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Tadoba

DIARIES

The Official Newsletter of Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve



[[Lokik Thakre

Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve Conservation Foundation, Chandrapur

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SUMMER CHALLENGES

Dear Reader

Summer poses the most intense challenges for both our wildlife and the teams protecting them. In Central India, the season brings extreme heat and dry conditions, especially across dry deciduous forests like Tadoba. The landscape turns brown and leafless, with thick leaf litter covering the ground. At Tadoba, our 151 natural and 191 solar-powered artificial waterholes serve as essential lifelines, ensuring hydration for a wide range of species during this difficult season.

This period is also crucial for local communities, as it brings seasonal forest produce such as Tendu leaves, Tendu fruits, and Mahua flowers—key sources of supplementary income. These resources not only support livelihoods but also strengthen the relationship between conservation and community welfare.

However, our greatest concern during summer is the heightened risk of forest fires. The recent gregarious flowering of bamboo across 1.3 lakh hectares—an event that occurs roughly every 40 years—has left behind dry, dead bamboo, significantly increasing fire vulnerability. This affects not only vegetation but also soil health and biodiversity.

In response, the Forest Department is actively mitigating risks by strengthening fire lines, deploying ground teams, and collecting bamboo seeds. These seeds will support regeneration in affected areas through seed broadcasting and seed ball dispersal. As we continue our shared mission to protect Tadoba's natural heritage, I invite you to witness and support our efforts during this testing yet vital season.

Dr. Prabhu Nath Shukla (IFS)

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

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A JUNGLE DRAMA

It was the evening of April 6th, 2025. We were deep in the Kolara Buffer zone of Tadoba, with our trusted guide Ashish Jiotode and ace driver Shankar Vaidya. Our plan was simple: check the Junabai waterhole first, and if nothing stirred, head toward Kankazari.

At Junabai, we spotted the shy male tiger Nalya snoozing far inside the forest. With too many gypsies around, we knew he wouldn't budge. So, we took a gamble and explored other zones. Just then, fresh pugmarks of Junabai tigress led us toward Futkibodi. Our hearts raced.

And there she was! Junabai was drinking from the waterhole, while her grandson, Veer—already cooling off—watched from the pool. After her drink, she joined him in the water, then got up to mark nearby trees before walking off into the forest.

That's when the real action began.

Veer, still lounging, suddenly stared to his left. Out of nowhere, a sloth bear strolled in—completely unaware of the tiger! The moment he sensed danger, the bear stood up on his hind legs, showing off his sharp claws. But Veer, young and curious, advanced.

In a flash, he charged!

The bear dropped to all fours and bolted. Veer, now feeling victorious, returned to the waterhole, proud and calm.

What a wild five minutes! This unforgettable encounter reminded me that Tadoba always has a surprise in store—especially when you travel with daring guides like Ashish and Shankar. All it takes is patience... and the courage to chase the unknown.

Ameya Gole
Naturalist, Pune



Satellite Launched to Measure Forests

On April 29, the European Space Agency launched a special satellite called Biomass. It will orbit Earth and use radar to "weigh" forests by measuring how much wood they have. This helps scientists understand how forests store carbon and how they are changing over time. The information will be useful for protecting forests and fighting climate change.
The Washington Post

Cool Roofs and Smart watches in India

In Ahmedabad, India, people are testing new ways to stay cool during hot weather. Some homes have been painted with special white paint to reflect sunlight, making them cooler inside. Also, residents are wearing smartwatches that track their health during heatwaves. This project helps scientists learn how to protect people from extreme heat.

AP News



New Wildlife Area in Texas

In April, Texas created a new protected area called the Trinity River Wildlife Management Area. It's the first new area like this in East Texas in nearly 20 years. The land will help protect animals and plants and give people a place to enjoy nature.

Hawaii Plans New Tourist Fee for Nature

Hawaii wants to add a small new tax for tourists staying in hotels and rentals starting January 2026. The money will help fix beaches, prepare for hurricanes, and repair damage from wildfires. Leaders say visitors should help care for the islands they enjoy.
The US Sun



Ready for a jungle challenge?

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

- What is the primary food source of tigers in the wild?
 - Fruits
 - Herbivores like deer and wild boar
 - Fish
 - Smaller mammals like rabbits
- Which of these animals is nocturnal, often roaming the forests at night?
 - Barking Deer
 - Mongoose
 - Horse
 - Civet
- What is the primary role of vultures in an ecosystem?
 - Pollination
 - Seed dispersal
 - Scavenging, cleaning the environment
 - Hunting small mammals
- Which is the fastest animal on land?
 - Leopard
 - Cheetah
 - Tiger
 - Lion
- What does the term "endemic species" mean?
 - Species that are found only in a specific region or habitat
 - Species that can be found anywhere in the world
 - Species that are extinct
 - Species that migrate seasonally

THE MIDNIGHT PHANTOM OF PANGDI

It was just another dusty summer evening as we exited the TATR through Pangdi gate, our minds still filled with the day's tiger sightings. Little did I know that the real magic was yet to unfold. Just as our vehicle rolled down the winding track, a shadow emerged from the forest—graceful, silent, and unreal. A black leopard!

I froze for a second, barely believing my eyes. Melanistic leopards are among the rarest cats to spot in the wild, and here it was, right in front of me, crossing the road with regal confidence. But what surprised me even more was its behaviour. Instead of disappearing into the undergrowth like most leopards, this bold individual sat calmly just beside the road, almost as if posing.

Heart racing, hands steadying the lens, I clicked—frame after frame of this elusive ghost of the forest. The contrast of its gleaming black coat against the sunlit dust trail



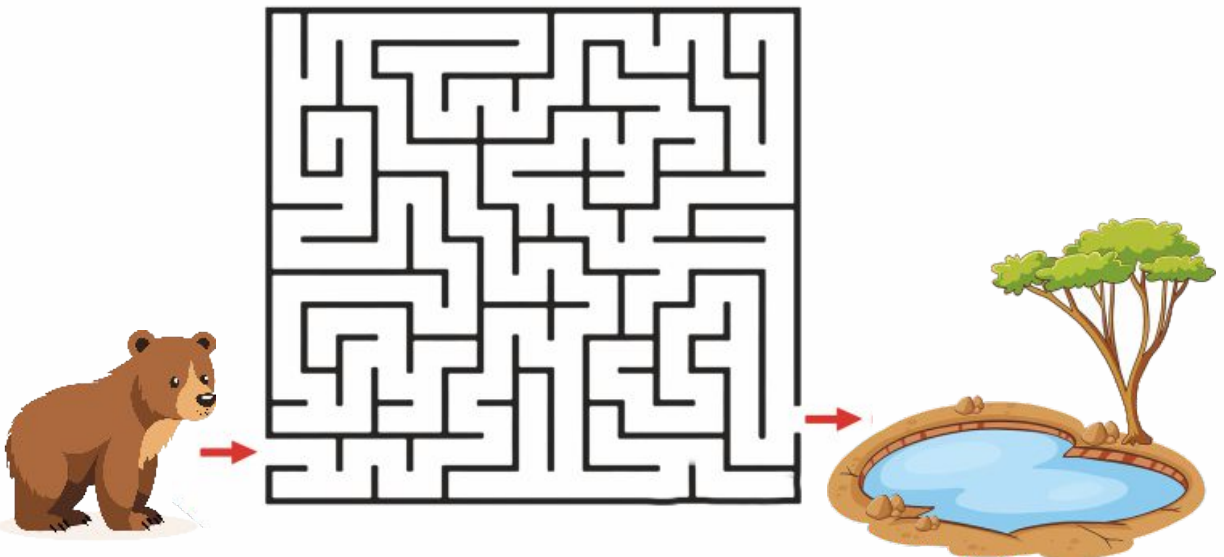
was a sight etched forever in my memory.

Moments like these are what every wildlife photographer dreams of. In that silent exchange, with only my shutter clicking, I felt both humbled and honoured to witness such a rare creature in the wild heart of Tadoba.

Narayan Malu
Industrialist, Nagpur

Find the Waterhole!

It's a hot summer day in Tadoba, and a thirsty sloth bear is looking for a waterhole. Can you help it reach the cool, shady spot by following the correct path through the maze?



THE LESSER KNOWN KHAKI #02

Join us in this low-cost, easy method of greening our planet...

THE GREEN BOMBS...

aka the seed balls

facilitate dispersal, germination and early growth of seeds by holding water...

Be a Bomber!!!

[[Piyusha Jagtap (IFS)]]



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)

These little structures can be easily made at home.. Children and adults can enjoy the activity alike! Join hands with foresters to be a 'green bomber'..

WHY IS THE SLOTH BEAR A UNIQUE ANIMAL?

The sloth bear, also called the labiated bear, is a fascinating animal that lives in the forests of India. It has a thick, shaggy coat of black fur and a distinctive white V-shaped mark on its chest. Unlike other bears, the sloth bear has a long, curved snout that helps it find food like insects and honey. It spends most of its time sleeping during the day and becomes active at night. Sloth bears are good climbers and often rest in trees.

They are gentle animals, but can be fierce if they feel threatened. These bears are special because they use their strong claws to dig for insects and build their nests. They also have a unique way of making loud noises to warn others



about danger.

Sloth bears are the only subspecies of bear which carry their young ones on their back!

Despite being shy and quiet animals, sloth bears are essential to the forests where they live, helping to keep the environment balanced. Isn't nature amazing?

A STING IN THE TALE



A jungle safari is always full of surprises—some delightful, others daunting. That afternoon in 2022, I was reminded that the wild follows its own rules, and we are mere visitors in its grand theatre.

The news had spread: Maya, the queen of Tadoba (T-12), and Rudra (T-103), a dominant male tiger, were mating at T-point in Compartment 97. By the time we reached, more than twenty gypsies and two canters filled with eager tourists had already gathered there. Everyone was in awe as the majestic tigers went about their courtship, undisturbed by the presence of their human admirers.

Just when it seemed like a perfect sighting, the jungle decided to test us.

A faint buzzing sound caught my attention. Within moments, the air above us thickened with hundreds of angry honeybees! I glanced around frantically and spotted the source—an Arjun tree nearby, home to a massive beehive. A honey buzzard had attacked it, sending the

entire swarm into a frenzy.

Panic spread like wildfire. Tourists ducked, drivers covered their faces, and voices rang out in alarm. Someone screamed—they had been stung! We had to act fast.

"Cover your face, hands with whatever you can!" I shouted to my guests, pulling my own scarf over my head. Other guides echoed the same instructions. Gypsies roared to life, drivers backing out cautiously to avoid chaos.

I felt a sharp sting on my arm—a bee had found its mark. But there was no time to react. My only concern was my guests. Within minutes, we were at a safe distance. I turned back, relieved to see my guests unharmed. Our driver, too, had escaped without a sting.

The jungle had reminded us once again—respect its ways, stay alert, and always be prepared for the unexpected.

Nandkishor Chaudhari

Guide, Navgaon Gate, TATR(Core)

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 immerse into the mysteries of the wild.

GUESS WHO?

TINY TEAM, BIG DREAMS

I march in lines across the land,
Carrying food, grain, leaf, or sand.
I'm tiny but I never stop—
In teams, we climb, we dig, we hop!

We work together, side by side,
No boss, no break, no room for pride.
Some of us bite, some sting with might,
But we're so small, we flee the fight!

TRACK THE TRAIL

WHO WALKED THIS WAY?

This morning, we encountered these delicate footprints pressed into the soft forest floor—what a discovery! Each print has three long toes pointing forward and a tiny one at the back, almost like a trident pressed in mud. The claw tips are clearly visible, sharp and neat, like someone walking with pointed shoes. The stride is light, graceful, and full of rhythm, as if the creature was dancing across the trail. Not a predator, but certainly proud. Who do you think left these elegant marks behind?



Achintha De Zoysa

MATCH-UP

Who Makes That Sound?

Animals

1. Leopard



2. Langur



3. Elephant



4. Peacock



5. Hyena



Sounds

A. Trumpet

B. Roar

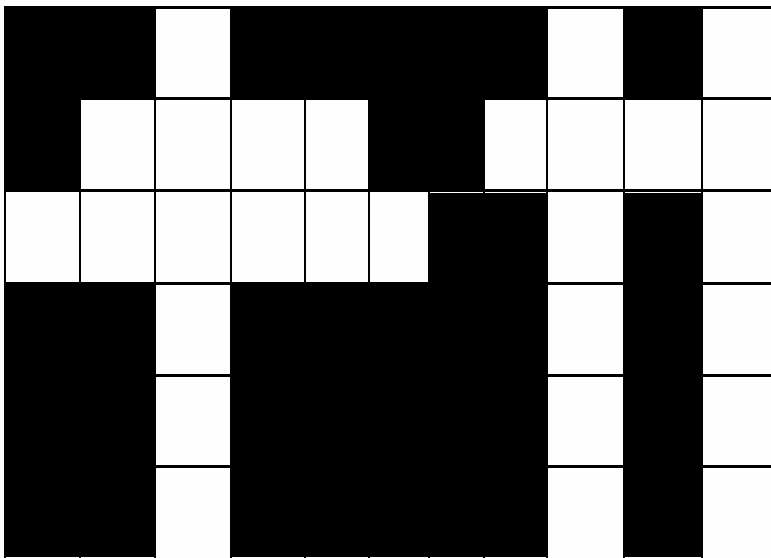
C. Whoop

D. Laugh

E. Scream



Bring these Indian Roller
birds 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) The biggest herbivore in Tadoba

DOWN:

- 1) The tallest grass in Tadoba
- 2) This tree with flame-like flowers blooms in summer
- 3) This bird mimics the calls of other birds

Youth Sensitization Program – Chaparala WLS



A two-day Youth Sensitization Program was conducted on 15-16 April 2025 at Moharli for 85 enthusiastic youths from the villages around Chaparala Wildlife Sanctuary. Through interactive sessions and field exposure, participants explored the ecological significance of the Chaparala forest, the challenges it faces, and how communities can become its guardians. The program ended with an unforgettable Tadoba Safari — a powerful reminder of why forests and wildlife need our protection.

Zero Waste Tadoba!



Under the Zero Waste Tadoba initiative, forest staff, villagers, gypsy guides and drivers came together again in April for a powerful cleanliness drive across many villages around Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve.

Together, they collected hundreds of kilograms of recyclable waste- a big step toward a cleaner, greener Tadoba! Hats off to every hand that helped make this possible.

Empowering Women through Eco-Friendly Handicrafts



On 26/04/25, women from Khuntwada village under the Tadoba range visited the Water Hyacinth Handicraft Centre in Chandrapur before beginning their training for sustainable livelihood. During the visit, Ms Swati Dhotekar explained how various eco-friendly products are made from water hyacinth.

Exposure Study Tour



Eco Development Committees (EDCs) and Self Help Groups (SHGs) members from Chaparala Wildlife Sanctuary visited TATR to learn about community-led forest conservation and sustainable ecotourism. The tour offered hands-on insight into how communities can protect wildlife while building livelihoods through workshops, local interactions, and a thrilling safari.

Tadoba on Global Platform!



Celebrated for its rich biodiversity and iconic tiger sightings, Tadoba is proudly emerging as a global icon of conservation and eco-tourism. Tadoba is featured on www.yonder.fr in an international travel article that beautifully captures the magic of our wild landscapes and majestic tigers.

Also, Germany's NATURBLICK magazine published a stunning piece on the Grand Tiger Photography Safari. The piece showcases Tadoba's breathtaking wildlife and the unforgettable thrill of tracking the Royal Bengal Tiger.

Marathon for Oral Health Day



On the occasion of Oral Health Day, TATR, in collaboration with the District Oral Health Department, Chandrapur, organised a vibrant Moharli to Agarzari Marathon on 20th April 2025. Forest officials, citizens, and wildlife lovers came together to run for a healthier, nicotine-free life. Participants pledged to care for their oral health, and the first 40 finishers were rewarded with Zero Waste Lifestyle Kits—featuring cloth bags and bamboo toothbrushes—to celebrate sustainability!

Strengthening the Shield of Our Forests!



To tackle emerging threats to wildlife, a specialized training session for the Special Tiger Protection Force (STPF) was recently conducted at Moharli Campus. The training included hands-on sessions with metal detectors and multimeters, presentations on traps, snares, and poaching techniques by Biologist Vinayak Sapte, and an insightful lecture by Shri Vinod Jambhule (RFO Karwa) on animal behaviour, patrolling strategies, and electrocution prevention. After a demo session, over 90 STPF guards were sent on-ground in groups for a real-time snare detection task. TATR now proudly has its own set of metal detectors and a well-trained team to operate them!

Successful Operation by TATR's Rapid Rescue Team!



Led by Dr. Ravikant Khobragade, Veterinary Officer (wildlife), the team safely tranquillized and captured a tigress responsible for five human deaths and three injuries in the Chichpalli range. Her three cubs were also rescued from a farmland using a special trapping strategy. All four are healthy and have been shifted to TTC, Chandrapur.

Vivek Sharma



COMMON VINE SNAKE

The Common Vine Snake (*Ahaetulla nasuta*) is a snake that looks so much like a twig or vine, you might mistake it for a tree branch! It has a long, thin body with smooth green scales. Its head is pointed, with a long snout and large golden eyes with horizontal pupils- perfect for spotting movement.

Life in the Trees

This snake is active during the day and lives high up in trees or low in bushes. It moves slowly and blends into leaves and twigs, making it very hard to spot!

What it Eats

The vine snake hunts frogs, lizards, baby birds, mice, and even other small snakes. It's mildly venomous, which means it can paralyse its prey but doesn't harm humans. There are no known deaths caused by its bite.

Baby Time in March

Female vine snakes give birth to live young—usually 15 to 20 babies—around the month of March.

Chinmay Deshpande
Naturalist, Nagpur

HIVAR

At first glance, the Hivar tree looks just like a Babool! That's why many people call it the White-barked Babool. Its real name is *Vachellia leucophloea*. When it's young, the bark is yellowish-brown, but as it grows older, it becomes dark and rough.

Flowers and Food

Hivar trees bloom with small, white, fragrant flowers. These turn into long, flat seed pods—up to 25 cm long! People cook these pods as vegetables, and goats love to eat them too.

A Helpful Tree

Hivar gives us Ghatti gum, which is used in traditional medicine. In some villages, bark paste is used to treat fevers, wounds, and even snake bites. Scientists have found that it really helps heal cuts and ulcers!

More Than Just Firewood

Though its wood isn't very strong, it's used for firewood and sometimes for simple furniture. In Pakistan, people even use its bark to make a special kind of drink!

Anirudh Chaoji
Senior Naturalist, Nagpur



GREY PANSY BUTTERFLY

Have you spotted a pale grey butterfly resting with wings wide open? That might be the Grey Pansy, called Rakhadi in Marathi—named after rakh, meaning ash.

This butterfly, scientifically known as *Junonia atlites*, is found across India except in dry regions. In Tadoba, you might see it fluttering near fields, roadsides, or forest clearings, especially on sunny mornings.

A Master of Camouflage:

Its creamy-grey wings are marked with brown lines and eyespots that look like tiny owl eyes—perfect for confusing predators!

Life Journey in the Wild:

The female lays eggs under young leaves of plants like *Hygrophila* and *Barleria*. The caterpillars hide cleverly and munch away until they pupate under leaves. After a magical transformation, the adult butterfly emerges with a wingspan of 55–65 mm.

Did You Know?

Like others in the *Nymphalidae* family, Grey Pansies walk only on four legs— the front two are folded up like tiny arms!

Yogita N. D. Chhapekar
Biologist, Nagpur



INDIAN BLACKBIRD

The Indian Blackbird (*Turdus simillimus*) is not commonly seen in Tadoba, but when it appears, it's a treat for bird lovers! This bird is mostly found in forests and orchards across India and Sri Lanka. It prefers quiet forest edges over noisy cities.

Look Closely!

The male blackbird has dark grey-brown feathers, a bright orange beak, and a little orange teardrop patch near its eye. Females are plainer brown. Some blackbirds even wear a "black cap" like a hat—especially in Central India!

The Forest Musician

This bird is a great singer! Its flute-like song can fill the forest with sweet music. It eats worms, insects, berries, and fruits. During winter, it comes to lower altitudes and sometimes closer to people.

Home Sweet Nest

It builds neat, mud-lined nests in trees and raises chicks in the safety of the woods.

Rundan Katkar
Range Forest Officer, Kolasa, TATR



Morning at a Waterhole! Just as the sun's first golden rays touched the forest floor, a group of wild gaur quietly walked up to a waterhole. The forest was still waking up, but our camera trap was already wide awake! It silently captured this peaceful moment as the massive animals quenched their thirst. Nearby, a lucky group on an early morning safari sat in awe, watching the gentle giants in their natural routine. It was a magical start to the day, proving that in Tadoba, even a quiet sip of water can be full of wonder!

STAR OF THE MONTH

Join us in cheering for the heroes of the wild—the best-performing forest guards of TATR! These fearless frontline warriors have covered the most ground, tirelessly patrolling the forests to protect wildlife. We are thrilled to announce the top two achievers for March 2025!

Forest Guard - P. A. Tiple
Beat - Parna
Round - Karwa
Range - Karwa
Division - Core TATR
Duration - 27 Days
Target - 125 Km/Month
Actual Patrolling - 425.35 Km



Forest Guard - R. K. Mohurle
Beat - Waigaon
Round - Mamla
Range - Chandrapur Buffer
Division - Buffer TATR
Duration - 26 Days
Target - 125 Km/Month
Actual Patrolling - 447.07 Km

ANSWERS

WILD WISDOM

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

GUESS WHO?

Ant



TRACK THE TRAIL

Peacock



MATCH-UP:

Animals

1. Leopard

2. Langur

3. Elephant

4. Peacock

5. Hyena

Sounds

A. Trumpet

B. Roar

C. Whoop

D. Laugh

E. Scream



JUNGLE JUMBLE:

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



KEEP SAFE DISTANCE!

Sloth bears are among the most fascinating forest dwellers. Once found across India, I remember hearing stories of sightings around my small hometown in Vidarbha. But today, due to habitat loss and growing urbanization, they now survive in select patches of forest—Tadoba's buffer zones being one of their safest homes.

Unlike tigers, sloth bears are rarely seen. They're mostly nocturnal, but in summer, you might spot them even during the day while they hunt for termites. Don't be fooled by their shy nature—they can turn aggressive in seconds. Many locals fear bear encounters more than tigers, since bears are unpredictable and their long, sharp claws can cause serious injury.

During a hot afternoon in Tadoba, I had a rare sighting of a mother sloth bear with her cub. When she noticed us, she calmly raised her paw, flashing her claws—a clear warning to stay away. We quietly backed off, grateful for the moment, and left them in peace.

Sanjay Deshpande

Wildlife Enthusiast
Sanjeevani Developers, Pune

**My Mom
My Forest
My Home**



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



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A Burst of Colour in Motion!

As the peacock dances, each feather unfurls like a brushstroke on nature's canvas, turning the forest into a living kaleidoscope.

Whispers Across the Water!

A majestic tiger cools off in Moharli Lake, with an eco-resort watching silently from afar. A perfect balance of nature and responsible tourism in Tadoba.

From,
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 Ph. 07172 - 251414

To, _____
