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# Tadoba

DIARIES

The official Newsletter of Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve



INDRAJEET MADANI

Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Conservation Foundation, Chandrapur

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# LIVE LIKE A TIGER : THE STORY OF T-33

Dear Reader,

**T**he month of May has brought a very poignant moment for all nature lovers especially those who have been associated with Tadoba since more than a decade. A dominant male tiger of the Tadoba, T-33, popularly known as 'Waghдох', breathed his last on 23rd May in Durgapur area on the outskirts of Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve. He was arguably one of India's largest tigers. As he grew older, he was driven away by younger dominant males from his original territory towards buffer areas which have more human density. T-33, however, never came into conflict with humans, as he continued to hunt wild prey and move around his territory.

For ecologists and biologists his death may not be more significant than losing a tiger due to old age, and one who lived well beyond his/her normal life span. After all, he had lived his life, fulfilling the ecological role of an apex predator and protector of the area for more than a decade, besides, leaving behind around 40 progenies in the Tadoba landscape. On the other hand, some nature lovers observing his painful last few days were concerned and even made emotional appeals to the forest department to intervene and 'rescue' him and somehow prolong his life. Wildlife managers in such situations have to take a balanced call to rightfully recognise the extraordinary ecological contribution of the animal but at the same time not to take away the spirit of the tiger and deprive him of his dignity. After all, he had lived like a tiger and hence he deserved to die like a tiger.

It was therefore consciously avoided to capture and confine T-33 during his last few days. We are well aware that tigers are on top of the food chain of the ecosystem and their existence indicates a healthy ecosystem across the trophic levels right to the level of primary producers like trees and grasses in the forest. And in T-33's territory, he was the one who ensured this integrity of the system. The very fact that a tiger like T-33 thrived for 18 long years, doing his best as a dominant tiger of the landscape, is no mean feat. The life of a wild tiger anywhere in the world is full of natural and manmade dangers. To survive in the face of fierce competition from other male tigers, to rule a vast territory and breed successfully year after year, besides dodging threats of fragmented forests, electrified farm lands, non-stop vehicular traffic and poachers. T-33 was the protector and ruler, as well as the product of the Tadoba landscape, which provided the best of protection, habitat and community goodwill towards tigers. The stage is set for future generation of tigers to continue the glorious legacy of T-33.

And as guardians and managers of Tadoba, we reiterate to do our best for them.

**Dr. Jitendra Ramgaokar**  
Field Director, TATR  
and Executive Director,  
TATR Conservation Foundation

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## AN INTROSPECTIVE TRIP

- Sumona Chakravarty  
Actress

**I**ndian film and television actress Sumona Chakravarty known for her roles in the shows 'Comedy Nights with Kapil' and 'The Kapil Sharma Show' was recently in TATR. She went on five safaris and was extremely excited about the wildlife she spotted! Tadoba Diaries caught up with her at the Tadoba Jungle Camp Resort.

**Q: How did you first develop a passion for wildlife?**

**A:** Ever since childhood, my mom and I would watch a lot of National Geographic shows on TV. It was actually because of her that we went to Kenya in 2019. Then again in March, I was shooting in Buxa Tiger Reserve for 'Shonar Bengal', a show highlighting the heritage of the state. That's when I realised that I had never gone on a wildlife safari in India! Tadoba is so close to Mumbai and I had never seen a tiger before. My mother's birthday was coming up and so we decided to do this trip and the trip has been fabulous!

**Q: Tell us about your safaris and sightings.**

**A:** My first day was brilliant! We enjoyed watching all the wildlife- dancing peacocks, owls, crocodiles, spotted deer, guar and wild boar. We saw tigress T-24, popularly known as Sonam, with her cubs, and then we also spotted a leopard eating its kill!

On our second day, we managed to sight all the superstars of Tadoba: T-12 (Maya), T-168 (Balram), T-44 (Bajrang) and T-100 (Tala). We saw chousingha - a very rare antelope and finally, we saw the sloth bear and a pack of dholes as well. In the span of two days, we saw all five VIP animals of Tadoba!

**Q: What has been your favourite encounter out of all these?**

**A:** It has to be Balram! On the second day we caught him just after his nap and our naturalist said, "Ye teen yawn ho gaya and ab yeh paani peene jayega." Which is exactly what happened! It actually sounded like my daily routine!

The next day we had stopped near this waterbody. We suddenly heard a growl and Balram emerged from the bush right by our vehicle. Just my luck that I had the 400mm lens on and could barely fit his huge body into the frame! I felt like asking him "Sir, thoda peeche ho jaiye, because I can't move!"

**Q: You have been to some wildlife parks before. What did you feel was special about Tadoba?**

**A:** The immense bio-diversity at Tadoba definitely stands out. People go on safaris only wanting to see a tiger, but don't realise there is so much in the forest beyond tigers too. In fact, it was on this trip that I realised my love for birds. I paid attention to every bird I spotted, and must say that Tadoba is just that incredible a place for birdwatching.

The uniqueness extends to the landscape as well. The topography and vegetation of Tadoba is truly extraordinary. One area is lush green and dense while another is completely burnt out, almost blond in colour. I have never seen this kind of diversity elsewhere.

**Q: You came here with your mother, how has she enjoyed Tadoba?**

**A:** She's a great animal lover. We were planning her 60th birthday and I decided there would be no better gift than a visit to Tadoba.

For birthdays, one often throws a party and feeds people. When you get married - you feed people. This business of feeding people never ends, even when one dies! A trip like this is a much better way of cherishing the moment and my mother has definitely enjoyed it.

- Amaan Lopez  
Summer Intern, TATR





## The Deer That Barks

**M**untiacus muntjakis found in most forests across India, but very little is known about this small yet brave animal. The Indian muntjac or barking deer as it is commonly known, is one of the most primitive deer groups in the world. The barking deer is also locally called kakar / kakad / bhedaki / bhekar. It is often sighted foraging in between bamboo patches or crossing roads in its characteristic springy walk. At under two feet in height, and weighing about 30 kg, the muntjac is one of the smaller deer species found in India. The barking deer's rust-brown fur is in stark contrast to the white beneath the tail. The male has short antlers that curve backwards, while the female has bony knobs instead of antlers. A 'V' shape mark on the face makes them easily identifiable even from a far distance.

Unlike other deer species which often live in herds, barking deer are largely solitary animals and are rarely seen in groups bigger than two individuals. They mark territory with secretions from glands on their face as well as by scraping the ground, grass, and tree bark.

The barking deer is an important prey species for carnivores like tigers, leopards, wild dogs, and crocodiles. When they encounter such predators or sense the presence of one, they let out the familiar, harsh barking call which sounds almost similar to a dog's bark. The sound is loud enough to be heard at least a kilometre away, and it's what gives this deer its name!

- Prajakta Hushangbadkar  
Wildlife Biologist, TATR



## State Flower of Maharashtra

**N**ext time during your safari when you are headed towards Moharli from Tadoba Visawa, the Interpretation Centre at Tadoba lake, I suggest you skip the tar road and instead drive by the mud road along the Panchadhara stream. This road has some amazing huge Indian Ghost Trees. As you come closer to old Panchadhara machan, you will see some of the most fascinating blues. These are the beautiful flowers of Jarul, also known by names like Queen's Flowers or the Pride of India. These are among the most spectacular flowering trees from the Indian forests.

The Lagerstroemia genus has members like *L. speciosa* whose lovely flowers, referred to as Taman in Marathi, have made it the State Flower of Maharashtra. Its widespread roots make it a favoured plant for plantations that aid in erosion control. The name Queen's Flower probably applies to *L. regina*. However, it is believed that a cousin, *L. microcarpa* (Nana) is the one that is naturally found in the forests of Western Ghats and has beautiful smaller flowers and fruits.

Lagerstroemia itself gets the name from a seafarer merchant 'Magnus von Lagerström', of the Swedish East India Company, who introduced the first specimens of this plant in Europe. Today a wide variety of Lagerstroemia are adding beauty to the gardens and homes in Europe and America.

This deciduous tree with bright pink to light purple flowers is one of the most outstanding summer bloomers. This beautiful tree is also very useful as its leaves and fruits are used in medicines.

- Anirudh Chaoji  
Senior Naturalist



## BEAR VS TIGERS

It was our second safari of the trip. As we entered through the Khutwanda gate, we spotted a sloth bear on the left side of the road rummaging through the grass. One of the guides pointed out that there were tiger cubs in the opposite bush. While we were busy taking images of the cubs, the sloth bear had crossed over! We eagerly waited for some interaction between the cubs and the bear, with our cameras poised to capture the moment.

The cubs seemed amused by the sloth bear. They were poised to ambush him from three directions. The sloth bear crouched down, no doubt hoping they would go away. However, one of the cubs went near him. This did not amuse the sloth bear at all, and he chased away the cub. The other two siblings were equally curious and they too came near the bear. Though we knew that this was nature's way, we still worried for the animal. But the annoyed sloth bear just chased them down the road! Thankfully, none were harmed and they all went their separate ways. A special thanks to our driver Mubarak Sheikh and our guide Yogesh Dhone for the wonderful experience.

- Padmalakshmi Jnaneshwar  
Tourist, Bangalore



## GENUINE WILDLIFE LOVERS

Being a night safari guide, I get various types of experiences with the wildlife. At the same time, the tourists we accompany also expose us to different experiences. While most of the tourists want to see only a tiger or a leopard, sometimes we also have tourists who want to see animals other than the tiger or just to experience the jungle. Recently I met such a group of tourists during a night safari. In the beginning of the safari itself, my guests said that they had sighted tigers in all of their previous safaris and now they wanted to see other animals.

Within a few kilometres from the entry gate, we sighted a tigress with her three cubs at a waterhole. The cubs were playing in the water. My guests appreciated the sighting but insisted on moving on. Hence while all other vehicles continued to be at the waterhole, we moved on. On the way, the guests kept on asking me if we spot mouse deer, flying squirrels, and giant squirrels in Tadoba. While I was explaining what all we get to see here, I spotted a flying squirrel. The guests were thrilled at this spotting. That my guests were enjoying every bit of the jungle was such a pleasant surprise.

When we reached near Devada, a leopard had crossed the road in front of a safari gypsy and a few other vehicles were waiting for it to come back on the road. We also stopped there. After a while, all other vehicles left the spot assuming that the leopard had moved far from there. I thought the leopard had not gone too far and was somewhere around. Hence I suggested we wait. My guests kept faith in my judgement and agreed to wait though other vehicles moved on. I kept on looking for the leopard in the torch light and suddenly a single eye shone only 15 feet away from us! It could have been any animal. I had a closer look and confirmed that it was indeed a leopard. My guests were not only delighted to see the leopard, but also appreciated my spotting skills.

While my tourists were happy to sight wildlife during the safari, I was happier to meet such genuine wildlife lovers.

- Niranjana Meshram  
Guide, Junona Gate





## THE LEGEND OF TADOBA

# WAGHDOH



**T**he recent death of a male tiger T-33, popularly called Waghdoh in Tadobais has for wildlife lovers in India. This tiger left has behind a y strong gene pool as he is believed to have sired a number of cubs who populate the reserve.

I remembered my first sighting of this strong, huge, and bulky tiger way back in 2011-12. Our Gypsy was moving on the rugged road of the Moharli range of Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve. Suddenly the guide asked the driver to stop the vehicle and took my binocular from me. On the fire line, he had spotted some movement. Deep in the jungle, a tiger was sitting on the edge of the fire line. In front of him, two cubs were playing in the grass. We assumed it to be a tigress. We all stood in the gypsy, watching the cubs when the guide muttered, "Sir, Waghdoh!"

This was my first encounter with one of the healthiest and heftiest tigers in the Moharli range. Since then, I have observed this dominant male several times in Khatoda, Kosecanal road, Teliya lake, and the tar road of Moharli range. The highlight was when this mighty tiger was sitting with tigress T-10 Madhuri and her four cubs in the taka no.2 in Moharli. The entire family were sitting in the water body and the tourists were observing this amazing behaviour of a tiger 'father' was playing with his cubs! It was quite a unique behaviour of a male tiger to be playing with his offspring. In due course, he became the Big Daddy of Tadoba! His strong gene pool includes the famous 'Four Sisters of Teliya' i.e. T-24 (Sonam), T-19 (Lara), Mona and Geeta. Sonam still rules the lake area of Teliya while Lara has taken over the adjacent area of Sonam's territory in the core area of the park.

Waghdoh was first sighted by guides in 2009-10 on the border of the Kolasa-Moharli range, especially in the

Waghdoh water body of the Andhari river. He fought with the dominant male (Yeda Anna) and became the 'King of Moharli'. He had a scar on his right eye, which is why the guides gave him the nickname 'Bhokyna' or Scar face. Guides said this scar was due to a gaur attack. Some said it was due to frequent fights with other dominant tigers. But due to this scar, he looked mysterious. He ruled the Moharli core area till he was dragged down by another male tiger T-44 Bajrang in 2014. Later, he shifted along with his trusted female Madhuri to the buffer area of Moharli, where he was famous for his frequent sightings. He ruled the Moharli buffer region till 2016, but he lost his dominance again and moved to Mamla buffer. There were sporadic sightings of Waghdoh, but this did not diminish his stardom! He once killed a sloth bear in Mamla buffer, and again came into the limelight. There is a picture of this hefty male crossing the rail line between Chandrapur-Gondia near Lohara. A documentary on the Teliya landscape and the famous tigers of Teliya was made while Waghdoh was the dominant male of that area. He was well-documented in this film.

This star attraction of Tadoba, Waghdoh, lived well and was safe even in dense human habitation due to the continuous efforts of the Tadoba management. In his last days, the ground staff of the regular forest division was continuously monitoring this legend. When he was found dead the entire department, guides and the wildlife lovers were deeply saddened. He was offered an obituary not only on social media, but also by putting his posters on the roads. Such was his popularity.

**Waghdoh, the Big Daddy will be remembered forever.**

- Sanjay Karkare  
Assistant Director, BNHS



## END OF AN ERA



I have seen Waghdoh through his ups and downs. I still remember when I saw that majestic tiger for the first time. It was at the very first waterhole that you come across after entering the Moharli gate. Mine was the first gypsy to reach there. He was resting near the waterhole. In my career as safari guide, I have seen many tigers. But this guy was different. I was mesmerized at the first sight of him. He was a strong, healthy, handsome male. Born in 2004, he must be around four to five years old then. He had no scars on his face, neither had he had that wounded eye. Yeda Anna was the dominant male in Teliya those days. Eventually Waghdoh took over the reins. I would always remember him as a family man. He was the mightiest male tiger. The scars on his face and his bulky body made him look fearsome. But he had a soft heart. I have seen him taking care of his cubs when his female would go on hunt. Unlike other male tigers, he used to spend time with cubs and take them around with him. He was a protective and a caring father. With Waghdoh, an era comes to an end... leaving behind numerous memories in our hearts.

- Anil Tiwade

President, Maharashtra State Guide Union

## LOVE at FIRST SIGHT

I still remember that day. It was my afternoon safari on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2011. We had heard that a big male tiger had hunted a gaur at Einbodi-Moharli a couple of days back, but no tourist could sight him at the waterhole. He was very shy and used to go inside the forest as soon as he heard the sound of any gypsy. When I entered Moharli gate for the safari that day, I requested my gypsy driver Ajay Nikode to head straight for Einbodi. Ours was the first gypsy to enter the park. On our way, we sighted a sloth bear mother with three tiny ones on her back. However, we resisted the temptation to photograph the family as our sole target was to see the huge male from Waghdoh! The road sloped down to the Einbodi waterhole. We switched off the gypsy in motion and let it roll down to the waterhole. And there he was! He was so huge! Waghdoh stood there for four to five seconds, allowing me to take exactly two images from the moving vehicle. He disappeared into the bushes before the other gypsies arrived. It was probably the first image taken by any tourist of this huge male who later became a legend. Legends never die, they live in our memories forever. As shall Waghdoh!



- Indranil Paul

Tourist, Nagpur





**I WILL LEAD MOM!** A young leopard walking through the jungle with its mother at night. Its eyes shine in the flash of the camera trap installed by the forest department.

## NATURE CAMPING

TATR buffer has a nature camping site with 10 well-furnished tents, and a kitchen, dining hall and conference hall. It is located near the Adventure Park at Agarzari. This camping site is a perfect venue for nature education and awareness events. TATR and BNHS have been frequently arranging nature camps for students from the schools in the villages around Tadoba. Schools and colleges are welcome to use this facility to for students to come here, explore the wilds and sensitise their students on conservation issues.

**Location:** : Agarzari Gate

**Booking:** [Online@mytadoba.org](mailto:Online@mytadoba.org)



## A LESSON TO THE DRUNK TOURISTS

**T**adoba Andhari Tiger Reserve is known for its strict adherence to the rules and regulations. Not just the forest officials, even the guides, drivers and community members see to it that the rules of the reserve are not broken.

Guides Shahnaz Being and Bhagyawan Sonule were on a canter safari on 13th May. When most tourists were appreciating the forest and wildlife, they noticed that one particular group was consuming liquor. They reported it to the Moharli gate while returning from the safari in the evening. Ten tourists were identified and were asked to pay a fine of Rs. 5,000 each as per the rules of the reserve. The group remained unruly and refused to pay the fine. The RFO Arun Gond (Moharli Core) took a firm stand stating that the rules of

the reserve are not to be compromised with, and further action would be taken if they failed to comply. Finally, the tourists had to pay Rs. 50,000 as fine.



“This incident highlights the fact that the TATR management is extremely serious with respect to the rules of the reserve and whoever breaks the rule will be taken action against”, said RFO Gond.

“This is probably the first time in the history of TATR wherein such a big fine is recovered from misbehaving, unruly errant tourists. We are grateful to our guides who behaved responsibly and reported the incident to the officials. We intend to felicitate those guides and appreciate their contribution in helping us maintain discipline in the reserve”, said Nandkishor Kale, Deputy Director, TATR(Core)



# CAPTURING A TIGER

With the reduction in overall forest cover and increasing tiger population, incidents of wildlife-human conflict are on a rise. We, at the forest department, do our best to ensure that both wild animals and human beings remain safe. At times, we risk our own lives to save both the species from each other.

This is the story of a young male tiger whom we had to capture to save human life. He was one of the three cubs born to a tigress in the Kolara range. My colleagues and I had seen this family roaming in the range multiple times. All three cubs were very playful. However, at about 18 months of age, we realised that one male cub was behaving differently. When he would see a motorcycle or a four-wheeler of department staff coming, he would take a stalking position. Usually, young cubs are enthusiastic and at times behave weirdly, so we ignored his behaviour. Then one day, he kept on circling around a Protection Camp, thereby not letting the only forest guard inside the camp come out. Ultimately, we had to send a vehicle to get him out of the camp. Once I saw him ready for an ambush along a fire line. He was clearly learning how to hunt and it was normal at his age.

Then on 14th February, 2020 a 67-year-old man was killed in his farm in a tiger attack. We installed camera traps in the area and the images captured showed three cubs roaming there. However, it was not clear which one actually had killed the man. On 4th April, 2020 a woman was killed in the core forest. This time the camera trap revealed it to be the same hyperactive male sub-adult cub! Next it was a woman, followed by two more people killed in June 2020. The villagers were extremely angry and demanded the tiger to be captured or shot.

In a high-level meeting, orders were issued on 9th June to capture him. We immediately procured four goats to use as bait and put three of them to three different places that night itself. By morning six o'clock we had formed six teams to search and capture the tiger. Each team had photographs of the trouble making tiger clicked from both sides so that the team could identify him from his stripe pattern. We received a call from one of the teams



confirming that the tiger was located. We immediately rushed to the spot and put the fourth bait. Within five minutes, the tiger appeared and killed the bait. His identity was reconfirmed and a team of senior officials and the medical officer was called for. The tiger was then tranquillized and captured.

I am glad that we could save the tiger and also the villagers.

- Satish Shende

Range Forest Officer, Tadoba Range, TATR

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## Tadoba

DIARIES

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## CAMERA TRAPPING BY STUDENTS

It was a special, and thrilling, day for the children in the villages around Tadoba! The Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) team guided the kids to install the camera traps. The Born Free Foundation, UK provided financial support for this initiative.

Two hundred and sixty one students and eleven teachers from 10 different schools in the buffer of Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve participated in the activity. The main objective of this initiative was to provide rural students a hands-on experience by using scientific equipment and improve their understanding in bio-diversity and conservation. The programme was conducted in seven stages, starting with a pre-test to assess their understanding of basic technology. This was followed by lectures on the technologies used in wildlife conservation and a demonstration on using camera traps and GPS in the schools. Selected students were then taken out into the field to set up the camera traps in a nearby forest or on the edge of agricultural farms. For the installation, two camera traps were prepared for each school, and a total of 17 cameras were installed over the next 20 days. All the locations chosen were easily accessible and were within one km radius of the schools. One camera was placed on the outskirts of farm or forest, while the other was placed inside the forest. The camera traps were set up entirely by students with the guidance of the BNHS team. The students also learned to fill the datasheet, resulting in an increase in student's knowledge and awareness about

camera trapping. Forest officials and field staff of TATR were kept in loop.

The next round was very exciting as the photographs captured in the camera traps were shown in classrooms! About 15,000 photos were captured in these camera traps, and the students were amazed to see the images. Tiger image generated excitement and cheers in every classroom. Students were surprised to see the extent of wildlife movement around their villages. Fifteen species of mammals along with tigers and honey badger were captured in the cameras. The camera traps also captured the images of resource collection by the communities. Interestingly, camera trap images captured the movement of large carnivores and people in the same time period indicating at the possibility of human- wildlife conflict. The BNHS team discussed the importance of this finding, how it can lead to conflict and its mitigation with the students.

In the last round, an exhibition of 74 pictures was organized in the Agarzari eco-tourism complex. G. Guruprasad, Deputy Director (Buffer) TATR inaugurated the exhibition. Dr. Jitendra Ramgaokar, Field Director-TAR, MS Shri. Lakshmi, Field Director-Pench, TR Panchbhai, DCF-Bor, ACF of Pench and Tadoba, and other forest staff visited the exhibition and appreciated the initiative conducted by Saurabh Dande, and Ameya Paranjape under the guidance of Sanjay Karkare, Assistant Director-BNHS.

## HERDER ORIENTATION

TATR- Khadsangi Buffer and BNHS organized a unique program in Talodhi village on 25th May 2022. It was called 'Gurakhi Samwad' i.e. a dialogue with the people who take cattle to grazing every day. Total 21 cowherds and goatherds from five villages participated in the program. A herder is vulnerable as he ventures into the forests for almost 365 days a year. Here, he would have many encounters with animals, mainly large carnivores, which may lead to accidental attacks. This event was organised to sensitize them with regard to the importance of forests and handling man-animal conflict. The herders present were addressed by Sanjay Karkare, Assistant Director-BNHS. Saurabh Dande, Sanjay Gohane from BNHS, RO Gurnule, forest guard Balki, Ankode, Hingankar, Talodhi PRT team also attended the event.





## A NIGHT ON MACHAN

When light slips into dark, the colours of the forest fade to gray. But as the full moon rises above the horizon, the forest is bathed in a soft silvery glow. The land reveals itself to be a realm of shifting shadows, more alive than day.

On the 16th of May, I had the opportunity of witnessing this phenomenon myself. The annual Machan Census has volunteers and members of the forest department sit overnight in various machans spread across the TATR.

Our team of four people were positioned just a few meters from a waterhole and equipped with the bare minimum for the night. We reached there at seven pm just as the sun was setting. Being as silent as possible, we began observing and recording all forms of life that the forest revealed to us.

The best part was that being on the machan enabled us to experience Tadoba's denizens undisturbed, without them being—mostly—unaware of our presence. I found the sloth bear the most interesting of all.

When there is scarce light to illuminate the shaggy edges of its frame, the creature appears as a shapeless, dark figure that is often heard before it is seen. A sloth bear is known to have a huge range of vocalizations. On that night we saw two sloth bears—both huffing, slurping, grunting and even snarling. The most startling, however, was when we heard it charge into the jungle, releasing a blood-curdling cry that pierced through the forest.

In stark contrast to the bear was the self-effacing porcupine. Its back is packed with sharp quills that blend almost seamlessly with the grasslands at night. It is only out in the open that its hobbling gait is revealed. When the torch light was shone on the rodent, it would freeze in cartoon-like animation, before shuffling along its path again.

Nearing midnight, the clouds were less forgiving and visibility suffered. In this darkness and silence, the sounds of the jungle never seemed louder. The breaking of a branch, the trampling of dry leaves--the slightest of sounds were building up an intense atmosphere of suspense.

Suddenly, the gentle sounds of the forest were shattered by the rumbling growl of a tiger! Everyone had their eyes peeled at the source of the sound. How would the king of the jungle reveal himself? Leap onto the scene in an intense chase? Saunter over to the water-body for a quick sip?

Minutes passed and the highly anticipated scenarios in our heads turned more into wistful fantasies. But at the stroke of midnight we heard a loud splash in the water! Hurriedly, we shifted our focus to the water. As the torchlight beam hit the farthest shore, the coveted colours of orange and black revealed themselves.

There he was!

Majestically lying in the water was a beautiful, sub-adult, male tiger, likely one of T-19's cubs. Once he had had his fill of water and our undivided attention, he leapt swiftly out of the waterhole. Clearing almost eight feet, he made his exit just as suddenly as he appeared. We were left speechless!

Dawn was heralded by chirping birds that came to reclaim the forest from their nocturnal counterparts.

I sat reviewing the entries that we had made into the census sheet. I couldn't help feeling that each single mark represented an untold and extraordinary interaction. Each sighting had a story that was a tiny window into the unique life-time of that animal. Considering the volume of animals recorded in all the machans that night, one can get an idea of the depth and richness of life that this forest supports.

It is not just the numbers, but the experiences that come from the Machan Census that emphasise the need to conserve these strongholds of life.



- Amaan Lopez  
Summer Intern, TATR Foundation



SUPER CLICK

HANS SAINI



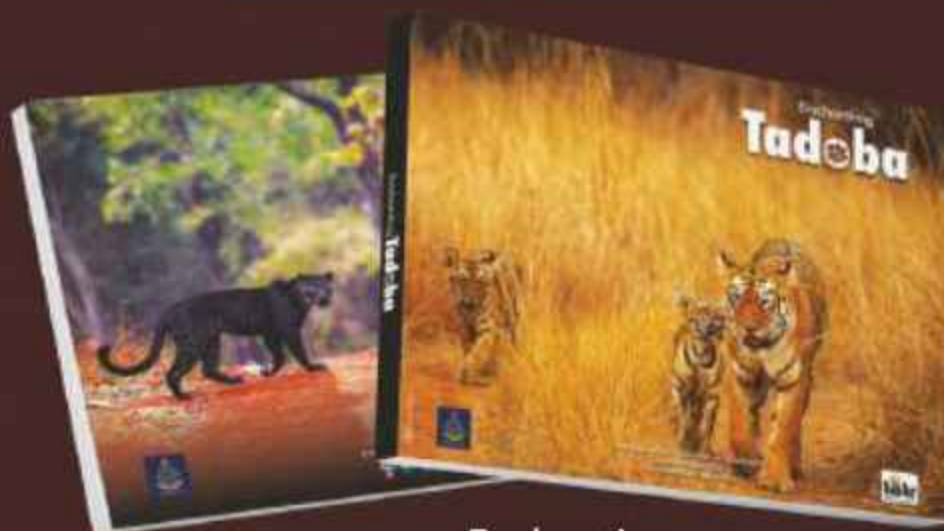
**UNDER THE WINGS!** Summer is always harsh to the wildlife, especially to the young ones. What could be a better shelter than the shadow of the mother! This cute cub was captured/clicked taking cover under the shadow of its mother - the star tigress T-24 lovingly called Sonam.



## Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve

*Presents*  
its very own

**COFFEE TABLE BOOK**



Enchanting

# Tadoba

₹ 2000

**Available at the entry gates of TATR**