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Tadoba

D I A R I E S

The Official Newsletter of Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve



[[Mohamed Shafiq

Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve Conservation Foundation, Chandrapur

RESPONSIBLE ECO-TOURISM

Dear Reader,

October 1 marks an important moment in the annual rhythm of Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve. After the monsoon closure of the core zone, the forest once again opens its trails to visitors seeking to experience the wilderness at its most vibrant. The monsoon months bring a remarkable transformation to Tadoba. The parched summer landscape gives way to lush greenery, fresh grasses, and abundant new growth. Water is plentiful, the forest floor is renewed, and every trail seems to carry the promise of a new discovery. With the reopening of the core zone, a new tourism season begins—not merely as a return to safari operations, but as an opportunity to experience a forest that has changed significantly over the past few months.

Across Tadoba, wildlife too is in a season of renewal. This year, visitors may also encounter one of the forest's most rewarding sights: tigresses with their young cubs. Several tigresses have new litters, adding another dimension to observing these magnificent animals in their natural habitat. Many other species can be seen with their young, from herbivores moving through the grasslands to birds and smaller creatures taking advantage of the monsoon's abundance. Such sightings remind us that a protected forest is not defined by its tigers alone. Every species, every sapling, every blade of grass and every seasonal change contributes to the complex ecological system that sustains Tadoba.

The reopening also provides an opportunity to experience the Reserve through initiatives that extend beyond the conventional jeep safari. Our virtual wildlife experience offers visitors an immersive introduction to the forest and its wildlife, while initiatives such as the butterfly parks and the participation of trained women guides create new avenues for nature interpretation and community involvement. Tourists can also enjoy other activities like nature trails, bird watching, kayaking, boating, adventure sports, etc. These programmes are an important part of our broader effort to make conservation inclusive and accessible. The involvement of local communities, particularly women and young people, strengthens the link between tourism and conservation and creates livelihood opportunities tied to protecting our natural heritage.

In 2025-26, 4.5 lakh tourists visited TATR. As we welcome visitors for the new tourism season, I appeal to every guest to enter Tadoba with curiosity, patience and respect. A safari is not simply a search for a tiger; it is an opportunity to understand a living ecosystem. Follow the prescribed rules, maintain silence, respect wildlife and allow the forest to reveal itself at its own pace. The season ahead promises fresh landscapes, new generations of wildlife and countless stories waiting to be discovered. Let's experience its beauty responsibly and work together to ensure that this wilderness remains thriving for generations to come.

Dr. Prabhu Nath Shukla (IFS)

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



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AN UNEXPECTED ENCOUNTER

The jungle does not always reveal its secrets immediately. Sometimes, it gives you only a glimpse of a story and leaves you wondering what happened before you arrived.

One such extraordinary moment unfolded in the buffer forest of Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve, near a buffer gate, when a tigress surprised everyone with an unusual display of tree-climbing behaviour before taking possession of a spotted deer kill. A tigress appeared near the tree and, instead of simply moving away, began climbing. As she continued upwards, the sight became increasingly remarkable. Tigers are primarily ground-dwelling predators, and although they are capable of climbing trees, watching a large tiger negotiate a tree at a considerable height is certainly an unusual sight for most wildlife observers.

For those watching, it was hard to take their eyes off it.

Climbing a tree is no small task for an animal as powerful and heavy as an adult tiger. Every movement requires strength, balance and coordination. The contrast was striking- a huge tigress, normally seen walking silently through the forest floor, was now making her way into the branches.

The moment left the observers stunned.

There was also a fascinating question hanging in the air: what exactly had happened before they arrived?

The spotted deer kill could have been made by a leopard. A tiger could have done it. With no eyewitness to the original hunt and no definitive evidence at the scene, the identity of the original hunter remained unknown.

What was certain, however, was what happened next.

The tigress secured the kill.

After taking possession of the spotted deer, she eventually brought it down and dragged the carcass away from the open area. With powerful determination, she pulled the kill into the thick bushes, disappearing from view and taking the mystery with her.

Within moments, the drama was over. The forest fell quiet again.

For a wildlife photographer, encounters such as this are precisely why every safari is unpredictable. We often enter the jungle hoping to see a tiger, a leopard or a dramatic hunt. But nature rarely follows a prepared script. Sometimes the most fascinating story begins before we arrive - and ends with more questions than answers.



Who made the kill? Why had it been placed where it was? What prompted the tigress to climb?

Those answers may remain unknown.

But the image of a tigress climbing high into a tree and later dragging a spotted deer into the bushes will remain as an extraordinary memory from Tadoba.

The jungle revealed just enough of its story to amaze its witnesses- and then quietly kept the rest to itself.

Pritam Gurav

Wildlife Tour Organiser, Dombivli

CONFLICT TO CO-EXISTENCE

Early 2026. Three hours into the safari—nothing much. Hope clung to its last strings. And then it happened. T163, popularly known as Collarwali and her cubs emerged by the lake, blissfully drinking water, completely unaffected by the line of safari vehicles and the frantic clicking of camera shutters. For those few minutes, nobody spoke. We just watched.

Later that evening, over a cup of chai at the resort, I casually asked one of the staff members, "Do you ever get scared, knowing tigers roam so close to the villages?" He looked at me, smiled, and replied almost matter-of-factly, "Madam, they were here before us. We know they're around, and they know we're around." That one sentence stayed with me.

The next morning, our resort manager pointed towards a trail cutting across the fields next to the resort. "A tigress crossed here at sunrise," he said, as casually as someone would mention a neighbour walking by. It struck me how normal this was for them. And then he added with a smile, "If you're lucky, one might just walk across those fields, while you sit next to the fencing for your tea or snacks."

Before visiting Tadoba, I had read countless reports about human-wildlife conflict and livestock killings in the landscape. Naturally, I was curious. So I asked the locals. "Do attacks happen?" I asked. "Yes,"



came the reply without hesitation. "But co-existence is a way of life here. It also demands a respectable distance." Both humans and animals go about their lives without fussing about the other's presence. But when those invisible boundaries are crossed, conflict becomes inevitable. Not every incident has an immediate trigger, they admitted, but more often than not, there is a story behind it.

What stayed with me wasn't just the tiger sightings, spectacular as they were. It was the quiet respect the locals had for the forest and its inhabitants. There was no drama, no resentment—just an understanding that living alongside wildlife comes with responsibility.

Aditi Goswami

Human Resources Professional, Bangalore

THE KING WHO STOPPED THE ROAD

Our first afternoon safari of 2026 at Tadoba began with excitement, hope, and the usual silence that comes before a jungle surprise. We entered through the Navegaon Gate, eyes searching every shadow, every bend, every movement in the dry forest.

And then, within some time, the jungle gifted us a moment we will never forget. There they were — the famous C1 male tiger and C1 female, resting calmly beside the road. For a few seconds, we were simply stunned. No words, no movement, only wide eyes and fast heartbeats. What made the moment even more special was that we were the only safari vehicle there for almost 15 minutes. No crowd, no noise — just us, the forest, and the royal tigers of Tadoba.

The C1 male looked completely relaxed, yet powerful. At one moment, he was lying lazily in the middle of the forest road, as if the entire path belonged to him. And honestly, it did. The road, the silence, the forest — everything seemed to wait for his permission.



When he raised his head and looked straight towards us, it felt like he was saying: "I am the king here. You may watch, but you cross only when I allow."

That calm confidence, that fearless gaze, and that royal presence made the sighting unforgettable. Some safaris give you photographs. Some safaris give you memories. But this one gave us both — and a story that will stay with us forever.

Saurabh Dhanorkar

Pune

THE GEOMETRY OF A TIGER'S WORLD

When we imagine a wild tiger roaming the jungle, we often picture a solitary wanderer exploring an endless, borderless wilderness. But in reality, a tiger does not wander aimlessly. To a tiger, the forest is not an open wilderness; it is a highly structured, heavily guarded, and deeply complex real estate market.

Biologists call this Spatial Ecology: the study of how animals distribute themselves across a landscape. In the tiger's world, every square kilometre of good forest is claimed, mapped, and actively managed.

The Geometry of Power

To understand jungle real estate, you have to look at the geometry of male and female territories. Tigers are fiercely territorial, meaning they will not tolerate rivals of the same sex. A female tiger will fight off any other female, and a male will kill any rival male.

When biologists track tigers using GPS telemetry collars and process those coordinates through spatial mapping software, a strict mathematical pattern emerges on the screen. A dominant male tiger claims a massive polygon, sometimes upwards of 50 to 100 square kilometres, depending on prey density and other resources. Within the borders of this massive male "estate," three to four adult females will carve out their own smaller, individual territories of about 15 to 20 square kilometres each.

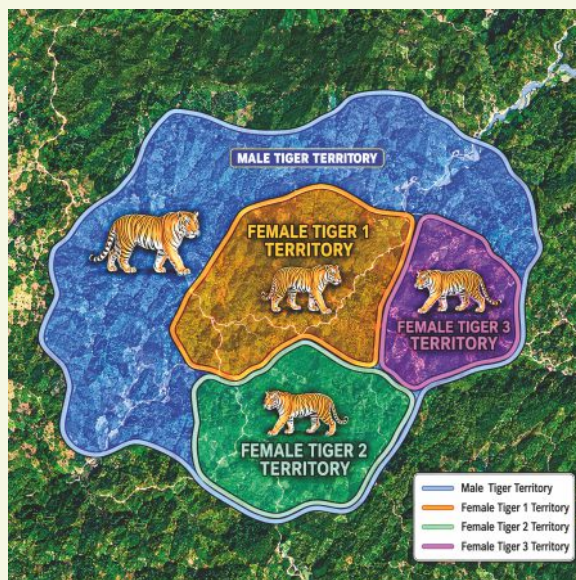
Think of the dominant male as a giant protective umbrella. He aggressively patrols the outer borders of his massive territory, keeping rival males out. Inside that protected zone, the females live safely on their individual plots, raising their cubs and hunting without interference from rogue males.

The Time-Share Agreement

This overlapping geometry raises an obvious question: if a massive male and three females are all living, hunting, and walking within the exact same patch of jungle, why don't they constantly bump into each other?

The answer is a brilliant behavioural adaptation known as Temporal Partitioning, essentially, time-sharing.

The jungle is thick with thorny underbrush, so animals prefer to walk on established dirt paths, dried riverbeds, and fire lines. Tigers are effectively sharing a limited highway system. To avoid accidental physical confrontation, they share the space by manipulating time. Camera trap data



consistently shows this: a female tiger might walk down a specific trail at 8:00 PM, and the dominant male might patrol that same trail at 2:00 AM.

So how do they successfully coordinate this time-share without ever seeing each other?

They use a biological clock hidden in their scent marks.

When a tiger sprays a tree, the scent contains highly volatile compounds that evaporate quickly, alongside heavier lipids (fats) that last for weeks. When a tiger walks down a trail and investigates an earlier mark using its specialised Jacobson's organ, it detects the exact ratio of evaporated compounds to remaining lipids. This gives the cat a highly accurate chemical read on exactly how much time has passed since the mark was made.

This is where the system's true brilliance lies: the tiger now has the data to make a conscious choice. If the male reads that a female passed by six hours ago, he simply proceeds calmly. But if the scent is fresh and steaming, he knows another tiger is just a few hundred meters ahead. Armed with this information, he decides his next move. If it is a female in estrus, he might speed up to follow and mate. If the scent belongs to a rival male, he might sit down and wait in ambush, or strategically alter his route to avoid a deadly, unnecessary fight.

Through this invisible network of chemical clocks and spatial geometry, these massive, solitary predators do not just blindly wander; they actively negotiate their shared real estate every single day.

Shaillendra Singh Deora
Wildlife Biologist, TATR



SPIKED WARRIOR! Under the cloak of darkness, a silent warrior patrols the forest floor. Spikes up... senses sharp... the night belongs to the porcupine. A camera trap image.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A TURTLE, A TORTOISE AND A TERRAPIN



TURTLE



TORTOISE



TERRAPIN

Turtles spend most of their life in the water (fresh water as well as saline water)	Tortoises spend most of their life on land areas	Terrapins spend most of their life in brackish water as well as land
Flatter carapace which reduces drag in water	Domed carapace which aids defensive protection	Oblong carapace between domed and flat
Light-weight shells	Heavier shells	Light-weight shells
Broad flipper like legs with webbed feet	Short sturdy legs without webbed feet	Strong legs with broad claws to climb out of water
Omnivorous	Herbivorous	Carnivorous and Herbivorous
Shorter life span	Longer life span	Shorter lifespan than tortoise
Cannot hide inside the shell	Can hide inside the shell	Cannot hide inside the shell

A TIGRESS AT MY DOORSTEP

I started working as a safari guide on International Women's Day, 8 March 2015, along with five other women from Moharli village. We were the first batch of female safari guides in Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve. It was an exciting but challenging beginning. In those early days, we were allotted canters- small safari buses- instead of gypsies. Those were our learning days. We were learning about the forest, wildlife and, most importantly, how to handle different kinds of tourists.

I vaguely remember it was winter, sometime in 2016 or 2017. I was leading a safari in a canter carrying around 22 adults and nearly ten children. The guests were extremely excited and kept talking loudly. I repeatedly requested them to maintain silence, as noise could disturb the animals and reduce our chances of a good sighting. Normally, two guides were allotted to each canter, but that day I was the only guide. Managing so many excited guests from different age groups was quite a responsibility.

As our canter moved along the narrow, one-way road at Jamni, the Queen of Jamni, T7, popularly known as Choti Tara, decided to give us a memorable surprise. She stepped onto the road, much to the delight of the tourists, including those waiting in the gypsies behind us. Cameras immediately started clicking. But Choti Tara appeared completely unconcerned. She looked at the vehicles around her and continued walking slowly and confidently along the road.

Then she came right in front of our canter. My guests were thrilled to see the tigress so close. But Choti Tara was not interested in them at all. Her attention was fixed on something lying on the road. I looked carefully and realised that it was a scarf, dropped unknowingly by a tourist from one of the vehicles. The tigress seemed curious. She cautiously approached the scarf, sniffed it and then picked it up in her mouth. Seeing a tigress carrying a scarf was certainly not something I had expected to witness on a safari!

Choti Tara then began walking towards our canter, still carrying the scarf. The driver, Mr. Patil, and I watched her carefully. She came closer and closer. Some guests began to feel nervous. We could not



AI Generated

reverse because several gypsies were lined up behind us.

And then came the moment I will never forget.

Choti Tara stopped right at the entrance of our canter and looked straight inside the vehicle!

My heartbeat almost stopped!

A tigress was standing at our doorstep!

Some tourists were frightened, while a few continued clicking photographs. I was afraid too, but I knew I had to remain calm. I kept telling everyone to stay quiet and avoid sudden movements. For a moment, I wondered whether Choti Tara was actually thinking of entering the canter.

I looked at Mr Patil. He was equally alert. He was ready to start the engine and move the canter quickly if the tigress made any unexpected move. He told me, "Alert me if she tries to enter. I will rush the canter."

As I tried to calm the tourists, I was silently preparing myself for the worst. Choti Tara, however, seemed completely unaffected by our anxiety. She stood there for nearly five minutes. Those five minutes felt much longer to me.

Finally, she dropped the scarf near the entrance of the canter and casually walked towards the gypsies behind us.

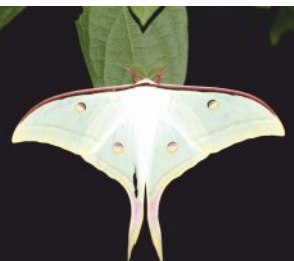
Only when she had moved far enough away did I finally breathe a sigh of relief.

Maya Jengthe

Guide, Moharli 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.





COMMANDER

In the dry deciduous forests of Tadoba, a striking butterfly is often seen fluttering through the landscape, its reddish-brown wings crossed by a distinctive white band. This is the Commander (*Moduza procris*), a member of the Nymphalidae, or brush-footed butterfly, family. It is particularly noticeable in the Tadoba landscape during winter.

Beauty in flight

The Commander has strongly scalloped wing edges and a bold white band across both wings, with males and females appearing broadly similar. Adults feed on tree sap, ripe fruits and nectar, while males may also visit damp soil to obtain minerals.

A caterpillar with a clever disguise

The Commander's most fascinating story begins after the female lays her eggs, often near the tips of host plants such as Kadamba. The tiny, spiny eggs resemble miniature sea urchins. After hatching, the caterpillar consumes its own eggshell before developing an extraordinary camouflage strategy.

It arranges its droppings-frass, into a chain-like structure near its resting site. This unusual arrangement can help break up the caterpillar's outline and make it less conspicuous to predators.

From caterpillar to leaf

When ready to pupate, the caterpillar forms a chrysalis suspended by its tail. With curved, horn-like projections and earthy brown markings, the pupa closely resembles a curled, withered leaf.

Soon after daybreak, the adult emerges, gradually unfolds its wings and prepares for flight. From a spiny egg to a cleverly disguised caterpillar and a leaf-like chrysalis, the Commander's life cycle is a remarkable demonstration of nature's artistry-and survival through camouflage.

- Yogita N. D. Chhapekar
Biologist, Nagpur



Wikipedia

HIRDA

I woke one morning at the Madnapur tented campsite to the sound of people talking. Stepping outside, I found a group gathered around the tree in front of my tent, collecting its seeds. I was hardly surprised. Hirda (*Terminalia chebula*) is one of India's most valued forest trees, with ecological, economic and medicinal importance.

Nature's insect guardians

In Tadoba, Hirda is commonly seen as a medium to large deciduous tree, with a well-developed root system that anchors it firmly and absorbs water and minerals. Its leaves often bear small characteristic glands near their base. These may secrete sugary droplets that attract ants. The ants feed on these secretions and patrol the leaves, potentially preying on eggs and caterpillars that could damage the foliage.

Valuable fruits

Hirda's small yellowish-white to greenish-white flowers are relatively inconspicuous and may have an unpleasant smell. Its fruits, however, are far more remarkable. Distinct longitudinal ridges mark the fruit, which changes from yellowish-green to brown as it matures and encloses a hard seed.

Rich in tannins and other bioactive compounds, Hirda fruits have a long history in Ayurveda and traditional medicine. They are also an important source of natural tannins used in leather processing and dyeing.

Hirda is one of the three fruits in Triphala, along with Behada (*Terminalia bellirica*) and Amla (*Phyllanthus emblica*)- another example of how Tadoba's trees connect forest ecology with human life.

- Anirudh Chaoji
Senior Naturalist, Nagpur



VEILED STINKHORN

During the monsoon, look closely around bamboo thickets in Tadoba and you may spot a remarkable mushroom rising from the leaf litter. This is the Veiled Stinkhorn (*Phallus merulinus*), also known as the basket stinkhorn.

From egg to mushroom

The fungus begins as a whitish, egg-like structure before rapidly developing into a hollow, spongy white stalk, reaching about 10–13 cm in height. A greyish to olive-brown, sticky cap sits on top, carrying the spore-bearing gleba. A delicate, white, net-like veil called the indusium surrounds the stalk and hangs like a skirt, extending about two-thirds of the way down. At the base, a white volva and rhizomorphs anchor the fungus in the soil.

Why does it stink?

Its unpleasant odour is not accidental. The gleba attracts flies, ants and other insects, which feed on the spore-rich material and carry spores to new locations. In this way, the stinkhorn uses insects as partners in spore dispersal.

Nature's recyclers

The Veiled Stinkhorn is a saprotroph, breaking down dead leaves and woody debris and returning nutrients to the forest floor. It has also been recorded growing among bamboo thickets and decomposing bamboo litter.

During Tadoba's monsoon, this unusual mushroom offers a fascinating glimpse into the hidden world of forest fungi.

- Muhammed Suhail N A
Wildlife Biologist, TATR



SPOTTED DOVE

Among the birds commonly seen across Tadoba, the Spotted Dove (*Spilopelia chinensis*) may appear unremarkable at first glance. Look closely, however, and its distinctive black collar, finely marked with white spots, makes it unmistakable. Its buff-brown body, rosy-pink breast and long, squared-off, white-tipped tail give it a graceful appearance.

From forests to firelines

The Spotted Dove is remarkably adaptable. It occurs in villages, plantations, rice fields, gardens and open forests, as well as around human settlements. In Tadoba, it is particularly common along firelines after controlled burning work. These open areas can provide opportunities for ground-foraging, where the dove searches for seeds and berries.

A noisy take-off

Although generally a quiet-looking bird, the Spotted Dove can make a surprisingly dramatic departure. When disturbed, it takes off explosively with rapid, noisy wingbeats, its fan-shaped tail clearly visible as it flies. Its soft, low-pitched, somewhat burry cooing is a familiar sound in many populated areas.

A simple family life

Spotted Doves build loose, shallow nests of twigs, usually placed on tree or bush branches and concealed among foliage. The female generally lays two white eggs. Both parents share incubation and care of their young, making parenting a joint effort.

Widespread and adaptable, the Spotted Dove is classified as Least Concern on the IUCN Red List. Its everyday presence is a reminder that Tadoba's biodiversity extends well beyond its most celebrated resident—the tiger.

- Rundhan Katkar
Range Forest Officer, Kolasa, TATR

Growing Green with Young Minds!



A Nursery and Plantation Activity was organised at Z.P. Primary School, Halde, encouraging students to participate in planting, caring for plants, and understanding the importance of nature and environmental conservation. The initiative promoted environmental awareness among young minds.

Eye & Cataract Screening Camp



Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve, in collaboration with Samata Foundation and Shalini Meghe Eye Hospital, organised a free eye and cataract screening camp at Talodhi (Naik). A total of 98 citizens were examined, 63 received eye drops and 35 were selected for free cataract surgery.

Together for a Cleaner Tadoba!



Under the Zero Waste Tadoba Initiative, weekly cleanliness drives were conducted in Bhamdali, Khutwanda and Katwan villages. Community members collected 45 kg of waste, contributing to an estimated reduction of 36 kg CO₂e and promoting cleaner surroundings and sustainable community participation.

Bird Training for Frontline Staff



A bird identification and habitat conservation training programme was organised for frontline forest staff, field officers and safari guides at Kolara and Khadsangi Buffer with guidance from CIBA, Nagpur. Field sessions recorded 42 bird species, strengthening participants' knowledge of Tadoba's avian diversity.

From Bottle Caps to a Big Message!



Students of a Zilla Parishad school at Madnapur creatively reused discarded plastic bottle caps to create "TADOBA" and wildlife signboards under the guidance of Ms Sumaiya Nikhath. The initiative promoted plastic waste reduction, creative reuse and environmental awareness among young learners.

Training on LepiScan & Tadoba Saathi Apps



A hands-on training programme was conducted for STPF personnel at Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve on the LepiScan–Butterfly ID and Tadoba Saathi SOS applications. The session covered app installation, account creation, AI-based butterfly identification, observation recording, SOS alerts and emergency response workflows.

Empowering Communities, Enhancing Hospitality



Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve and Tata STRIVE, Nagpur, jointly organised a Hospitality Training Workshop at Agarzari Auditorium for local women's Self-Help Groups and tourism staff. The workshop focused on guest hospitality, communication, cleanliness and quality service, strengthening local skills and tourism opportunities.

STAR OF THE MONTH August 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.



Subhash Dayanand Maraskolhe
Forest Guard, Range: Moharli (Core)

- Making nurseries for fruit trees, rare trees and grasses
- Consistent efforts to track the cubs of tigress T163
- Planting trees along the roads
- Daily tiger monitoring through camera trapping
- Participated in various workshops and trainings
- Foot patrolling as targeted
- Completed all work in the KRAs



P. P. Kshirsagar
Forest Guard, Range: Palasgaon (Buffer)

- Protected forests and wildlife in the beat
- 400.38 Km patrolling as per M-Stripe
- Public awareness to avoid man-wildlife conflict
- Completed all assigned tasks in time
- Implemented tiger monitoring
- Regularly stayed at the protection huts
- Regularly attended the tasks at the head office



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)

Specially to 'create forests' in the urban spaces and water scarce regions using intensive techniques like mulching and irrigation. Local species are preferred. The entire plantation patch behaves like a family ... Intricately linked with each other below the ground ... and they support growth! They are an eco-system ...



Ready for a jungle challenge?

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

- Which animal is called the King of the Jungle in Tadoba?
 - Leopard
 - Gaur
 - Tiger
 - Black Leopard
- Which bird is known for drumming sounds on tree trunks?
 - Hoopoe
 - Woodpecker
 - Bulbul
 - Mynah
- Which animal rolls into a ball when threatened?
 - Porcupine
 - Pangolin
 - Mongoose
 - Civet
- Which sense is strongest in a tiger?
 - Hearing
 - Taste
 - Smell
 - Touch
- Which forest product is collected from Mahua flowers?
 - Honey
 - Oil
 - Resin
 - Juice

Check page no. 14 for correct answers.

JUNGLE DETECTIVE

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

GUESS WHO?

THE HONEY LOVER

Shaggy black coat and curved white chest,
In termite mounds I love to quest.
With noisy snorts and claws so long,
I wander forests fierce and strong.

Sweet honeycombs are my delight,
Mostly active through the night.
A restless forest wanderer free,
Can you guess who I might be?

TRACK THE TRAIL

Who Walked This Way?

Tiny clawed footprints circle around fallen fruits and seeds.
Soft rustling sounds come from dry leaves overhead.
Half-eaten berries lie scattered beneath the trees.
The trail jumps from branch to branch instead of staying below.
Curious eyes and restless energy passed this way.
A playful troop moved together through the canopy.



MATCH-UP

WHO MAKES THIS SOUND?

Match the animal with its call.

Animals

1. Tiger



2. Indian Peafowl



3. Spotted Deer



4. Indian Cuckoo



5. Indian Scops Owl



Sound

A. Alarm bark

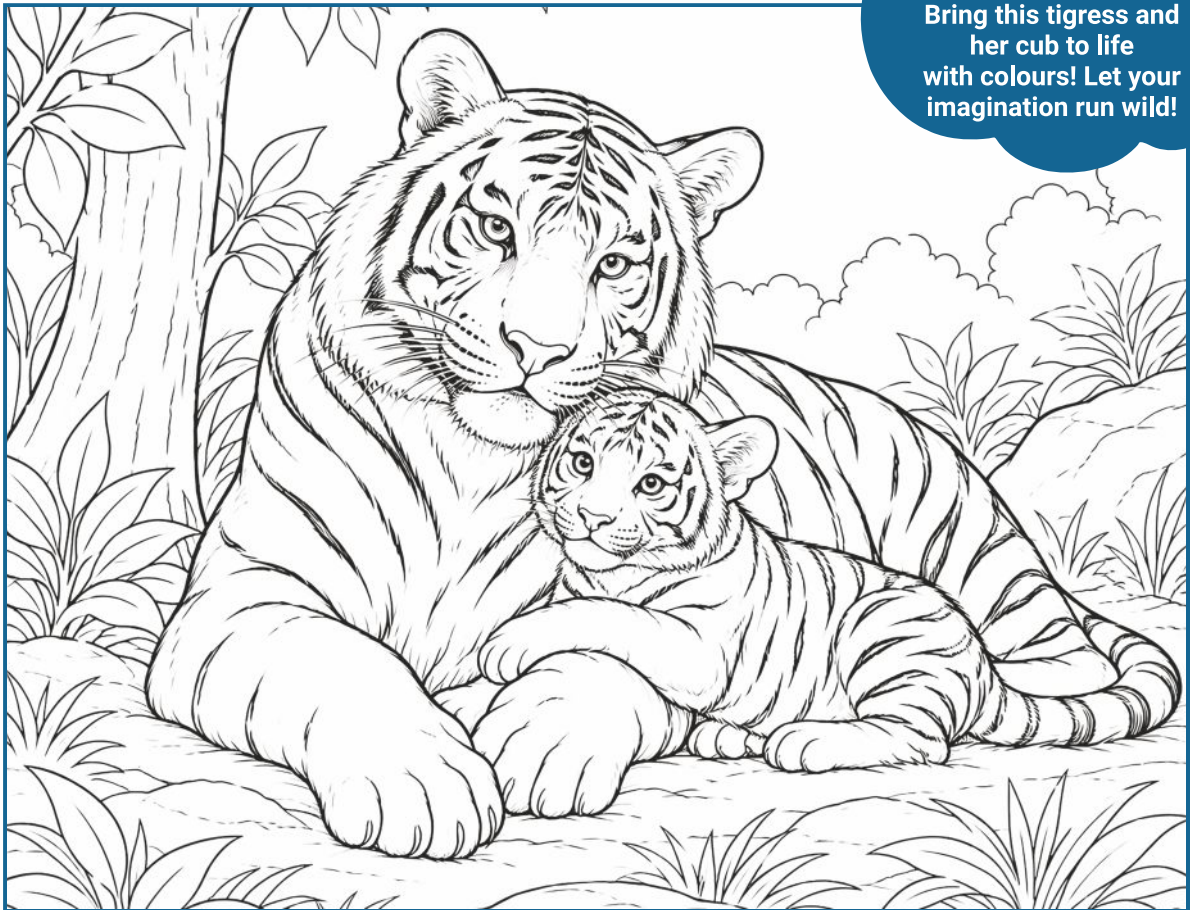
B. Melodious whistle

C. Soft repeated hoot

D. Loud "may-awe" call

E. Roar

Check page no. 14 for correct answers.



Bring this tigress and her cub to life with colours! Let your imagination run wild!

WILD WISDOM

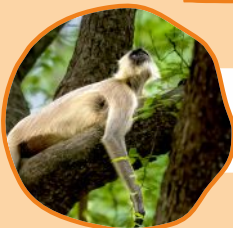
1-C, 2-B, 3-B, 4-A, 5-D

GUESS WHO?

Sloth Bear



TRACK THE TRAIL



Hanuman Langur

MATCH-UP:

Animals

1. Tiger
2. Indian Peafowl
3. Spotted Deer
4. Indian Cuckoo
5. Indian Scops Owl

Sound

- A. Alarm bark
- B. Melodious whistle
- C. Soft repeated hoot
- D. Loud "may-awe" call
- E. Roar

TARU UDYAN: CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR PEOPLE AND WILDLIFE

In the villages surrounding Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve, the relationship between people and wildlife is an everyday reality. As wildlife populations recover and animals such as tigers, leopards, sloth bears and gaurs increasingly move through areas adjoining villages, communities are learning to share their landscape with them. Now, Tadoba is taking a new approach to strengthen this coexistence—with a community initiative called Taru Udyan.

Taru Udyan is envisioned as a safe, fenced community space where recreation, nature education and conservation awareness come together. The initiative has already taken shape in buffer villages including Bhamdeli and Haldi, while several more Taru Udyans are under development and are expected to be completed shortly. The long-term vision is to establish such spaces across all villages in the buffer landscape of TATR, which has more than 100 villages located in and around its buffer area.

A Space for Every Generation

For many families living close to forests, concerns about encounters with wild animals and attacks by stray dogs have made parents increasingly reluctant to allow children to play outdoors. This has reduced opportunities for children to enjoy outdoor recreation, physical activity, social interaction and simply experience nature around them. Elderly villagers too face similar challenges, with few safe and comfortable public spaces available for recreation and social interaction.

Taru Udyan seeks to address these needs while also supporting conservation. Each park is being developed on community land identified by the respective Gram Panchayat in consultation with the Village Eco-Development Committee (VEDC). The facilities include chain-link fencing, entrance gates, children's play equipment, walking pathways, benches, solar lighting, native trees and shrubs, waste bins and environmental information boards.

The name Taru Udyan has a special significance. It derives from Taru Dev, the legendary protector of forests after whom Tadoba is believed to have been named. In this way, every Taru Udyan becomes more than a village park. It represents the traditional relationship between people and forests while carrying forward the cultural identity and heritage of the Tadoba landscape.



Creating Young Conservationists

One of the most important features of the initiative is the creation of 'Friends of Taru' Children's Clubs in participating villages. Comprising local school children, these clubs will give young residents an opportunity to become active participants in conservation.

The children will help maintain the parks and water plants, participate in cleanliness drives and celebrate occasions such as World Environment Day, Wildlife Week and Earth Day. They will also take part in bird watching and nature walks, gradually becoming young ambassadors for conservation within their own communities.

The sustainability of Taru Udyans will depend on community ownership. Gram Panchayats, VEDCs and Friends of Taru groups will play an active role, supported by regular monitoring from TATR field staff. Community plantation drives and annual maintenance through village institutions and departmental convergence, wherever feasible, will further strengthen the initiative.

Taru Udyan represents an important idea: conservation is not only about protecting forests and wildlife; it is also about creating a positive relationship between people and the landscape they share. By providing children and families with safe spaces while nurturing curiosity and respect for nature, Tadoba is taking conservation beyond the forest boundary—and placing the seeds of coexistence within the villages themselves.

I LOVE A GOOD SOAK!

Cooling off... watching the world go by...
even a tigress knows when it's time for a refreshing dip!.



Sacchidanand Utekar



TWO OWLS, ONE COSY HIDEOUT!

Tucked into a tree hollow, these two Indian Scope Owls
prove that the best homes are found in nature

Kishor Poddari