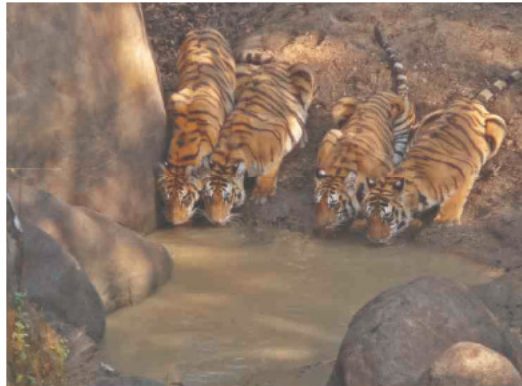
### Second litter on Collar -

When Tiger show from elephants was permitted in the park, Mahawats used to take tourists on Elephant back to show tigers. On October 10, 2008, Mahawats saw a tigress on a cheetal kill near dyke no. 1. Her mammary glands were indicating her motherhood. Mahawats followed the tigress to the compartment no. 585 of lantana 2 region and to their surprise; tigress called the cubs and four cubs came out. They started breast feeding on their mother collarwali. Mahawats then inform the higher official via wireless.

### Third litter of Collarwali -

For the first time in the history of Pench, a tigress gave birth to 5 cubs in year 2010. On October 5, 2010, Collarwali was seen with four female and one male cub.

During the time of tiger re-introduction in Panna tiger reserve, one of the four daughters of collarwali, K-5 was sent to Panna on January 21, 2014. This tigress was tranquilized, radio collared and transferred to Panna in a special rescue vehicle. She has given birth to three cubs and is now raising her cubs in Panna, adding to the prosperity of Panna Tiger reserve. Before this female translocation, a male tiger was also translocated to Panna from Pench in November 2009.



Second Litter of Collarwali

Under the project "Ecology of tigers in Pench Tiger reserve", Scientists of Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, tranquilized and radio collared one of the male tiger of this family in 2010.



### Fourth litter of Collarwali -

On May 15, 2012, Collarwali was again sighted with three cubs. There were two females and one male in her fourth litter. Among these three cubs, one of the female was found dead near bijamatta talaab on April 22, 2013. Rest two cubs survived.



Translocation of a tigress K-5 to Panna Tiger Reserve



Translocation of a tigress K-5 to Panna Tiger Reserve

### Fifth Litter of Collarwali -

On October 16, 2013, Collarwali again gave birth to three cubs. All the cubs were male this time and all survived. These cubs, who are now almost adults, are frequently sighted by the tourist vehicles. They are sighted crossing roads and playing with each other several times in the park.

### Sixth litter of Collarwali-

Astonishing everyone, this tigress did not stop even after five litters and gave birth to her sixth

#### Sixth Litter of Collarwali



#### Third litter of Collarwali



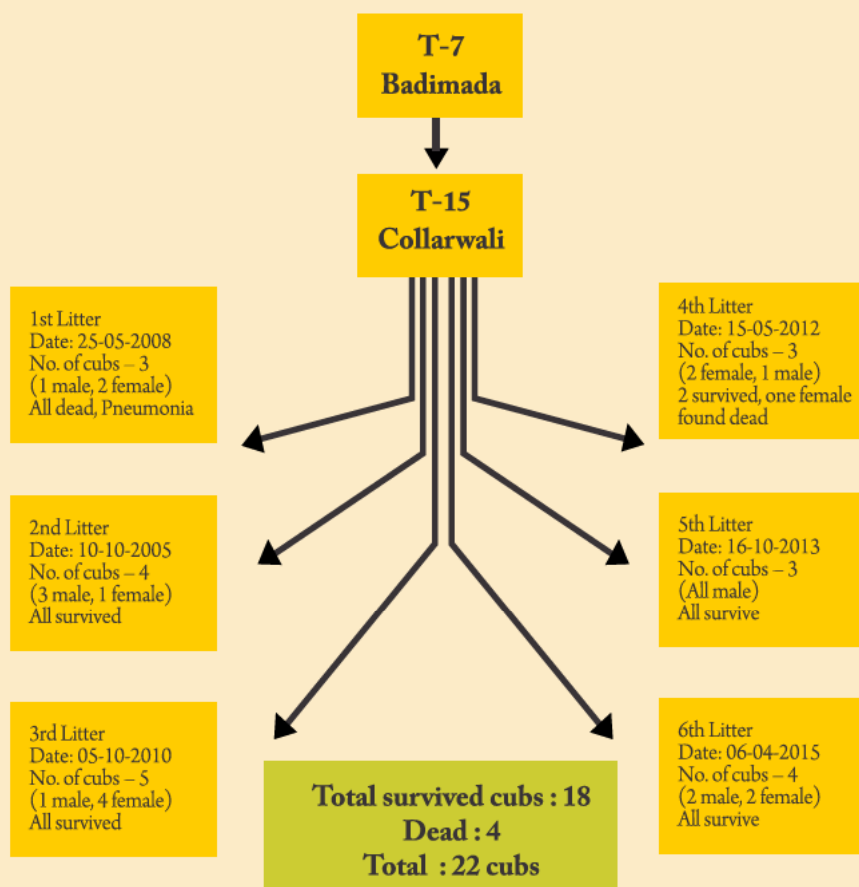


litter in March 2015. On April 6, when the range assistant was patrolling the area with his team on elephant, he saw Collarwali. It looked like she has given birth again, so the patrolling team followed her. She was on a quest for hunt that morning and she succeeded. She hunted down a cheetal, ate half of it and hid the rest in the bushes. She went back to her den and called her cubs. Four beautiful cubs came out of the cave and started breast feeding on their marvelous mother. The cubs were of around 15-20 days with their eyes completely open. All of them looked happy and healthy.

It's astonishing to see how a single individual can make such a remarkable contribution to its habitat. It's well understood that the value of each and every tiger is immense in the wild and the necessity to protect this marvelous species cannot be denied.

Translated from Story By : Gautam Prasad Soni

## Pedigree Chart of Collarwali



## Mowgli and the Mowgli Utsav

Pench has a glorious history of natural wealth and unique cultural richness, a description on which can be read in several classics ranging from Ain-e-Akbari to Kipling's Jungle book. Several natural history books like R. A. Strendale's "Seonee - Camp life in the Satpuras", Forsyth's "Highlands of Central India" and Dunbar Brander's "Wild animals of Central India" explicitly present the detailed panorama of nature's abundance in this tract. Strendale's semi-autobiographical 'Seonee' was the inspiration behind Rudyard Kipling's 'Jungle Book'.

Kipling's "Jungle Book" has made the forests of Seoni and the character of Mowgli immortal for the world. Mowgli, the wolf child was caught eating human flesh with wolves by Lieut Moor in the Jungles of Seoni in the year 1831 near the village Sant Vavadi, situated 10 kms away from Seoni. Sir Rudyard Kipling wrote "The Jungle Book" in 1894, based on William Sleeman's book, the Rambles and Recollections; in which Sleeman narrated the story of the Wolf Child. Kipling has mentioned Jungles of Seoni, river Wainganga, Hirri, Kanhiwada and Dhutera in his book. These references are the same as in the year 1831, when the wolf child was caught. 'The Jungle Book' is based on forest of Seoni now 'Pench Tiger Reserve'. Sir Rudyard Kipling served in the Dewas Riyasat of old Madhya Pradesh. He probably visited the Seoni forest and learned about the forest and wildlife of that region during that time.



With Such glorious past, State Government of Madhya Pradesh along with the Pench Tiger Reserve, in its endeavor to conserve these magnificent forests, organizes a three day event "Mowgli Utsav" every year to generate awareness among school students regarding the history of the area and to inculcate the feeling of environment and wildlife conservation. It is a grand event in which around 250 students and 50 teachers from all the districts of the state participate. The students participate in various competitions and activities. They are given the exposure of natural forest and wildlife by taking each one of them on safari ride in the national park.





## Dealing with the mystery - snake handling training in Pench

In the mid of March, Mougli Foundation along with Tiger Awareness and Saving Tiger Society organized a two day training on handling the lesser known and highly feared beautiful creature "Snake" in Pench for the front line staff of Pench Tiger Reserve and Seoni Circle. The training broke many myths about the snakes and provided staff with tools and techniques to handle snakes and snake bites. Staff learned the trades and tricks on how to rescue and rehabilitate snakes and save themselves from snake bites. This training would help in conserving snakes and reducing deaths due to snake bites. It has boosted confidence of the staff a great deal. A medical check-up camp was also organized with the training and medical kits were distributed to the staff.



## Know our people



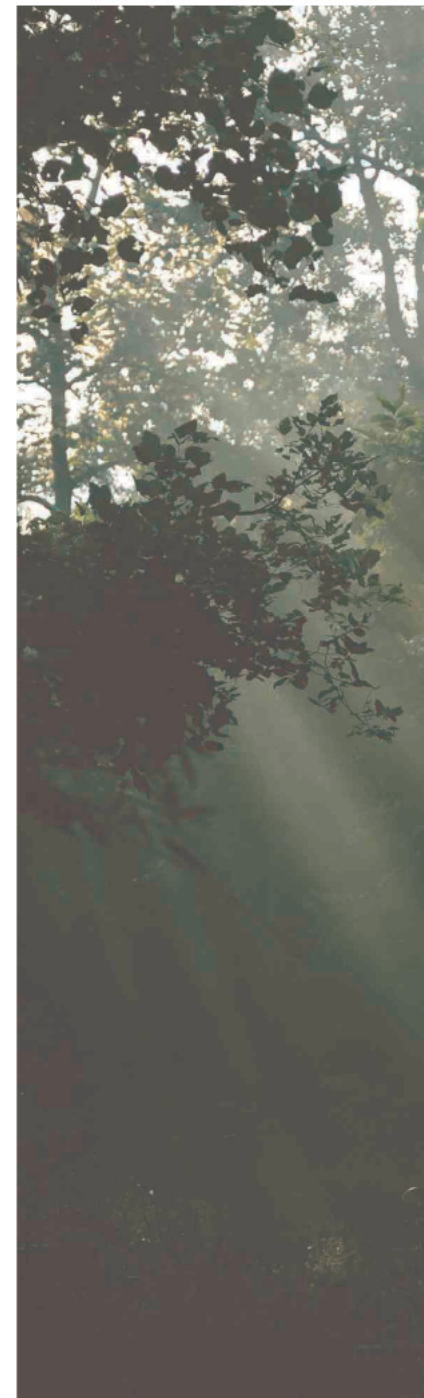
Indramani Tiwari

Indramani Tiwari, joined as forest guard at Pench in 1984, since then he is serving and protecting this park with full zeal. He spent almost three decades of his life as a brave soldier of this park.

When he starts thinking about what his life was like 30 years ago, it's astonishing to realize how certain elements of being a protector of forest has completely changed. There are things from the past that used to happen all the time but now never happens anymore. Traversing down the memory lane, he quotes an incident "Once we went to Ambadi gaon with Suhas Kumar Sahab for a meeting, in which, a teacher from the village offered chair to him. Later, that teacher was thrown out of the village for the same. Helping Park workers in anyway was considered as an offence at that time. People used to put forest on fire because they were not allowed to take their animals inside for grazing. Now with the changing time, we got acceptance in the nearby villages. Scenario has changed in favour of wildlife and conservation over the years. Now villagers respect us. There was a time when villagers hated us and we were not allowed by them to enter their villages."

Talking about the hardships in the past, he says that there were no such facilities in the past as now. Now the time has changed and life is much easy. Now forest guards have access to so many facilities. In our times we used to use kerosene chimneys in kacche camps, now guards get solar lights instead. We lived in dingy camps for months and did our duty there. In groups, we used to do paidal gashti for long kilometres with other guards.

Turning few pages from his life Tiwari ji shared his most dreadful and unforgettable experience of his life, a tiger attack. "I was posted at alikatta those days; I remember clearly, it was 25th of May, 1995. Around 4'O clock in the afternoon, we went out for patrolling. There was a big doh near mahadev ghat at that time, where people from nearby villages used to come for illegal fishing. We were patrolling that area, when we saw a full grown male Tiger sitting very near to us in Gajar ghaas. Due to dense weeds, we couldn't see it and unknowingly we went closer. He got startled and attacked me from front. I couldn't balance my body and fell down. Tooth of the tiger pierced my arm. The hole was so deep that I could even put my finger in. He vanished in seconds. I was Bleeding when fellow guards took me to alikatta where we had wireless. I still carry the mark from that attack on my arm which always reminds me of that scary moment. From my experience i can say that the Tiger had no intention to kill me, but only attacked in self-defence, he only wanted to scare us away."







## Shanta bai

Shanta bai, a tough and dynamic woman of Karmajhiri, is a leader with courage to voice her opinion for the welfare of her people.

Living in the forest village of Karmajhiri for over four decades now, Shanta bai understands the dynamics and problems of her people very well. Years ago, distressed by the problem of crop raiding by wild animals in her village, she decided to protest and ask forest officers to relocate the village or give them another sustainable livelihood solution.

She wasn't ready to back off and later, her constant struggle made her pioneer of Eco-tourism in Karmajhiri village. In 1997, she was given the charge of managing a canteen that catered to the Forest rest house at karmajhiri which she is running successfully till date. Gradually as the tourism picked up, she got two rooms constructed for the tourists in 2007. She proudly boasts that with her augmented resources, she has bought a Gypsy for safari and a tractor for her family farms. Now the whole village is earning its livelihood from the park in one way or other. Her sons are also employed as guard and nature guide in the park.

Understanding the plight of the villagers, forest department decided to build a crop protection wall around the fields which came as a relief to the villagers, owing to the efforts of Shanta bai. Her efforts didn't even stop there. Looking at the condition of women in her village and how they are harassed by their menfolk due to rampant alcoholism, she ignited a movement against brewing of mahua alcohol in the village. She got all women together and approached the SP and Collector of the district. Now there was no option for men but to stop.

Shantabai, an inspiring lady behind the happiness of this village, is surely an epitome of women empowerment in rural India.



## Rarest of rare:

# White Beauty



Natural world is filled with mysterious happenings and curious oddities. From the impressive to downright weird, sometimes nature surprises the eyes and bewilders the mind. Mysterious Mother Nature plays with the genetics and heredity make-up of her creatures creatively and Pench is witnessing a product of one of her crafty mutation as this beautiful white deer. What can be only termed as one of the rarest of rare incident, an albino cheetal is sighted in the Gumtara range of Pench. This beautiful sparkling white female cheetal is about a year old mystery for the park now. It was sighted amidst a group of spotted deer, langurs and gaurs.

Although albinism is indeed an indication of a genetic mutation, it will also impose challenges of survival to this beautiful creature. To live and flourish in wild, animals must be able to find food and avoid becoming food themselves. The white coat or missing camouflage may affect it as a prey. It may get easily noticed and captured more easily than other deer or in may be, predator will not even recognize it as food. The mystery is yet to be resolved.







# WILD DIARIES

Photo Courtesy:  
Sanjay Shukla  
Monu Dubey



## E-base: Educating children, Sustaining Future

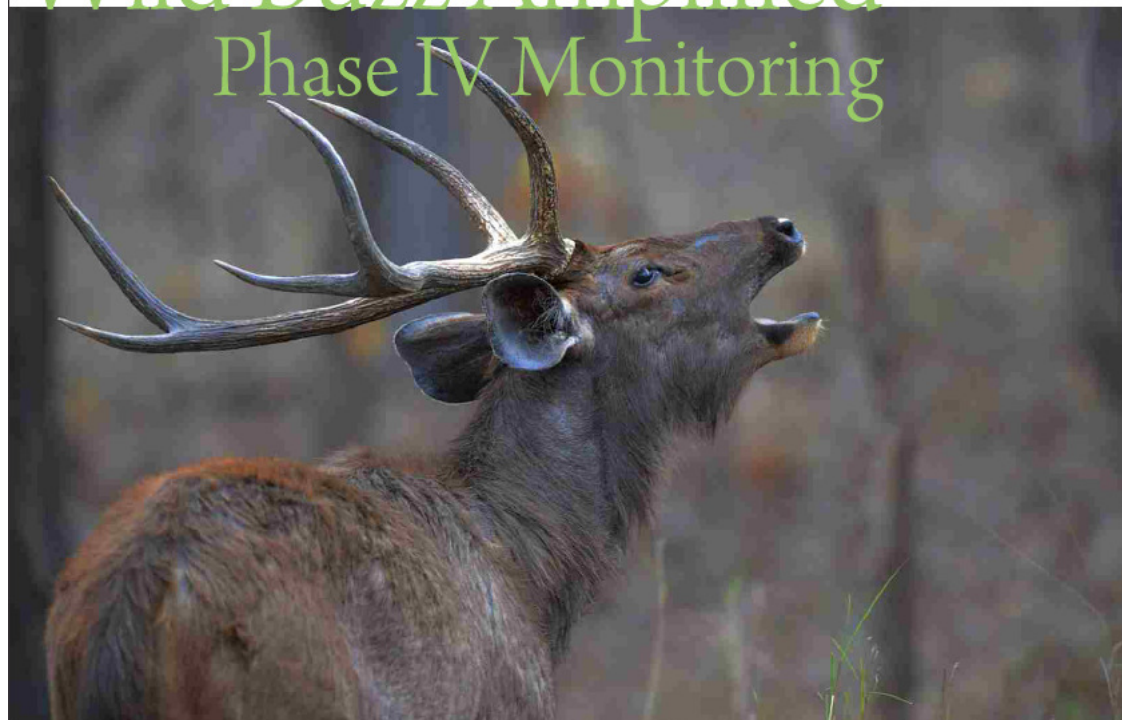


Convinced that the literacy and education will pave the way for the survival of Tiger, Conservation Wildlands Trust has created World's second E-base (Education base in the Interpretation Centre at the Turia Gate of Pench Tiger Reserve, first one being in Antarctic. At this unique centre, school students from all nearby schools learn about the importance of nature and its conservation by various mediums.

Created around three and a half year ago, this unique centre has a library with great collection of books which is widely aimed at educating children, and it also cater to the needs of forest guards and locals of the nearby region.

Unlike other libraries, echoing with the buzz of excited kids, this centre is surely sending the message that there is more value to be derived from conserving forests than uprooting it. Apart from its initiatives in molding future generation towards a better world through nature education, Conservation Wildlands Trust also runs sustainable livelihood programs and comprehensive health services project in the area which is making a positive difference in the lives of the locals.

## Wild Buzz Amplified Phase IV Monitoring



In all tiger reserves, everyone works hard to maintain the wild buzz of the beautiful creatures residing in. The healthy population of the tigers and the prey base is the top most priority in these serene landscapes. The tiger population is estimated by camera trapping exercise and the work is continuously going on to estimate this year's tiger population in Pench. In general forest areas, tiger population are monitored once in every four year, but for tiger reserves, it is mandatory to estimate the population every year, given the sensitivity and possible fluctuations in the wild population. Same in the case of prey base estimation, every year population is estimated by transect line exercise to monitor the structure of the prey base and to understand the population growth dynamics of different species.

In Pench, the prey base estimation in core as well as in buffer zone is done twice a year; once in summer and once in winter. Predator and co-predators are also estimated via camera trap exercise in core and buffer zone. This year, the population of prey base has shown tremendous increase in comparison to last year which is a good sign for the forests of Pench.



# A walk in the woods, Giant step towards conservation

In the chill of November, WWF India in partnership with Pench and Kanha Tiger reserve organized a 130 km walk in the most viable Tiger Corridor of the country, the Kanha-Pench tiger corridor. In this seven day event, around 60 wildlife enthusiast from across the country participated to spread the word of tiger conservation. They were led by Chittaranjan Dave, landscape coordinator from World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

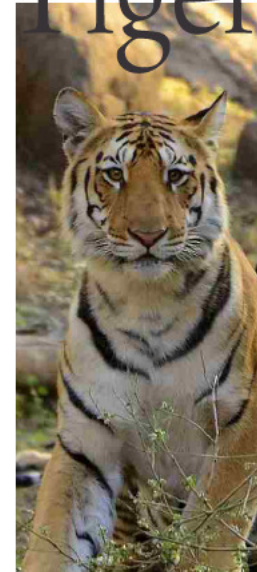
The participants found not only the evidences of tiger presence in the corridor, also, the wild dogs, leopard, hyena, jackal, sambar, cheetal and sloth bear signs were found during the walk. The aim of the walk was to raise awareness among local communities on the vital role of tiger corridors and the need to conserve wildlife outside of protected areas.



Stopping at different villages each night, the trip offered the unique experience of being immersed into local ways of life. In total 36 villages were visited by participants, giving them the opportunity to interact face-to-face with the villagers. The wildlife movies were also shown to the villagers and participants that ultimately raised the awareness in the corridor villages.

During the walk more than 1500 villagers participated in eight awareness events including in-depth conservation discussions. During the trail, villagers largely voiced concern about losing their ancestral home if they are relocated from the corridor. Participants and forest officials cleared their doubts and assured them that no such plan exists.

# Tiger Safari



In the buffer zone of PTR, an exciting new eco-tourism venture is on its way. All Tiger lovers can now actually go on a safari where chances of their tiger sighting is almost a sure shot. It's a new venture in the buffer zone of Pench Tiger Reserve, funded by MPEDB. This is a 500 hectare enclosure where tiger will be kept in its natural habitat with natural prey base. Tourist experience will be as wild as in core zone.

The major objective of this project is reducing the tourism pressure from the core zone, providing new livelihood opportunities to villagers via eco-tourism and also creating a natural refuge for problematic tigers such as orphaned cubs or stray tigers.

# Tigers of the buffer zone

The team of Wildlife Conservation Trust (WCT) has made an effort to camera trap the tigers of the buffer zone of Seoni district as per the protocol of NTCA and to the surprise of everyone; these thickets are abode to 14 adult tigers. The buffer zone of Seoni district is a part of Pench- Kanha corridor which connects two very important source tiger population of the Central Indian landscape. The results indicate that the spill over population of these two tiger reserves is settling and moving in the buffer zone. It is a positive indications for a healthy gene flow in the landscape, now interventions for the protection of these wild stripes will be strengthen in the area. The team has worked in the area for around two months.



A photograph from the camera trap: Cattle kill, part and parcel of increased tiger population in the buffer zone, although it's not a very big problem in Pench, owing to good prey base even in buffer zone. Timely compensation is a tool to avoid any conflict with the locals on this issue.





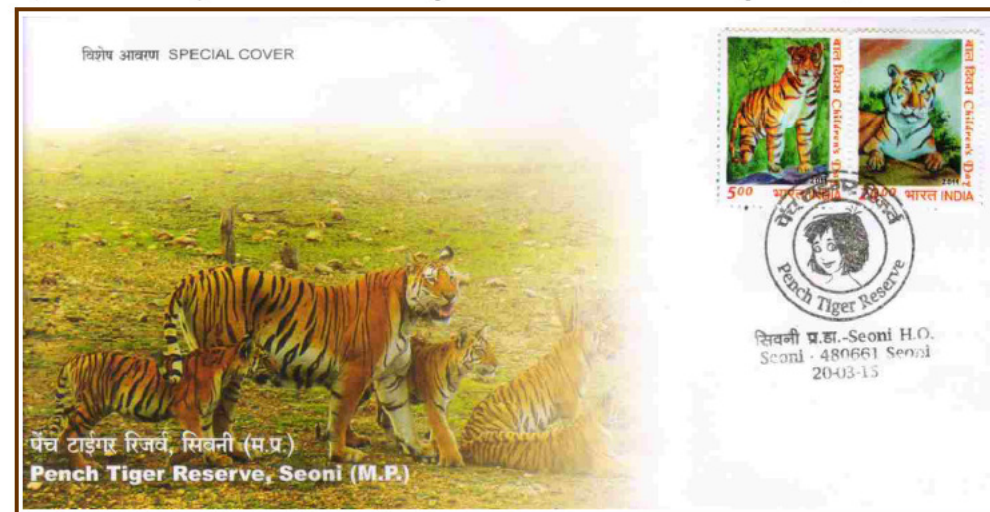
## Jungle Safari for the students of peripheral villages



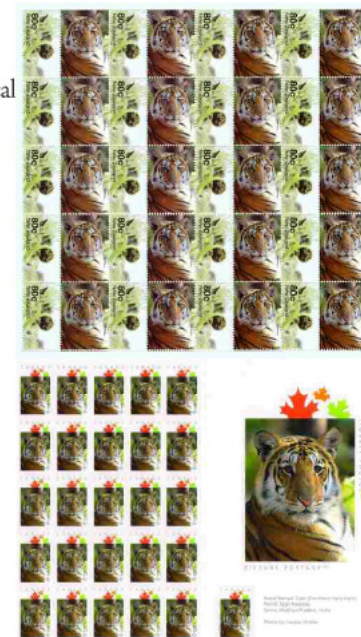
With the objective to promote and support enthusiastic students by providing a platform, BNHS with the full support from Pench Tiger Reserve organized "Jungle Safari" for peripheral school students so that they can see things directly from the field and learn. Each year with new session, BNHS provides regular Environmental Education and Awareness to students via different means including Oral lectures & Discussions, Presentations, Films & Documentary Screening, Nature walk in field, Jungle Safari and Nature Camps. Around 300 Students Participated with full enthusiasm and learned about the nature and ecosystem from the Guides and BNHS Education officer. Students have great sighting including Jackals, Cheetals, Sambar, Nilgais, Indian Bison, Langurs, Monkeys, Peacock and other common & migratory birds. Students sighted BaghinNala's Tigress with 2 cubs and also saw three cubs of Collarwali hunting and eating Cheetal in Pench River bed. They also saw rare albino cheetal. All students and Teachers were filled with joy and mesmerized by the Safari.

## Special Cover Released

A special cover on Pench Tiger Reserve - Madhya Pradesh, India was released on 20th Mar 2015 by Indian Postal department in a function organized at Turia Gate of Pench Tiger Reserve, Seoni.



This event was held as a part of World Forestry Day celebrations. The occasion was graced by the presence of officers and staff of forest department, postal department, and representatives from local resorts, guides and villagers. This has been made possible only due to the efforts of Shri. Sanjay Shukla, Chief Conservator of Forest, Seoni, who is also a very talented photographer and a prominent Philatelist of the country.





# Harmonizing ways with nature: BCRLIP



Charu Tiwari is an intern from Indian Institute of Forest Management, currently working under the Biodiversity Conservation and Rural Livelihoods Improvement Project (BCRLIP) in Chhindwara.

Creation of harmony between man and the nature has been a consideration of times. And man has been making efforts on various scales to achieve this aim. Humans are also a part of the nature and hence fostering of nature cannot be done without development of humans. In the present scenario, we need to correct our approach towards conservation and stop seeing it as a standalone subject in the ecosystem.

Initial steps towards this have been taken by the Ministry of environment, forests and climate change by introducing BCRLIP. Biodiversity conservation and rural livelihoods improvement project (BCRLIP) is a project of MOEF&CC, funded by the World Bank. The project is an example of landscape approach where the integrated approach is adopted for the simultaneous development of villages and the natural forests of the target region. It is for improving the livelihoods of the villages and conservation of biodiversity of the area. This project is operational in Askot landscape (Uttarakhand), Gir National Park (Gujrat), Kalakkad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve (Tamil Nadu) and Periyar Tiger Reserve (Kerala). Recently, Satpura landscape (Madhya Pradesh) has joined the list. In the initial phase, 25 villages have been selected for the project implementation in the Satpura-Pench corridor. Some of the villages from the buffer zones of Pench and Satpura Tiger Reserves along with other corridor villages are chosen as target villages. All the villages are highly dependent on forests for their livelihoods activities. Under this project, the villagers are to be provided with alternative livelihood options to reduce their dependency on forests. This will reduce the human-pressure on the forests gradually. It will be an important achievement towards conservation of forests and biodiversity.

As alternative livelihood options villagers are getting trained for various jobs like masonry, JCB machine operators, micro irrigation, automobile repair and more. The training is provided by the institute of Confederation of Indian Industries (CII). Ashok Leyland's institute imparts training of four wheeler driving. The training imparts them with the requisite skill sets and they are placed in various industries after the training period. There are also provisions for improvement in agriculture for the families with land holdings.

There are other plans which are to be implemented in near future as the project progresses like habitat management, livelihood profiling, resource mapping and formation of institutional support system. The best practices of various places are to be studied as successful models and will be applied to regions with suitable condition.

The project initiates a hope that humans are aware and trying to soothe the relationship between man and nature by advancing with the integrated approach where humans and nature go hand-in-hand. It is a part of the much awaited solution for nature-human conflict. There is a long way to go yet, but at least we can say that we are on the right road.



## Training by WTI

Wildlife trust of India conducted a training program for the staff to understand the dynamics of forensic investigation in wildlife crime cases. The staff got trained in investigating the minute details and collecting evidences properly in such cases. WTI trained the staff in effectively carrying out the court procedures so that the criminals don't simply get away due to lack of proper documentation. The training will help the department in dealing effectively with such criminal cases in future.

## ORGANIC FARMING, SUSTAINABLE LIVES

A workshop entitled, "Traditional Health Practices and Ethno Medicinal Farming-Generation of Sustainable Livelihood for the Farming Community", was successfully organized at the Khawasa Interpretation Centre of PTR on 27th of March 2015. Dr. Rajaram Tripathi who was the Chief Guest as well as Resource Person on the occasion is Senior Herbal Scientist and CEO of Central Herbal Agro Marketing Federation. Dr. Tripathi is also associated with certain other highly esteemed organizations working in the field of medicinal plants cultivation and organic farming. Being a lucid orator, Dr. Tripathi captivated the participants and inspired them to realize the benefits of organic and medicinal farming. He narrated his personal experiences of failures and successes that he had to face while adopting to medicinal farming over a period of two decades. The farmers were highly motivated by his power plus speech. The occasion was also graced by the presence of many other distinguished and prominent guests who themselves are associated with organic farming and the farming of medicinal plants. They also interacted with the farmers to motivate them with their real life stories. Farmers pledged to associate in groups and start cultivating medicinal plants in a minimum of an acre of land, conserving forests. This they felt would reap them large benefits in the near future. All in all, the workshop was a huge success.

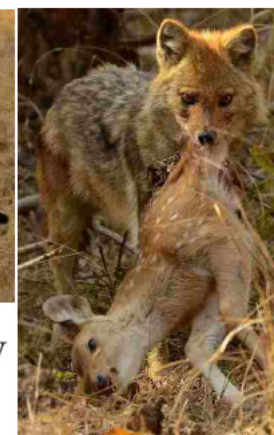
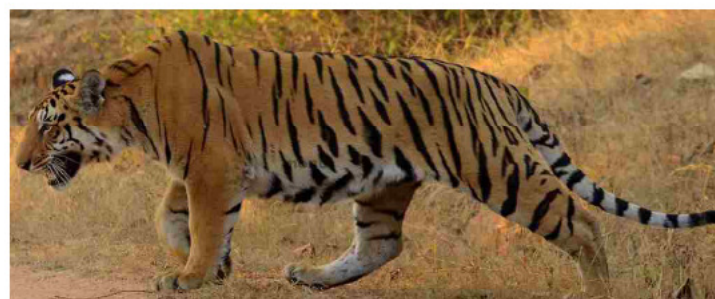


## A CENTRE FOR EMPOWERMENT

"A responsible nature travel experience is one that contributes to the conservation of the ecosystem while respecting the integrity of host communities and wherever possible ensures that activities are complementary, or at least compatible with the existing resource usage pattern and supplements concept of sustainability."

A Community & Cultural Centre has been constructed in the village of karmajhiri which will be functional very soon. This centre is an all new tourist facility at karmajhiri gate of the park and would be run by the local community itself. The centre will have all the facilities ranging from top class accommodation to local food and ethnic cultural performances. The centre will run on the age old principle-"OF the people, BY the people, FOR the people".

One of the purposes of this centre is inculcating the sense of ownership in villagers towards wildlife and natural heritage leading to the attainment of goal of sustainable tourism in the area. This centre will give a sense of empowerment to the villagers and the strong local experience to the tourists. The centre would be a respectable platform for all village level cultural and social activities as well. This intervention will take away the excessive pressure of managing tourists in the guest house from the forest department and will help them to concentrate on their core responsibility of wildlife protection and conservation.



## Madhya Pradesh Tiger Foundation Society An opportunity for You

Madhya Pradesh Tiger Foundation Society, founded in 1997, is an organization that has been providing support to Protected Areas of Madhya Pradesh in partnership with individuals and organizations outside the government. The chairman of this prestigious organization is Honorable Minister of Forest, M.P. and the Secretary is Chief Wildlife Warden of Madhya Pradesh. MPTFS is an opportunity for all organizations that are still struggling to find out that one credible organization and a sparkling idea where they can put their CSR money and make a difference. MPTFS can help you in increasing the visibility of your organization at prime locations in the National Parks, Tiger Reserves and Wildlife Sanctuaries of Madhya Pradesh. MPTFS offers various projects in the field of wildlife and environment conservation, eco-tourism and rural livelihoods.





## Forest Minister's Visit to Pench Tiger Reserve

Dr. Gauri Shankar Shejwar, Honorable forest Minister of Madhya Pradesh visited Pench Tiger Reserve on March 5, 2015 to March 8, 2015. He discussed issues related to protection, management, eco-tourism and safari with the staff and provided his valuable suggestions. He had a joyful ride with his family in the park.

## Chief Minister's visit to Pench Tiger Reserve

On 5th and 6th of May 2015, Honorable Chief Minister Shri. Shivraj Singh Chauhan visited Pench Tiger Reserve along with his wife Mrs. Sadhna Singh. Shri. Chauhan interacted with the frontline staff and officers and motivated them to carry on with the good work. On his safari, he sighted tiger along with other wild animals. He also took a meeting with the villagers of karmajhiri village, listened to their problems and informed them about the schemes and programs of government which are beneficial to them.

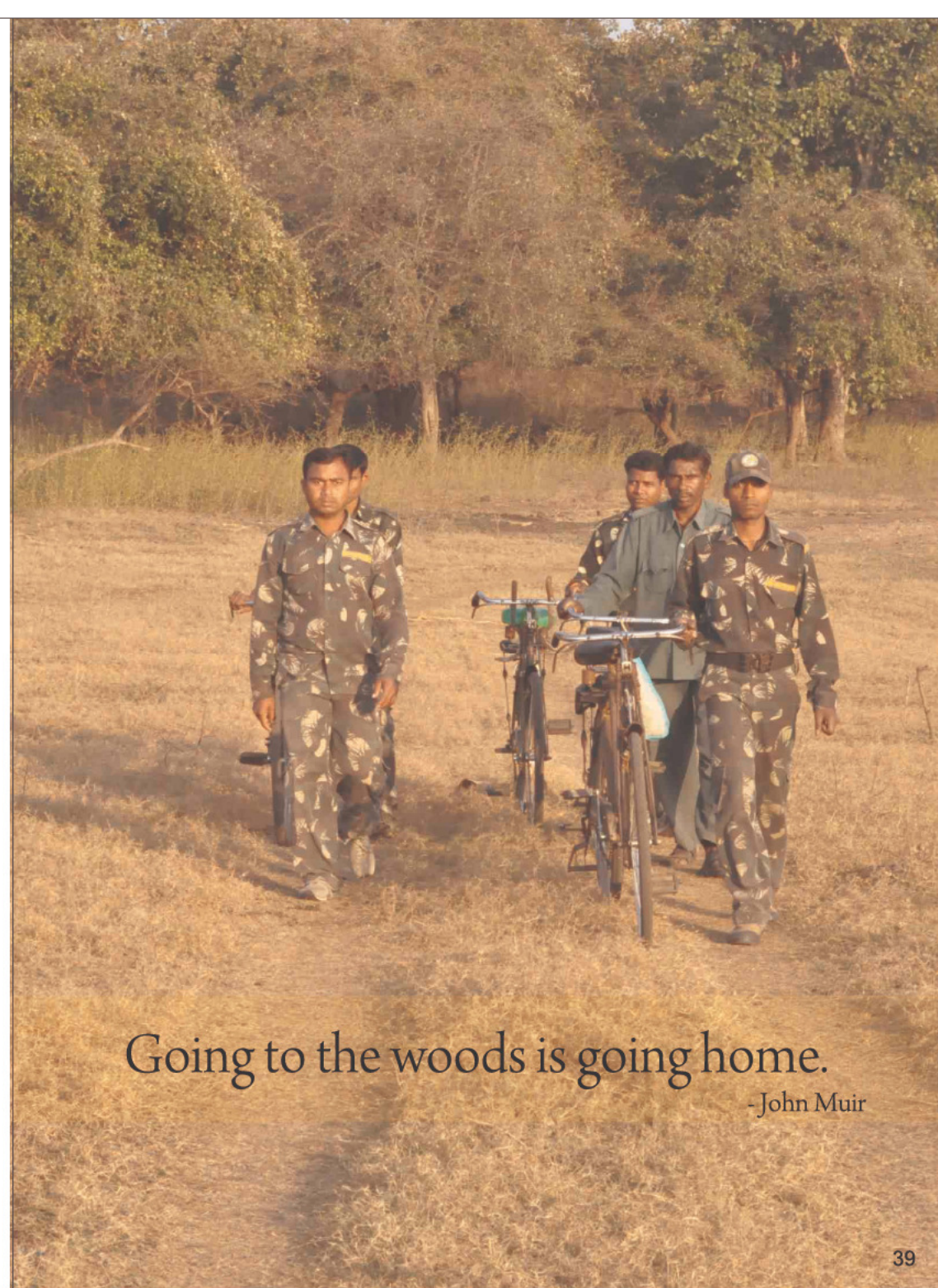




# Management Effectiveness Evaluation results

Based on rigorous protocols established in consultation with some of the finest field biologists both in and out of government, the official tiger estimation for the year 2014 is now 2,226 tigers, up by over 30 per cent over the 2010 figure of 1,706. India is now home to around 70% total Tigers of the world in wild.

Management effectiveness evaluation (MEE) results were announced by NTCA &WII in which Pench Tiger Reserve made it in the category of "Very Good". Pench Tiger reserve dedicate this victory to our conservation team especially the foot soldiers and the front line staff that works day and night to save our natural heritages. Kudos to the real heroes of our forests!



Going to the woods is going home.

- John Muir