



Issue 60 / Nov. 2026

Tadoba

DIARIES

The Official Newsletter of Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve



Praveen Premkumar Pai

Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve Conservation Foundation, Chandrapur

FIVE YEARS OF TADOKA DIARIES: TAKING CONSERVATION BEYOND THE FOREST

Dear Reader,

Conservation isn't confined to protecting forests and wildlife; it also means building awareness, nurturing empathy, and inspiring people to partner with us in safeguarding our natural heritage. When we launched *Tadoba Diaries* five years ago, we envisioned a platform that would bring the remarkable biodiversity of the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve closer to people, especially the younger generation. As we celebrate this milestone in November, it is heartening to reflect on how this initiative has evolved from a newsletter into a meaningful medium for conservation communication. Each issue has sought to tell Tadoba's story beyond its celebrated tigers, highlighting the intricate relationships between wildlife, forests, and the communities that coexist with them. This journey reinforces our belief that awareness is the foundation for lasting conservation efforts.

The journey began with 1,000 copies per month; today we print 10,000 copies every month and present them free to tourists visiting TATR. *Tadoba Diaries* is also available as a downloadable PDF on our official website. The transition from a newsletter to a more comprehensive magazine, complemented by its digital presence, has further strengthened our ability to reach and engage a wider audience. Over these five years, *Tadoba Diaries* has endeavoured to make the wonders of nature accessible, engaging and relevant to readers from diverse backgrounds. Its stories have introduced readers to lesser-known species, fascinating ecological processes, the dedication of frontline forest personnel and the traditions of local communities. This journey is particularly meaningful because the newsletter reaches thousands of school students. By placing stories of nature in young hands, we hope to encourage curiosity, scientific thinking and a deeper appreciation of biodiversity.

Producing *Tadoba Diaries* has reaffirmed an important principle: conservation communication must be inclusive and representative of every



stakeholder who contributes to the Tadoba experience. Over the years, the publication has endeavoured to provide a common platform for nature guides, tourists, wildlife photographers, naturalists, frontline forest personnel, forest officers, researchers, students and local communities to share their experiences, insights and perspectives. Each stakeholder brings a unique understanding of the forest. By bringing these diverse voices together, *Tadoba Diaries* presents a holistic picture of Tadoba, extending beyond wildlife sightings to include conservation initiatives, responsible tourism, community participation, and the human stories woven into the forest landscape. Such inclusive storytelling helps bridge the gap between scientific understanding and public perception, fostering mutual appreciation, a shared sense of responsibility and a stronger collective commitment to conservation.

As we enter the sixth year of *Tadoba Diaries*, we remain committed to keeping the stories of this extraordinary landscape alive and relevant. I thank everyone who has contributed to this journey, and our readers, whose continued interest gives it purpose. May *Tadoba Diaries* continue to nurture a culture of conservation, carrying Tadoba's voice from the heart of the forest to the hearts and minds of people everywhere.

Dr. Prabhu Nath Shukla (IFS)

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

"*Tadoba Diaries*" is published by the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve Conservation Foundation, Chandrapur and printed at Renuka Publications, Chandrapur. The views and opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the publisher. Reproduction of any content is not allowed without a written permission of the publisher.

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Official website of TATR : www.mytadoba.mahaforest.gov.in



THE HIMALAYAN JEWEL IN TADOB

While Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve is globally renowned for its tigers, its forests shelter seasonal avian treasures that are just as mesmerising. Among the most vibrant is the Blue-capped Rock Thrush, a striking winter visitor that links the lofty Himalayas with Central India's dry deciduous landscapes.

The Blue-capped Rock Thrush migrates both altitudinally and latitudinally. During the summer months (April to October), it breeds in the Himalayan foothills, inhabiting open pine and oak forests stretching from Jammu to Arunachal Pradesh. As winter tightens its grip on the mountains, this elegant bird journeys southward to warmer regions. It finds refuge in the forests of peninsular India, including TATR in Chandrapur, where it can be observed from October to March.

The male is a true spectacle—its deep blue head, throat, and upperparts sharply contrast with a rich chestnut-orange underbelly, making it unmistakable. The female, more understated, wears soft grey-brown plumage with fine scaling that blends effortlessly into the forest floor and rocky terrain.

In Tadoba, this thrush favours forest clearings, rocky patches, and open woodland edges. Often seen



perched upright on branches or stones, it scans the ground for insects and small invertebrates, occasionally sallying out in quick, graceful flights to catch prey. Its presence is subtle yet rewarding for keen observers.

Each winter, the arrival of the Blue-capped Rock Thrush reminds us that Tadoba's magic extends far beyond its iconic predators. It is a landscape alive with movement, migration, and delicate seasonal rhythms.

Janmayjay Singh Krishnawat
Naturalist, TreesNTigers

MY FIRST TIGER SIGHTING

My first-ever tiger safari at Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve was an experience I will cherish for a lifetime. In June 2026, my brother-in-law thoughtfully planned several safaris for our family, and I was fortunate to be part of this unforgettable adventure.

Our journey began on 21 June 2026, with an afternoon safari through Nimdhela Gate. My excitement knew no bounds, especially because my brother-in-law was confident we would spot the famous tigress lovingly called Chandni, who had made a kill earlier that morning. Having never seen a tiger in the wild, I felt a surge of anticipation as our safari began.

As our gypsy navigated the forest trails, we eagerly searched for a glimpse of this magnificent animal. For quite some time, however, there was no sign of her. Then, near a waterhole, we suddenly spotted several jeeps lined up in complete silence, with everyone looking in the same direction. A smile instantly spread across my face. I knew something extraordinary was about to happen.

And there she was! Chandni was resting lazily in the muddy water, cooling herself in the summer heat. My first sighting of a wild tiger felt almost surreal. At



Pranil Khadtale

times, she remained perfectly still; at others, she gently lifted and turned her head, almost as if acknowledging her admirers. After about half an hour, she rose gracefully, gave herself a regal shake and disappeared into the bushes.

Though brief, the encounter was truly magical. Watching a tiger in its natural habitat was one of the most memorable experiences of my life. The thrill of that first sighting, along with the wonderful photographs and videos my brother-in-law captured, will remain etched in my memory forever. Tadoba has given me a memory to treasure for a lifetime.

Bhanu Pratap Singh

Manager – Programming, ONGC, Dehradun

THE SHOW STOPPER

During my June 2026 safari at Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve, our naturalist, Raju Mishra, guided our gypsy towards Lake Irai. As sunset neared, the clouds looked like brushstrokes across the sky, and the sun played peekaboo with the gathering rain clouds. Lost in the breathtaking panorama, I suddenly spotted tigress T14, known as Kuwani, emerging from the rocks.

After quenching her thirst, she strode gracefully towards us. My heart skipped several beats as she walked past like a supermodel on a ramp, proudly displaying her perfectly tailored orange coat with black stripes. Her sharp teeth, retractable claws, and confident gait reminded me of her power and elegance. It felt as though she was saying, "You have come to see me? Then admire me from every angle!" Nature is indeed the finest stylist.

Kuwani then circled the lake, surveying her surroundings. In the distance, Indian gaur, sambar, and spotted deer moved about, while the crocodile remained another potential threat. Finally, she settled into the landscape's camouflage, perhaps waiting for the right opportunity to hunt and feed her cubs. Watching her was an unforgettable privilege.



The excitement continued in the buffer zone, where my camera captured an Oriental Garden Lizard, a Red-wattled Lapwing nesting on the ground, owls, eagles, peacocks, Grey Junglefowl, an Indian Roller, a mongoose, a monitor lizard and langurs. Every turn revealed another wonder, making the forest feel truly alive. Raju also explained why local Adivasi communities regard the Mahua tree as their Kalpavriksha—a temple, hospital, pharmacy, spa, café and bar rolled into one.

As I left Tadoba, I carried home much more than photographs. My mind felt refreshed, my heart rejuvenated and my soul deeply nourished. Forest bathing had worked its magic on every sense. I bid farewell with a heavy heart, already dreaming of returning to my favourite jungle.

Deepa Shah

Real Estate consultant, Mumbai



THE CAT WITH SANDPAPER ON ITS TONGUE

If you have ever been licked by a domestic house cat, you know exactly what a feline tongue feels like. It does not feel like a wet muscle; it feels like coarse sandpaper dragging across your skin. Now, scale that exact same sensation up to a 400-pound apex predator. A tiger's tongue is one of the most fascinating tools in its anatomical arsenal, designed not just to taste water or swallow food, but as heavy-duty, multipurpose biological hardware that acts as both a grooming comb and a meat scraper.

To understand why a tiger's tongue is so abrasive, you have to look closely at its surface, which is covered in hundreds of tiny, rigid, backwards-facing spines called filiform papillae. These tiny hooks are not made of soft tissue. They are made of solid keratin, the exact same tough, fibrous protein that makes up human fingernails, rhino horns, and a tiger's own lethal claws. When a tiger extends its tongue, these keratin spikes stand at attention, turning a soft muscle into a biological rasp.

This rasp is essential because a tiger's coat is its primary defence against the elements, and keeping it pristine is a matter of survival. A wild tiger spends much of its resting time grooming. When hunting, navigating thorny underbrush, or dragging heavy prey, its fur becomes matted with dirt, dried blood, and dangerous parasites like ticks. The backwards-facing papillae act as the ultimate detangling comb. As the tiger licks its fur, hard keratin hooks dig deep

into the undercoat, catch loose hair, scrape away dried mud, and physically dislodge parasites from the skin. At the same time, the tongue spreads saliva evenly across the coat, helping the cat cool down through evaporation, a critical feature in the jungle's sweltering heat.

While the tongue is an excellent grooming tool, its most brutal and necessary function happens at the dinner table. In the wild, hunting is an incredibly energy-intensive and dangerous gamble. Most hunts fail, meaning a tiger can never afford to waste a single calorie. When a tiger takes down a kill, its massive canine teeth and powerful jaws do the heavy lifting, slicing through thick muscle and snapping bone. But teeth are blunt instruments when it comes to the finer details.

Once the bulk of the meat is consumed, the tiger uses its tongue to finish the job. The keratin papillae act like heavy-grit sandpaper, forcefully scraping every last ounce of meat, fat, and tissue straight off the bone. The abrasive power is so immense that a tiger can literally lick a bone completely bare, leaving it white and gleaming. This ensures the tiger extracts maximum nutritional value from a kill, surviving on calories a predator with a smooth tongue would be forced to leave behind.

Shaillendra Singh Deora
Wildlife Biologist, TATR



A SHADOW IN THE NIGHT! Under the cover of darkness, this elusive black leopard moves silently through Tadoba's forest, captured in a fleeting moment by a camera trap. Every such frame offers a fascinating glimpse into the forest's secret life after sunset.

WHICH MAMMAL IS MOST TRAFFICKED?

The Indian Pangolin faces a serious threat from hunting and illegal wildlife trafficking. Its scales are in demand in illegal markets, particularly for use in traditional Chinese medicine, despite the lack of scientific evidence supporting their claimed medicinal benefits. This demand has made pangolins among the world's most heavily trafficked mammals.

The Indian Pangolin is an ancient, insect-eating mammal with a distinctive body covered in hard scales. It is one of India's most unusual mammals. Its body is covered with protective scales, and when threatened, it curls itself into a tight ball. This unique defence mechanism protects it from predators.

The pangolin is a solitary, nocturnal animal that primarily feeds on ants and termites. It uses its powerful claws to dig into termite mounds and ant nests. Its long, sticky tongue helps it collect insects from inside their nests. Despite its strong claws, the pangolin has no teeth and relies on its specialised feeding mechanism to consume its prey. When threatened, it curls into a ball and uses its tough scales as armour.



Bikram Bhattacharjee

Pangolins play an important role in maintaining ecological balance by controlling ant and termite populations. They also improve soil conditions through digging, which aerates the soil and supports nutrient cycling. Their burrows can provide shelter for other animals.

THE UNFORGETTABLE FLIGHT

I was born in Kolsa village and have spent all 40 years of my life in and around the forests of Tadoba. Over the years, I have witnessed the forest in its many colours, moods and seasons. I have been fortunate to experience the King of the Jungle, the tiger, in all his glory. Yet, one particular sighting remains etched in my memory, bringing me a kind of happiness and excitement that even the most magnificent tiger encounter cannot match.

Many people believe that Tadoba is all about tigers. As a nature guide, I want to tell them the forest holds countless surprises for those who keep their eyes open and their minds curious. Sometimes, the most extraordinary moments come from the smallest movements in the canopy or a fleeting glimpse of a rarely seen animal.

I vividly remember a summer evening in 2007. One of my regular guests, Mr Abhay Ujagare from Nashik, was visiting Tadoba with a group of school students. He often organised educational camps to introduce children to the wonders of the forest. That day, the group was travelling in three Gypsies. As we drove through the Kolsa range, I was busy pointing out different birds and trees to the students in my vehicle. At around 5.30 pm, while we were near Takal Ghat, something caught the corner of my eye. Movement in the branches of a Kusum tree some distance away caught my eye. I could not identify the animal clearly, but its dark appearance made me wonder if it was a civet. I alerted my guests and asked the driver to approach the tree slowly.

As we drew closer, I realised that it was a squirrel. But this was no ordinary squirrel! Suddenly, it leapt from one tree towards another, spreading the loose folds of skin between its limbs and gliding effortlessly through the air. In that magical instant, I recognised it as a flying squirrel. I was thrilled! Flying squirrels are elusive, nocturnal mammals that spend much of their lives in trees. They don't truly fly; instead, a specialised membrane called the patagium stretches between their limbs, letting them glide from tree to tree. Their large eyes help them navigate in low light, while their long tails assist with balance and steering. Tadoba's forest



AI Generated

canopy provides the wooded habitat these remarkable animals need, but spotting one during a safari is a rare and special experience. At that time, flying squirrel sightings in the Kolsa range were uncommon, and I believe this may have been the first recorded sighting there.

The students were absolutely delighted, and their excitement was infectious. The following day, a newspaper carried the story of our sighting, accompanied by a photograph. Even after so many years, I remember that evening with the same joy.

I work in a tiger reserve, and I deeply respect the tiger, but encounters like this remind me why I love the forest in its entirety. Every creature has a story worth discovering. Today, I am equally delighted that Eurasian Rollers have been sighted in the area for three consecutive years, with their numbers increasing each year. For me, Tadoba's real magic lies not only in its tigers but also in the unexpected wonders that reveal themselves when we look beyond them.

Satish Raghunath Naitam

Guide, Zari Gate, TATR (Core)

Contribute to 'Tadoba Diaries'

Are you a forest department staff, tourist, guide, driver, working with a resort, managing a home stay or a community member from TATR vicinity? Do you want to join our effort to spread awareness on forest and wildlife conservation through 'Tadoba Diaries'? Please share your interesting photographs (not less than 4 MB) and experiences (not more than 250 words) on tadobadiaries2021@gmail.com. Your photograph/experience must be related to TATR only. The best content will be published with due credit.





LEMON PANSY

During a visit to the Agarzari Butterfly Garden, I spotted several pansy butterflies fluttering around the plants, including the Peacock Pansy, Grey Pansy and the striking Lemon Pansy (*Junonia lemonias*). Among them, the Lemon Pansy stood out with its beautiful yellow markings. Its interaction with a Kateri plant revealed a fascinating chapter in the butterfly's life cycle.

A Butterfly with a Purpose

Kateri, the local name for a plant belonging to the genus *Barleria*, caught my attention when a Lemon Pansy repeatedly landed on its tender leaves, briefly touching them with its feet before flying away. This was more than casual exploration. Butterflies possess specialised sensory receptors on their feet that help them detect chemical cues on plants and assess their suitability as host plants for egg-laying. As I looked closely at the leaves, I found a black, spiny caterpillar, seemingly nearing the end of its larval stage.

From Spiny Caterpillar to Beautiful Butterfly

The caterpillar's appearance was strikingly different from the delicate butterfly it would eventually become. When ready, it finds a suitable spot to pupate, attaches itself, and enters the next stage of development. Inside the pupa, metamorphosis transforms the larval body into an adult butterfly. Once development is complete, the butterfly emerges, expands and dries its wings, and prepares for its first flight.

The Lemon Pansy is easily recognised by its yellow-to-lemon-yellow markings, prominent eyespots, and contrasting patterns along the wing margins. Its journey from a spiny caterpillar to a colourful butterfly is a remarkable reminder of nature's capacity for transformation, unfolding quietly in Tadoba's gardens.

- Yogita N. D. Chhapekar
Biologist, Nagpur



ASANA

During a visit near the old Karwa Forest Rest House in Tadoba, we noticed a beautiful, medium-sized tree. Its most striking feature was the large thorns protruding from its trunk. Shri Rundan Karkar, RFO, who accompanied us, promptly identified it as Asana or Kate Ain (*Bridelia retusa*), popularly known as the Spinous Kino Tree.

A Tree That Feeds the Forest

Common across Central and Peninsular India, the Asana is a familiar sight in Tadoba's tropical dry deciduous forests. As it matures, the tree develops a spreading crown. Its small, inconspicuous flowers give way to tiny, fleshy fruits that turn dark as they ripen. These fruits attract birds, langurs and other wildlife, which help disperse the seeds across the forest. Interestingly, local people also relish these fruits despite their small size. Thus, this thorny tree plays a quiet but important role in sustaining the forest's food web.

Nature's Resource for People

Well adapted to Tadoba's dry conditions, the Asana has long served people in several ways. Its hard, durable wood has traditionally been used for agricultural implements and construction, while its bark has provided fibre for ropes and other tying materials. The bark and leaves also feature in traditional medicinal practices, where they have been used for various ailments, including wounds, skin problems, inflammation and digestive disorders.

The Asana reminds us that even an apparently ordinary, thorny tree can hold immense ecological and cultural value. The next time you encounter one in Tadoba, pause for a moment. Its story connects wildlife, local livelihoods and generations of traditional knowledge.

- Anirudh Chaoji
Senior Naturalist, Nagpur



RUBY DAPPERLING

Amid Tadoba's fallen leaves and forest litter, a tiny splash of colour can reveal an intriguing member of the fungal world. The Ruby Dapperling (*Leucoagaricus rubrotinctus*) is a striking mushroom whose reddish-pink to orange-brown hues make it stand out against the forest floor's earthy shades. Though small, this fungus plays a valuable role in the forest ecosystem.

A Delicate Mushroom with Distinctive Colours

The Ruby Dapperling begins life with a rounded, egg-shaped cap that gradually opens out as it matures, becoming broad and almost flat. Measuring about 3–6 cm across, the cap is generally pale, adorned with reddish-brown fibres and small scales, and often darker at the centre. Beneath the cap, closely packed white gills lie. Its slender, whitish stem usually bears a delicate ring near the upper portion. These subtle yet distinctive features make this mushroom a fascinating subject for close observation.

Nature's Tiny Recycling Expert

Beyond its colourful appearance, the Ruby Dapperling performs an important ecological function. As a saprobic fungus, it obtains nutrients from dead and decaying organic matter. By breaking down fallen plant material, fungi help nutrient cycling and return essential nutrients to the soil. The mushroom may appear singly, scattered across the ground, or in small groups, especially during warmer, wetter periods. It has also been recorded in habitats rich in decomposing vegetation, including forests, compost-rich areas and landscaped spaces.

- Muhammed Suhail N A
Wildlife Biologist, TATR



LAUGHING DOVE

Afamiliar sight across Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve (TATR), the Little Brown Dove, more commonly known as the Laughing Dove (*Spilopelia senegalensis*), is a charming presence in the reserve's open landscapes. Found in scrublands, farmlands and around human habitations, this gentle bird is as delightful to hear as it is to observe.

A Delicate Bird with Distinctive Markings

Measuring around 25 cm in length, the Laughing Dove has a slender body and a long, graduated tail with white-tipped outer feathers. Its soft pinkish-brown head and underparts contrast with an earthy greyish-brown back and a whitish belly. A finely chequered black-and-rufous patch across the front of its neck is its most distinctive feature, though juveniles lack this marking. Its dark reddish-brown eyes and purplish-red legs complete its understated appearance.

A Gentle Laugh and Ground-Level Life

True to its name, the Laughing Dove produces a soft, rhythmic, bubbling call that resembles gentle human laughter. Highly terrestrial, it often forages on the ground in pairs or small groups, feeding mainly on grass seeds, grains, and fallen crops, occasionally supplemented by small insects. Its flight is fast and direct, with regular wingbeats and a smooth glide before landing. During courtship, the male performs a steep display flight accompanied by audible wing-claps.

Though modest in appearance, this little dove adds a distinctive voice and quiet charm to Tadoba's rich avian life, reminding us that the forest's beauty extends far beyond its larger, more celebrated inhabitants.

- Rundan Katkar
Range Forest Officer, Kothari

Wildlife Law Training



Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve, in association with Tiger Trust, organised a capacity-building training programme on wildlife laws and criminal procedure at Moharli on 26 September 2026. Over 50 frontline staff and officers attended sessions covering the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, new criminal laws, evidence collection, digital forensics, and investigation procedures. Practical exercises strengthened participants' understanding of legal compliance and wildlife crime prosecution.

Core Safari Resumes



Tadoba resumed core safari tourism on 1 October 2026, following the seasonal three-month break. The reopening welcomed tourists back to experience Tadoba's rich wildlife and forest landscapes. The resumption marks the beginning of a new tourism season, offering visitors opportunities to explore the reserve while promoting responsible wildlife tourism and nature conservation.

Skill Development and Employment



Van Jeevan Sankul Academy held the valedictory programme for its third batch at Pangadi under a skill development initiative sponsored by SBI Foundation and supported by TATR. Following two months of intensive training, all trainees secured placements, achieving a 100% placement rate. The programme distributed appointment letters, while Solar PV Technician trainees showcased innovative electrical models, highlighting their technical skills and creativity.

Waste Segregation Centre



2026, alongside a Wildlife Week rally and a plastic waste collection drive. The programme was attended by Dr Prabhu Nath Shukla (Field Director), Shri Anand Reddy (Deputy Director - Core), Shri Vivek Natu (ACF), forest officials, Eco-Development Committee representatives, villagers and the PRT team. The initiative reinforces Tadoba's commitment to waste management, environmental responsibility and wildlife-friendly tourism.

Cleanliness Drive



On the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti and Lal Bahadur Shastri Jayanti, a cleanliness drive was conducted at the Moharli Forest Range Office and along the Nature Tourism Gate, Main Road and Bhamdoli route as part of Wildlife Week 2026. Forest staff, guides, drivers and local villagers actively participated in collecting plastic waste. The programme was attended by RFO Shri S. G. Avgan and Sarpanch Smt. Sunita Katkar, promoting community participation in keeping Tadoba clean and environmentally sustainable.

Tourism and Conservation Satara



As part of Wildlife Week 2026, Shri Anand Reddy (Deputy Director - Core) inaugurated a Tourism Ticket Counter and Taru Udyan at Satara village under Talodhi Sub-Range on 6 October 2026. The initiative aims to promote responsible tourism, strengthen local participation and support wildlife conservation. Forest officials, tourism stakeholders, village representatives and local residents participated in the programme, highlighting the importance of community-led tourism development.

Digital Wildlife Crime Investigation



During Wildlife Week on 5 October 2026, Freeland conducted a one-day, hands-on Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) workshop for 38 officers of TATR. The training focused on digital investigation techniques, tracing online footprints, identifying connections between suspects and using digital tools to investigate wildlife crime. Through practical exercises based on real-world cases, the programme strengthened officers' capacity to address technology-enabled wildlife offences and support effective wildlife protection.

STAR OF THE MONTH September 2026

Let's celebrate the dedication and impact of our frontline staff who go above and beyond to protect our forests and wildlife. It is a token of appreciation for their outstanding service, vigilance, and commitment to conservation on the ground.



Sandeep V. Kamapurwar
Forest Guard, Range: Kolsa (Core)

- Completed foot patrolling as per the KRAs.
- Performed duties as the Forest Guard of Botezary-1.
- Regularly stayed at and maintained the protection hut.
- Conducted regular patrolling in the beat and maintained records of wildlife sightings.
- Maintained PIP records.
- Cared for the vultures at the Jatayu Conservation Project, Botezary.



Shaym C. Shil
Forest Guard, Range: Chandrapur (Buffer)

- Protected forest and wildlife
- Completed foot patrolling as per the KRAs (286.268km).
- Performed duties as the Forest Guard of Khandala-2.
- Regularly stayed at and maintained the protection hut.
- Public awareness on animal-human conflict
- Regular tiger monitoring

THE LESSER KNOWN KHAKI #20

MANGROVES need a whole lot of efforts for their conservation and protection. And one of the most important is creating livelihood opportunities for locals who play a major role. Apart from the **MANGROVE PLANTATIONS** and generating employment from it, we also **PROMOTE** all these activities for local livelihood generation...



Piyusha Jagtap (IFS)

LESSER KNOWN KHAKI

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)

"Maintain Mangroves: Make Money" ... yeah! This important aspect of viable business options to locals goes far way in conserving the coastal biodiversity! Strengthen the stakeholders to achieve their participation in conservation efforts!



Ready for a jungle challenge?

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

1. Which snake is the longest in India?

- A) Cobra B) Krait
C) Python D) Viper

2. Which bird is famous for its beautiful courtship dance?

- A) Peacock B) Parrot
C) Owl D) Kite

3. Which mammal has quills for protection?

- A) Wild Boar
B) Porcupine
C) Pangolin
D) Otter

4. Which animal is known for storing food underground?

- A) Squirrel
B) Langur
C) Deer
D) Hyena

5. Which forest animal is known for eating termites?

- A) Leopard
B) Gaur
C) Sloth Bear
D) Wild Dog

JUNGLE DETECTIVE

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

GUESS WHO?

THE PAINTED BEAUTY

Orange and black with wings so wide,
Among the flowers I gently glide.
Sunlit forests are where I play,
Dancing softly through the day.

I sip sweet nectar as I roam,
From leaf to leaf I make my home.
A delicate jewel for all to see,
Can you guess who I might be?

TRACK THE TRAIL

Who Walked This Way?

Rosette-shadowed footprints move quietly over rocky ground.
The trail suddenly disappears toward a tree branch above.
Langurs chatter nervously in the distance.
Nothing stirs, yet the forest feels watched.
Silent and graceful, the climber moved unseen.
Only the clawless pugmarks reveal its secret passage.



MATCH-UP

WHOSE BABY IS IT?

Match the young one with its parent.

Young One

1. Leveret



2. Fawn



3. Cub



4. Chick



5. Hatchling



Parent

A. Owl

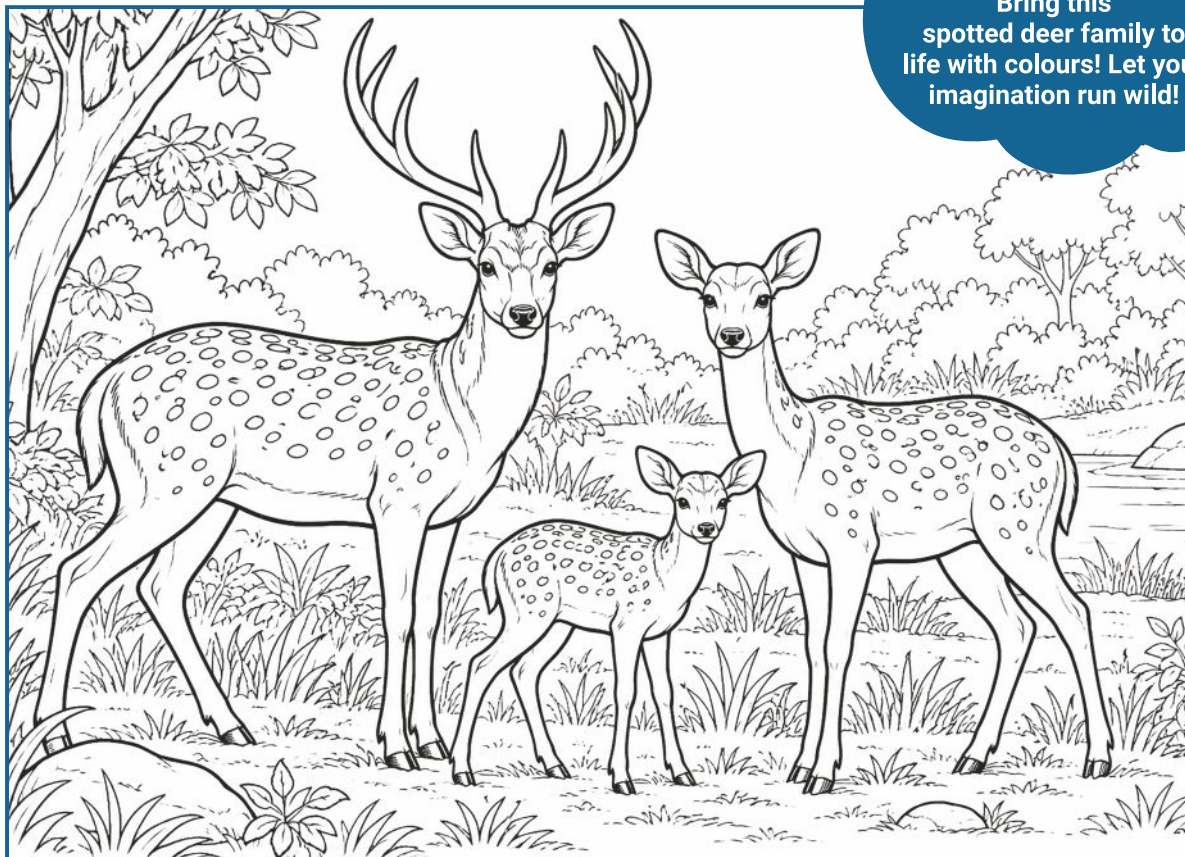
B. Sambar Deer

C. Hare

D. Mugger Crocodile

E. Sloth Bear

Bring this spotted deer family to life with colours! Let your imagination run wild!



WILD WISDOM

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

GUESS WHO?

Plain Tiger Butterfly



TRACK THE TRAIL



Leopard

MATCH-UP:

Young One

Parent

- | | | |
|--------------|---|---------------------|
| 1. Leveret | → | A. Owl |
| 2. Fawn | → | B. Sambar Deer |
| 3. Cub | → | C. Hare |
| 4. Chick | → | D. Mugger Crocodile |
| 5. Hatchling | → | E. Sloth Bear |



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FROM LOCAL GUIDES TO GLOBAL VOICES

Don't be surprised if a tribal community nature guide welcomes you in English or German the next time you visit Tadoba! The forests may speak the universal language of nature, but Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve (TATR) is taking thoughtful steps to ensure that visitors from across the world feel equally welcome. With international wildlife tourism growing, the reserve is investing in a more confident, skilled and visitor-friendly tourism experience, while keeping conservation at its heart.

The numbers tell an interesting story. Last year, Tadoba recorded 3,89,700 tourist entries, including 20,939 foreign tourist entries from 91 countries. That is a remarkable international footprint for a forest destination in Maharashtra. To prepare for this growing global audience, TATR recently organised specialised conversational language training programmes for its nature guides. Fourteen women nature guides from the Core Zone underwent English-speaking training at Moharli from July 2 to August 8. The sessions focused on everyday conversations with tourists, explaining wildlife and biodiversity, introducing Tadoba's attractions, and responding to visitor queries with confidence. The initiative is also an important step towards strengthening women's professional skills and participation in nature tourism.

German came next! Recognising the presence of German-speaking visitors, TATR conducted a basic conversational German programme from August 17 to 27 at Moharli and Madnapur. A total of 42 nature guides participated—25 at Moharli and 17 at

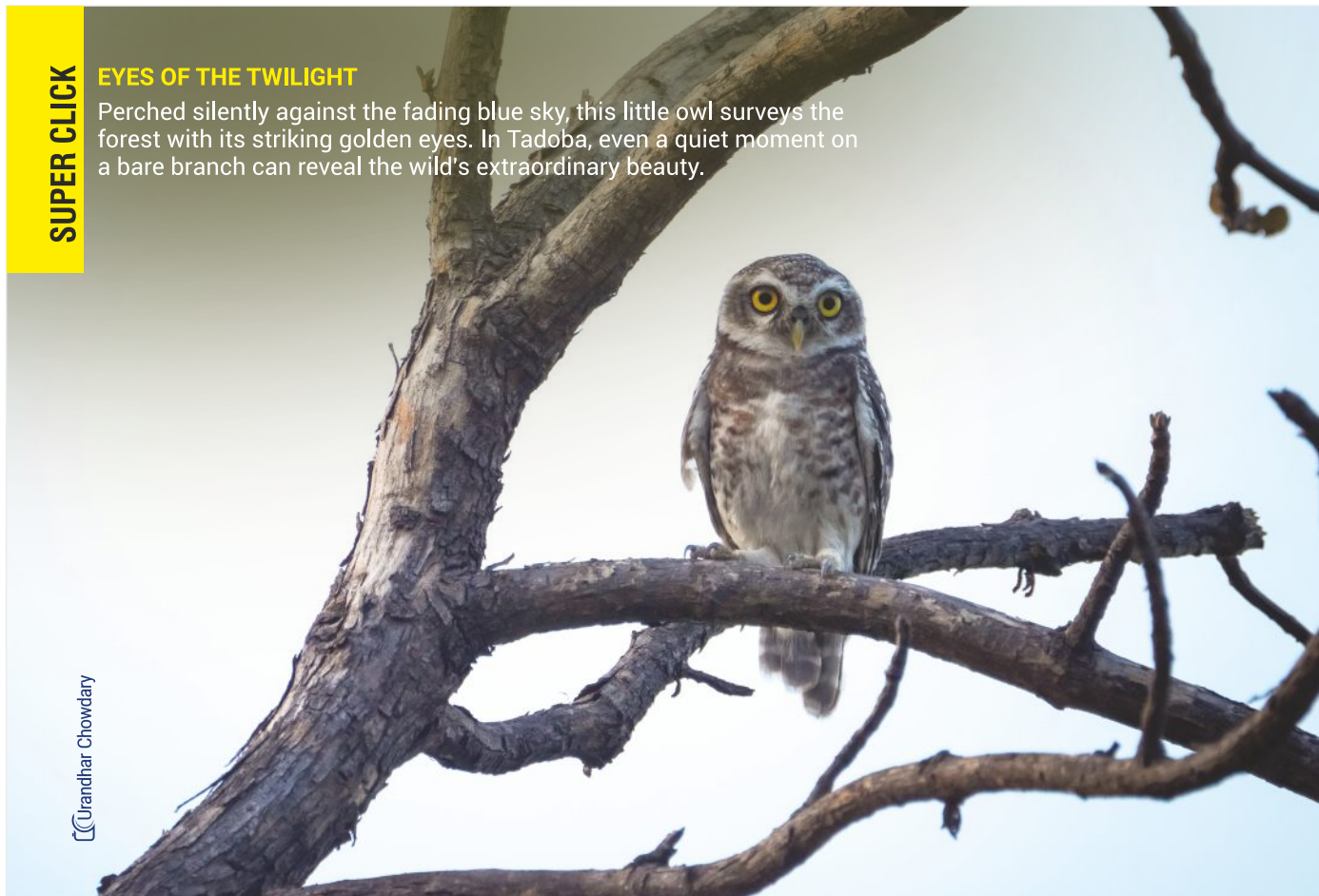
Madnapur. From welcoming visitors and introducing the reserve to explaining safari basics and discussing wildlife, the training covered practical expressions that guides can use on the job. Imagine arriving at a safari gate and being greeted in your own language by a guide who is eager to share the wonders of the Indian jungle. That first interaction can make a real difference to the experience. And when a guide can explain the significance of a tiger sighting, a bird call or a forest tree, the safari becomes much more than a wildlife excursion.

Of course, welcoming international tourists involves more than learning a new language. TATR has also upgraded facilities at its safari gates, including clean washrooms, free clean drinking water and virtual safari tools that help visitors understand the forest even before entering it. These improvements are part of a larger effort to make the visitor experience comfortable, informative and memorable. At the same time, training local guides creates opportunities for communities living around the reserve to benefit from tourism. The goal is not simply to bring more tourists to Tadoba, but to offer them a meaningful encounter with its wildlife, landscapes and local culture. As Tadoba strengthens its place on the global tourism map, its greatest ambassadors may well be the people who know this forest best- and can now tell its stories to the world in more languages.

EYES OF THE TWILIGHT

Perched silently against the fading blue sky, this little owl surveys the forest with its striking golden eyes. In Tadoba, even a quiet moment on a bare branch can reveal the wild's extraordinary beauty.

Urandhar Chowdary



LIFE AND DEATH

In the tangled threads of life, a tiny struggle unfolds as a spider holds its ground and a butterfly hangs suspended between survival and surrender. In Tadoba's natural world, every moment tells a story of survival, where life and death are inseparable threads of the same web.

Ajay Kodape

