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Tadoba

DIARIES

The Official Newsletter of Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve

Jeswin Kingsly

Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve Conservation Foundation, Chandrapur

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MONSOON MAGIC

Dear Reader

The early arrival of the monsoon this year brought immense relief to all of us entrusted with the care of the reserve. With the first showers, the dry, weary forest was instantly transformed—lush greenery has returned, breathing life into the landscape. This year's summer posed heightened risks, with large stretches of dried bamboo flowering and carpeting the forest floor, significantly raising the threat of forest fires. Our teams worked tirelessly through those tense months, and the rains have finally lifted that burden. Nature, in her wisdom, has offered us a well-timed reprieve.

With the rains, the forest has entered a new phase of vitality. Grassy clearings are alive with herds and newborn fawns, taking full advantage of the abundance. This season also signals a period of movement for young tigers, especially sub-adults preparing to establish their own territories. The dense monsoon cover offers them ideal camouflage as they navigate the reserve and beyond.

However, this natural movement also brings challenges. The dispersal of big cats during this time raises the risk of encounters near human settlements and farmland. Our Primary Response Teams and ground staff are on high alert, tracking movement and ensuring swift intervention to prevent any conflict. Every possible step is taken to ensure the safety of both wildlife and the community.

Though the fire season is behind us, the monsoon brings its own set of challenges—rugged terrain, constant rain, and limited visibility. Yet, our dedication remains unwavering. Whether it's the scorching heat or the pouring rains, our frontline teams continue to patrol, monitor, and protect with commitment and pride. This forest is not just a wilderness—it is a living heritage, and safeguarding it is our foremost duty.

Dr. Prabhu Nath Shukla (IFS)

Conservator of Forests & Field Director, TATR
Executive Director, TATR Conservation Foundation

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GEN-Z OF TADOBA

Tadoba- rightly called the Tiger Capital of India- never fails to amaze, and my recent safari through Navegaon Gate proved just why. The morning began quietly at Pandhapauni, with no movement in sight. But at around 8:30 a.m., we returned to Pandhapauni-1 only to hear frantic alarm calls from the direction of PP-2. Vehicles rushed in, and we followed.

The spot was already crowded- rows of safari vehicles blocked the view. Just when disappointment crept in, a forest official helped ease the congestion. We managed a spot in the third row. Standing on my seat, scanning the tall grasses of PP-2's island, my heart skipped a beat- there she was, the majestic tigress T7, popularly known as Choti Tara (CT), matriarch of Tadoba, emerging from the grass with a kill in her jaws!

Though partly hidden by grass, I guessed it to be a barking deer. She dropped it and moved to the water to cool off- graceful yet weary. As I

clicked her, something magical happened- a cub peeped out from the grass! Then another! It was the Gen-Z of Tadoba- CT's cubs, the future of the jungle.

Suddenly, one cub leapt onto the other in playful joy, and to my astonishment, one dragged the kill into the water- it wasn't a deer, but a wild dog! The cubs played with it, learning the brutal lessons of survival.

Choti Tara looked old, tired, yet her spirit to raise her cubs shone through. If these cubs survive, they'll carry forward her legacy- born of strength, struggle, and instinct. Watching them was not just thrilling- it was witnessing history being written in stripes.

This is the magic of Tadoba. This is the wild, raw story of Gen-Z Tigers- ready to roar into the future.

Krishanu Manna
Kolkata, West Bengal

Wildfires Burn Forests in Canada

Huge wildfires roared through parts of Canada, especially in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. These fires burned millions of acres of forests, forcing thousands of people to leave their homes for safety. The smoke from the fires spread far, making the air unhealthy to breathe in parts of Canada and even the United States. Animals like bears and deer lost their homes, and firefighters worked hard to control the flames.

Floods Threaten Wildlife in Australia

Big floods hit outback Queensland, Australia, putting animals like bettongs in danger. These small, hopping creatures live in special protected areas, but heavy rains flooded their homes. Rangers worked hard to save them, but the floods made it tough for plants and animals to recover.



Vultures Poisoned in South Africa

A sad event happened in South Africa's Kruger National Park where 123 vultures

Coral Reefs Get a Helping Hand

Scientists in Australia worked to save coral reefs in the Great Barrier Reef. Warmer oceans and pollution have been hurting the colourful corals, which are home to fish and other sea creatures. Teams planted new corals and used special tools to clean the water around them. This helped the reefs start to grow back, giving animals like clownfish a safer home.

died from eating poisoned food left by poachers. These birds help keep nature clean by eating dead animals, but poaching hurts them. Vets saved 83 other vultures, and rangers are working to stop this from happening again.



Ready for a jungle challenge?

Take this quiz and see how much you know about forests and wildlife!

- Which of these birds is known for mimicking other birds' calls?
 - Parrot
 - Drongo
 - Eagle
 - Ostrich
- The lion's roar can be heard up to how many kilometers away?
 - 1 km
 - 5 km
 - 8 km
 - 16 km
- Which reptile is known for its ability to change colours to blend with its environment?
 - Chameleon
 - Octopus
 - Frog
 - Mantis Shrimp
- Which of the following is a major threat to wildlife?
 - Conservation efforts
 - Habitat destruction
 - Protected areas
 - Eco-tourism
- The world's largest coral reef system is the _____.
 - Great Barrier Reef
 - Belize Barrier Reef
 - Mesoamerican Reef
 - Red Sea Coral Reef

MATERNAL INSTINCTS

April 30th, 2025—a date etched in my memory forever. As we entered Tadoba through the Moharli Gate, the soft golden sunlight and cool breeze promised a perfect jungle morning. We ventured deep into the core zone, hearts full of hope for a tiger sighting.

But for nearly two hours, the jungle remained still. At a waterhole, we decided to pause. While we waited, we spotted yellow-footed green pigeons perched high on a dry tree and a lone female red jungle fowl near the water.

Just then, a Sloth Bear appeared at a turn—and on her back were two tiny cubs! Startled by our presence, she quickly retreated into the bushes. Our guide was sure they'd return to water, and so we waited silently.

The next half hour was a masterclass in patience and animal behaviour. Three times the mother bear tried to approach the waterhole,



each time backing off cautiously. She finally came down, and the cubs clambered off to drink. All the while, she kept a sharp eye on us. Once they were done, the cubs climbed back on, and the trio vanished into the forest.

It was a moment of pure magic and maternal bravery!

Dr. Dhananjay Kashikar
Tourist, Pune

BACK TO THE NEST

An eagle has caught its lunch and now must fly back to its nest perched high on a tall teak tree. Can you guide it safely through the maze without bumping into any hornbills or tangled vines?





Do you want to know what work the foresters do?

This series will take you to the world of forest warriors in Khaki.

Piyusha Jagtap (IFS)

Let's try knowing what goes behind the tree planting photos that flood the social media on the day of planting!

DOES A FLYING FOX HAVE SUPERPOWERS?

Indian Flying Fox has wings that can be as wide as 1.5 meters- that's as long as a big umbrella! Flying foxes are super special because they eat fruits like mangoes and bananas, which makes them fruit bats. By eating fruits, they help plants grow by spreading seeds around.

These bats have another superpower- they can see really well in the dark! They use their big eyes to find food at night. Flying foxes also make sounds to talk to each other, which helps them stay together in big groups. They hang upside down in trees to sleep during the day, looking like they're taking a big nap! But sometimes, they face problems like losing their homes because of people cutting down trees. We can help them by



planting more trees and keeping their homes safe.

Fun Fact: Flying foxes are not related to foxes- they're bats! They got their name because their faces look a bit like a fox's. So, next time you see a big bat flying at night, it might be an Indian Flying Fox showing off its superpowers!

PLAY, HUNT, SURVIVE

Recently, I was on a morning safari near Irai Dam with a group of eager guests. The sun had just begun to rise over the buffer zone, and we were hoping for a glimpse of Tadoba's queen of the buffer forest—T127, popularly known as Choti Madhu. Word had spread that she had brought down a wild boar the previous day, and my instincts told me to check that very spot.

When we reached Pardi, there was no sign of the tigress. Still, I decided to wait. And patience, once again, proved to be the best strategy in the jungle.

Out of the thickets emerged Choti Madhu. She carried something in her jaws—it was a wild boar piglet, and to our astonishment, it was still alive! Likely, it was one of the orphaned piglets left behind after Choti Madhu killed their mother the day before. Confused and vulnerable, they had remained near the same area—and now, she was using one for a real-life hunting lesson.

Choti Madhu let out a soft call. From the bushes, three cubs emerged. One of them ran up to her and received the "gift." Carrying the struggling piglet in its mouth, the cub headed toward the water and began to play. It would



Video Grab

drop the piglet, watch it swim frantically, and then pounce again. This wasn't just play—it was training in the wildest form.

Then suddenly, the piglet didn't resurface. The cub searched for it in the water, but it had drowned. With the lesson cut short, the cub gave up and rejoined its siblings.

For us, it was a heart-pounding reminder: in the wild, life lessons come raw, fast, and unforgiving. And for Choti Madhu's cubs, survival training had just begun.

Rahul Mangam

Guide, Junona Gate, TATR (Buffer)

HAVE A STORY TO TELL? A SKETCH TO SHARE?

We'd love to hear from you!

Send us your articles, illustrations, or drawings that capture your experience at Tadoba.

The best entries will be published in Tadoba Diaries with due credit.

And that's not all - you'll also receive a special souvenir from us! So don't wait!

📧 Share your work at: tadobadiaries2021@gmail.com



JUNGLE DETECTIVE

Do you want to be a Jungle Detective?
Solve the following puzzles and check your knowledge.

GUESS WHO?

THE MIDNIGHT WATCHER

With orange eyes and silent flight,
I hunt in darkness, not in light.
My head can spin from side to side,
Through forest trees, I smoothly glide.

I hoot at night while others sleep,
And guard my young when shadows creep.
A secret watcher of the skies—
Guess me by my wise disguise!

TRACK THE TRAIL

WHO WALKED THIS WAY?

Recently, an unexpected guest visited the forests of Tadoba. While patrolling, we encountered these giant footprints on the dusty road, and we were amazed! Each one was as wide as a bucket and sunk deep into the soil, like craters on the moon! We tiptoed closer and saw fine cracks and wrinkles in the prints, like a secret map left behind.

The best part? The trail was fresh... maybe the gentle giant was still nearby, hiding behind the trees!

Can you guess who it was?



WATCH-UP

Can you help these parents find their babies?

Animals

1. Deer



2. Owl



3. Kangaroo



4. Duck



5. Pig



Young Ones

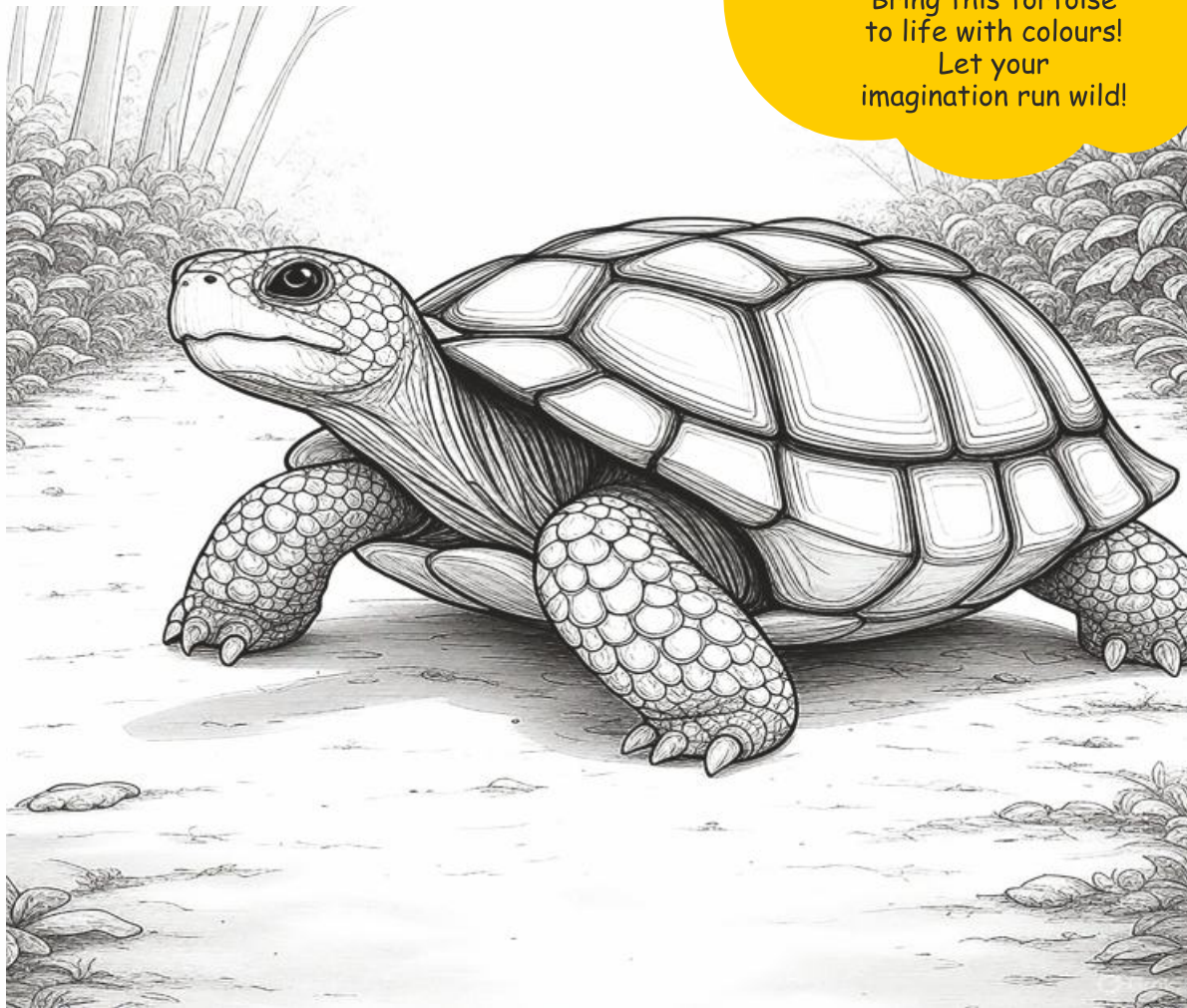
A. Duckling

B. Joey

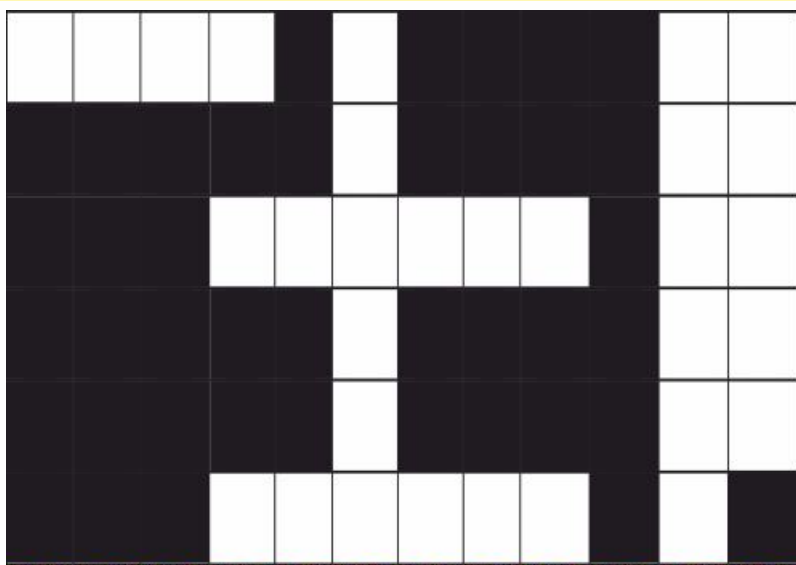
C. Piglet

D. Owlet

E. Fawn



Bring this tortoise
to life with colours!
Let your
imagination run wild!



ACROSS:

1. Tadoba is named after this tribal God
2. Dry leaves crackle under your feet in this forest season
3. This bird mimics the calls of other birds

DOWN:

1. The tallest grass in Tadoba
2. This tree with flame-like flowers blooms in summer
3. A tree whose fruit is loved by bears and monkeys

Check page no. 14 for correct answers.

Coexistence Through Awareness!



TATR forest officials engaged with villagers at Maroda to raise awareness about preventing human-wildlife conflicts. The community was guided on safety measures to follow while working in fields and moving through forested areas. Collective efforts like these help build a safer and more harmonious relationship between people and wildlife.

Crackdown on Illegal Tree Felling



On 18th May 2025, acting on confidential information, forest staff and aides intercepted a bullock cart near the Bhanusakhindi Protection Hut. Four accused were detained on the spot as they were carrying three illegally felled teak trees. A forest offence has been registered and legal proceedings are underway.

Van e-Seva Kendra!



Hon'ble Dr. Ashok Ramji Uikey, Minister of Tribal Development, Maharashtra and Guardian Minister of Chandrapur District, launched 10 Van e-Seva Kendras in TATR buffer villages, bringing essential online forest and banking services closer to communities. These centres are a game-changer for digital inclusion, from filing applications to accessing forest maps and paying bills. With 15 more planned, TATR is fostering better connections with villagers while speeding up compensation processes!

Buddha Purnima Machan Experience 2025!



On the full moon night of 12th May 2025, nature lovers participated in a unique machan stay event across 96 machans in the core zone and 81 in the buffer zone of Tadoba. Over 5,500 wildlife sightings, including 63 tigers, were recorded! Such eco-initiatives strengthen public awareness about biodiversity, conservation, and the magic of the wild.

Strengthening Partnerships for a Greener Tadoba!



A productive meeting was held with local leaders and Eco-Development Committees (EDCs) of the Zero Waste Tadoba Moharli Cluster, led by Shri Anand Reddy, DD Core, and the Forest Department team. The session focused on advancing sustainable waste management and expanding the impact of the Zero Waste Tadoba initiative. Together, we move closer to a cleaner, greener Tadoba!

Eco-Friendly Crafts



A water hyacinth handicraft training programme was launched in Khutwanda village under the Tadoba range. Thirty local women have joined the initiative to turn invasive weeds into wealth through sustainable livelihood opportunities. This training aims to empower them financially by transforming water hyacinth into beautiful, eco-friendly products.

Tadoba in the Spotlight

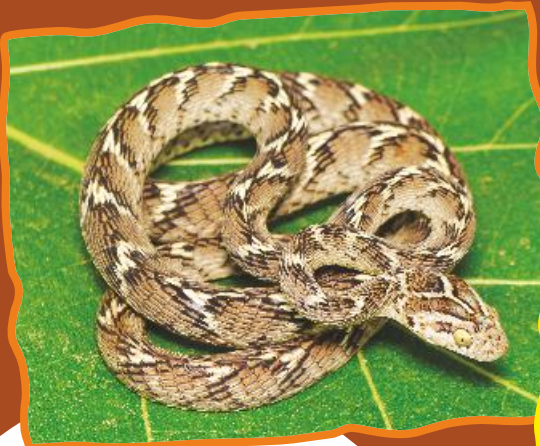


Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve was featured in The Sunday Times on 4th May 2025! The article captures the thrill of tracking tigers in their natural habitat and the latest big cat sightings. Dive into the wild and feel the pulse of the jungle at TATR!

Health & Safety Workshop



A special workshop was held today at the Moharli Forest Auditorium in the presence of Mr. Anand Reddy, DD, TATR Core, focusing on employee medical checkups, treatment, and usage of first aid, medicine, and snake bite kits. Experts including Dr. Sachin Dhagde, Dr. Swapnil Bade, and Dr. Rohit Salame guided the session, while practical demos on metal detectors and clamp meters were given by Mr. Jambhule, RFO, Karwa. The workshop saw active participation from RFOs, staff, drivers, and guards from the TATR Core Division.



COMMON CAT SNAKE

The Common Cat Snake (*Boiga trigonata*) is a long, thin snake with smooth scales and a zigzag pattern along its body. Its head is wider than its neck and has a Y-shaped mark on top. Look closely at its eyes—they're large with vertical pupils, just like a cat's!

Night Explorer: The Common Cat Snake is nocturnal, which means it's active at night. During the day, it hides under tree bark or inside thick bushes, often curled up tightly. It's a great climber and is commonly found in and around the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve.

What It Eats: This snake feeds on frogs, lizards, baby birds, and sometimes even other small snakes. It's mildly venomous—just enough to paralyse its prey—but it's not harmful to humans. It may look scary, especially since it's often mistaken for the dangerous saw-scaled viper!

Eggs in the Monsoon: Between August and September, the female lays around 3 to 7 eggs. When threatened, this clever snake coils up, vibrates its tail, and puts on a scary show!

Chinmay Deshpande
Naturalist, Nagpur



Wikimedia Commons

ROHAN

The Rohan Tree (*Soymida febrifuga*) is a beautiful tree found in the forests of Tadoba. Its round fruits hang like bulbs and open up in May into five wooden petals. These release feathery seeds that float away in the wind. I loved these wooden flowers, but when Balaji Kaka, a forest watcher from Karwa village, told me more about it, I began to see it as something truly special.

A Tree of Healing

The Rohan tree is mentioned in ancient texts like Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita, where it is called Rohitaka and valued for its healing powers. The bark is used to reduce fever and treat skin problems, ulcers, and stomach issues. That's why its scientific name *febrifuga* means "fever-reducing."

Strong and Sacred

With its reddish bark, it is also called Indian Red Wood. Its strong, termite-resistant wood is used for furniture in villages. But due to overuse, it's time to protect this sacred tree for the future.

Anirudh Chaoji
Senior Naturalist, Nagpur



LEMON PANSY BUTTERFLY

The Lemon Pansy Butterfly (*Junonia lemonias*) is a common and colourful butterfly seen in gardens and forest areas across India, including Tadoba. With its lemon-yellow and brown wings decorated with eye-like spots, it's one of six pansy butterflies found in this region.

Bright and Bold

This butterfly gets its name from the large yellow eyespot on each of its front wings. These spots help scare away predators and make it easy to spot when it's basking in the sun.

A Busy Life

The female lays tiny green eggs on soft leaves of plants like *Barleria* and *Hygrophila*. The black caterpillar is covered in branched spines and rolls off the leaf when disturbed! The pupa is brown with little cones and blends in with dry leaves. After a few days, a beautiful butterfly breaks out, dries its wings, and takes flight!

Where to Look

Look for Lemon Pansies on sunny days, resting on low plants or fluttering through the garden—it's a real treat for butterfly watchers!

Yogita N. D. Chhapekar
Biologist, Nagpur



ORANGE-HEADED THRUSH

With its bright orange head and belly, the orange-headed thrush (*Geokichla citrina*) is easy to spot—if you're lucky! Males wear grey coats, while females and young birds are dressed in brownish shades. One helpful clue? A white stripe under the wing that flashes in flight.

Home in the Green

This bird loves shady, damp places like forests, bamboo groves, and even big gardens. In Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve, you can often hear its sweet, whistling song in the early morning or evening as it hunts quietly for insects, worms, and fruits on the ground.

Family Life and Fun Facts

The thrush builds a cosy cup-shaped nest in bushes using twigs and dry leaves. Both parents help! They lay 3-4 spotted eggs. Babies hatch in two weeks and fly out in just 12 days!

Though quiet and shy, the orange-headed thrush has a powerful, musical voice. Listen carefully— you might hear it mimicking other birds too!

Rundan Katkar
Range Forest Officer, Kolsa, TATR



BREAKFAST! A sneaky tiger prowls the jungle in the early hours of the day, hunting a wild boar- yum, breakfast is served!

ANSWERS

WILD WISDOM

1-B, 2-D, 3-A, 4-B, 5-A

GUESS WHO?

Owl



TRACK THE TRAIL



Elephant

MATCH-UP:

Animals

1. Deer
2. Owl
3. Kangaroo
4. Duck
5. Pig

Young Ones

A. Duckling



B. Joey



C. Piglet



D. Owlet



E. Fawn



JUNGLE JUMBLE:

T	A	R	U		B			P	M
					A			A	A
			S	U	M	M	E	R	L
					B				A
					O				S
			D	R	O	N	G	O	H



THIRST VS FEAR

Tadoba summers are brutal for wildlife. While humans enjoy fans, ACs, and refrigerators, animals have only one refuge from the scorching heat- water. Naturally, waterholes become the most sought-after places. But what happens when that waterhole is already occupied by none other than the Queen of the jungle?

During one such sweltering afternoon, I watched a female sambar deer and her baby wait anxiously near a waterhole, where tigress T7, popularly known as Choti Tara lounged leisurely. For over an hour, the deer gave continuous alarm calls, torn between fear and thirst. Eventually, thirst triumphed. With tail raised high in caution and eyes fixed on the tigress, the mother cautiously stepped forward, allowing her baby to drink. The moment the fawn quenched its thirst, it bolted away- safe, for now.

When the tiger isn't around, however, the same deer strolls confidently, tail relaxed, enjoying the water freely. This is nature- no right or wrong, just survival. That day, Tadoba taught me this: live fully in the moment, for life in the wild is both beautiful and unforgiving.

Sanjay Deshpande

Wildlife Enthusiast
Sanjeevani Developers, Pune

**My Forest
My Waterhole
My Home**



“When We Build Your Home in Pune,
We Also Care for Their Home in Tadoba!”

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Harsh Agrawal

Bear Necessities!

A sloth bear enjoys a good back scratch against a tree in Kolara buffer-jungle spa, wild style!"

ताडोबा - अंधारी व्याघ्र प्रकल्प,
चंद्रपूर
TADOBA - ANDHARI TIGER RESERVE
CHANDRAPUR



Debarpan Datta

Queen in Command!

With a fierce stance and fearless eyes, the tigress reminds us- this is her kingdom.

Book-Post

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To, _____