

Whispering Wilds

Explore The Nature!!!

Issue 01 - January 2023

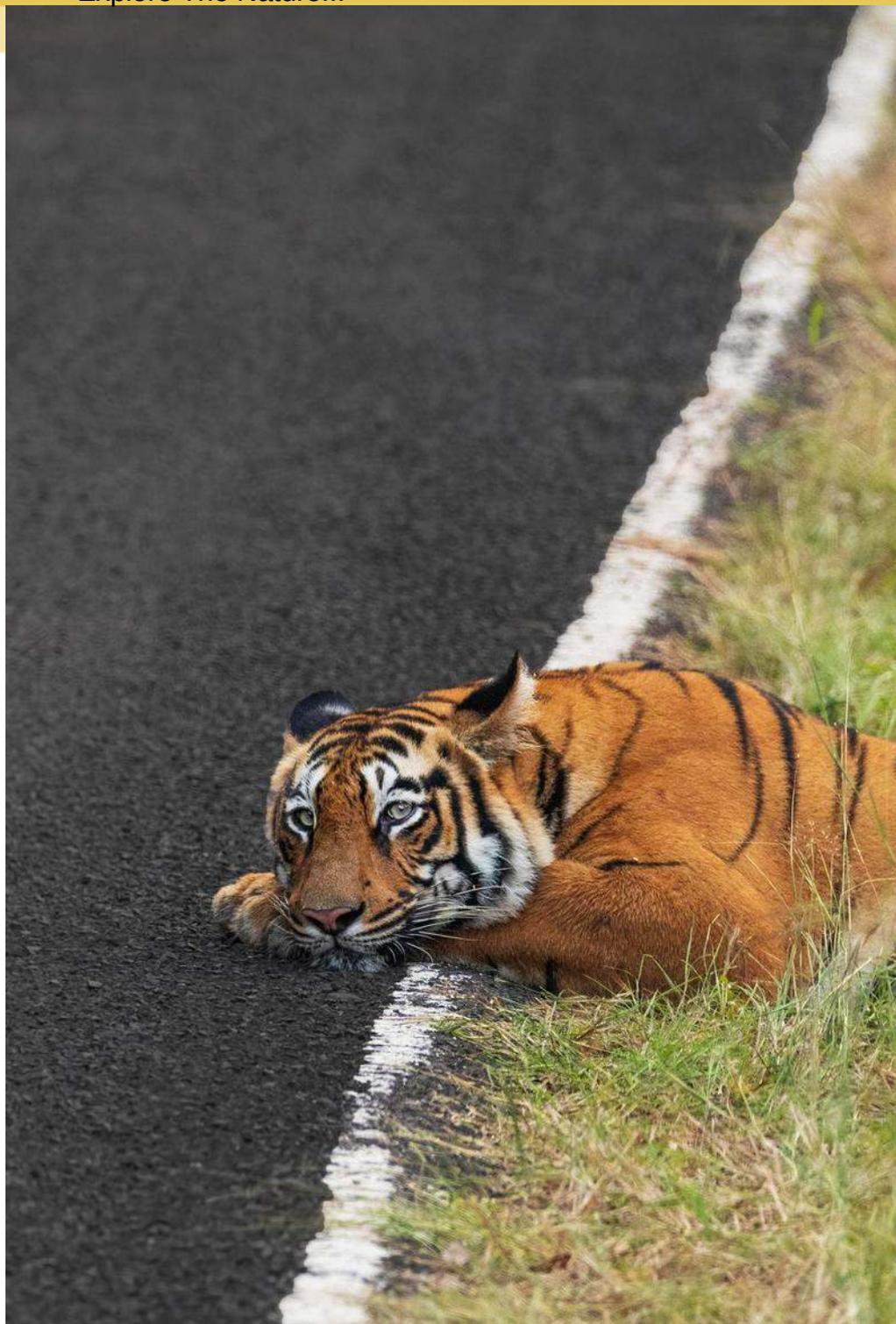


Wonderland Stories

Georgia
Purulia
Okhrey
Kutch

Earthlings

Avian World
Invertebrates
Tiger Special



International Tiger Day Celebration

Republic Day Special Edition



About Us



www.exploringnature.net

Instagram

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Twitter

[@ExploringNat007](https://twitter.com/ExploringNat007)

Facebook Page

[exploringthenature2021](https://www.facebook.com/exploringthenature2021)

Facebook Group

Exploring Nature

Email Id

exploringthenature1981@gmail.com

A Wildlife Consulting Company

Exploring Nature is a Community of like-minded people who loves to be in Nature amidst. Mother Nature has its own rhythm and we must tune up to it for a better tomorrow. Our mission is to make people cherish nature's beauty and protect it's novelty.

Exploring Nature is a Wildlife Consulting initiative that provides all types of Nature & Wildlife related services.

Nature Trails & Photo Walks

(Designed for all Age Groups, Schools, Colleges & Corporate Organisations)

Nature & Wildlife Photography Workshops

(Designed for all Age Groups, Schools, Colleges & Corporate Organisations)

Nature & Wildlife Photography Expeditions

(In Collaboration with Travel Companies and Locals. Designed for all Age Groups, Schools, Colleges & Corporate Organisations)

Nature & Wildlife Camps

(Designed for all Age Groups, Schools, Colleges & Corporate Organisations)

Wildlife Consulting

(Designed for Tiger Reserves, National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries & Corporate Organisations)

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exploringthenature1981@gmail.com

Aims & Objectives

Exploring Nature Call of the Wild is a wildlife consulting company. We like to introduce ourselves as a community of like-minded people who love to be in nature amidst, cherishing her many bounties. Mother Nature has her own rhythm and we must tune up to it for a better tomorrow. Our mission is to make people cherish nature's beauty and protect its novelty. With this aim we created a Facebook group of the same name and our magazine showcases our work in terms of short diaries and articles as shared by the group members, enjoying the flora and fauna with photographs and anecdotes and celebrating various events across the year. This magazine also displays the best of the photographs - the Winners and celebrated contributors of our Facebook group.

Ishani Chakraborty

(Honorary Corporate Communications & CEO Jungle Chimes)

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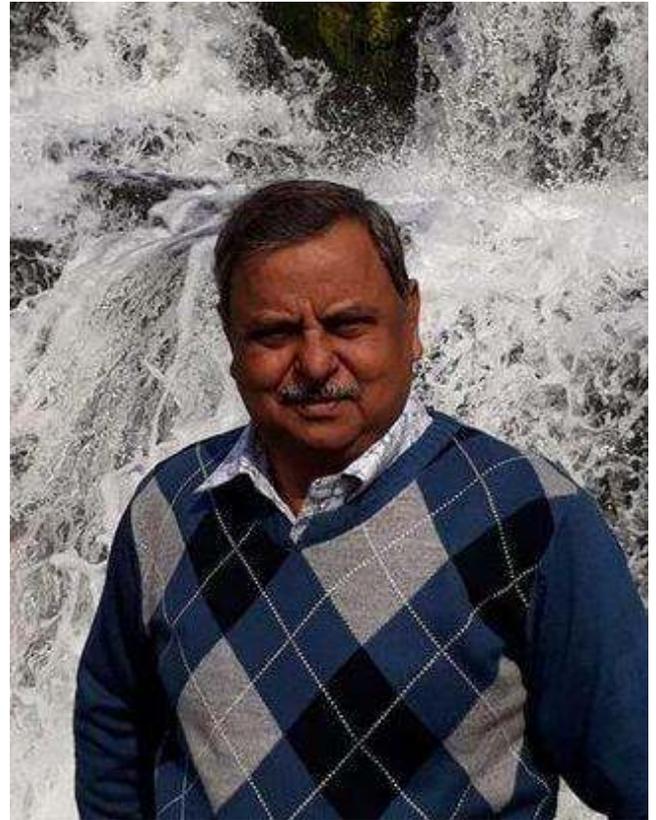
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Dr. Mithilesh Dutta Dwivedi (Chief Editor & Zoologist)

I feel honoured and privileged to send this message for the magazine "Whispering Wilds" published by Exploring Nature. I hope that this journal will highlight the burning issues related to Nature and Wildlife. It will spread the fragrance of conservation of nature as well as natural resources leading to sustainable development and focus on better utilization of natural resources, wildlife protection and co-existence of human beings.



Sumana (Co-Ordinator)

The recent news of land subsidence in Joshimath has shown us that when we take nature for granted, we have to suffer the consequences. Earth is not our only home. We also have to think about other earthlings who live on this earth. A few days ago, I saw an edited photo of snowfall in Kolkata on social media, which worried me. If you don't want your city to be Siberia or a desert, know your surroundings and love nature.

Explore nature with us!!



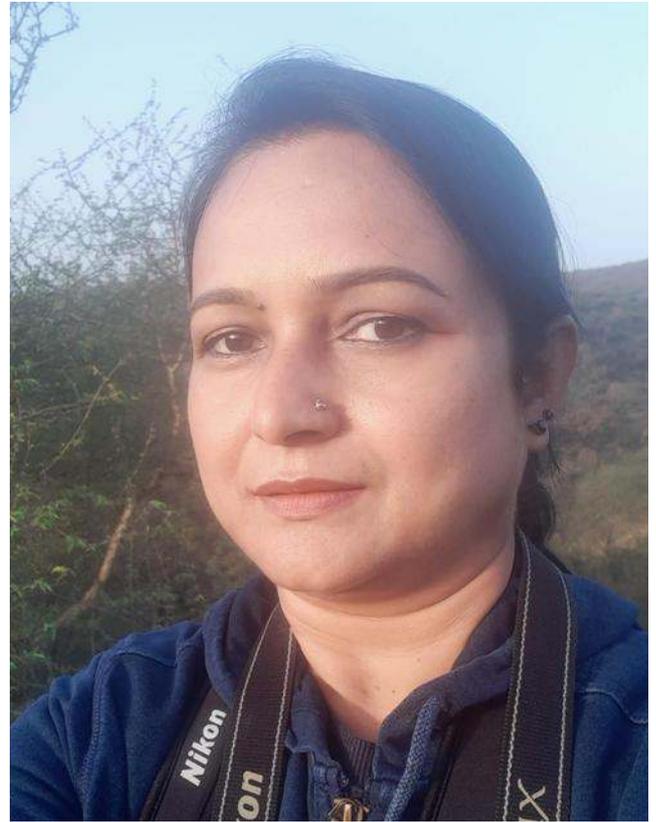
Heena Khan Shaikh (Co-Ordinator)

Inspite of Global warming alarming it has no impact on the growing urbanization. Still the species are endangered for existence. Through this magazine we hope to inculcate with in ourselves to save our Wildlife Reserve, Forest Reserve which contributes greatly to our life. Its great to be part of our magazine 'Whispering Wild'.



Gargi Mishra (Ornithologist)

I feel privileged and honored to bring forth my anecdotes about the avifauna through the e-magazine "Whispering Wilds". The aim of this magazine is to introduce you to the incredible world of birds, mammals, insects, butterflies and many other denizens in a very lucid manner. The stories embedded over here would be informative, entertaining and thrilling. They would allow you to peep into the real life experiences of the author.



Ishani Chakraborty (Honorary Corporate Communications & CEO Jungle Chimes)

Today, with increased dependency of humans on machines, the wildlife across the globe is facing risk and uncertainty. Thousands of species face the threat of extinction, as rapid urbanization has destroyed the ecosystems in which they live. We sincerely need to act now to reverse this trend. As the most intelligent life form on Earth we have a moral duty to ensure its sustainability. Besides, humans also depend on the essential products and services that nature provides. Hence, by practicing our love and care for the natural world, we ensure our own well-being. Our newsletter Whispering Wild captures people's passion towards wildlife and environment.



The Behind Story



Special Thanks to
Shri. ASI Rajesh Malgave



Special Thanks to
Shri. Senior inspector Rajkumar Waghchaware



Special Thanks to
Shri. PSI Mahesh Bhosale Sir

Pune: Duo robs man of valuables worth Rs 1.8 lakh on Baner Hill

Baner Hill, which is a hilly suburb of Pune, had something unpleasant in store for me. Though in the midst of a concrete jungle, this isolated hill is a paradise for nature lovers.

Upon visiting the Police station they never kept me waiting but they immediately took me to the site after listening to my story and they started doing the ground work. They called an Auto rickshaw and asked me to take the seat and instructed the auto driver to take me to the police station and pushed a

100 rupee note in my pocket to pay the auto driver.

Again upon reaching the police station they immediately took all my details and made the FIR ready and asked me to leave.

When I was leaving the police station the police officers arrived with multiple records collected from various CCTV Cameras.

चतुःश्रृंगी पोलिसांनी बाणेर टेकडीवरील फोटोग्राफरला लुटणारे दोन गुन्हेगार केले जेरबंद



-शिवतेज इंगुलकर-
जिल्हा टाईम्स पुणे, दि.२६-

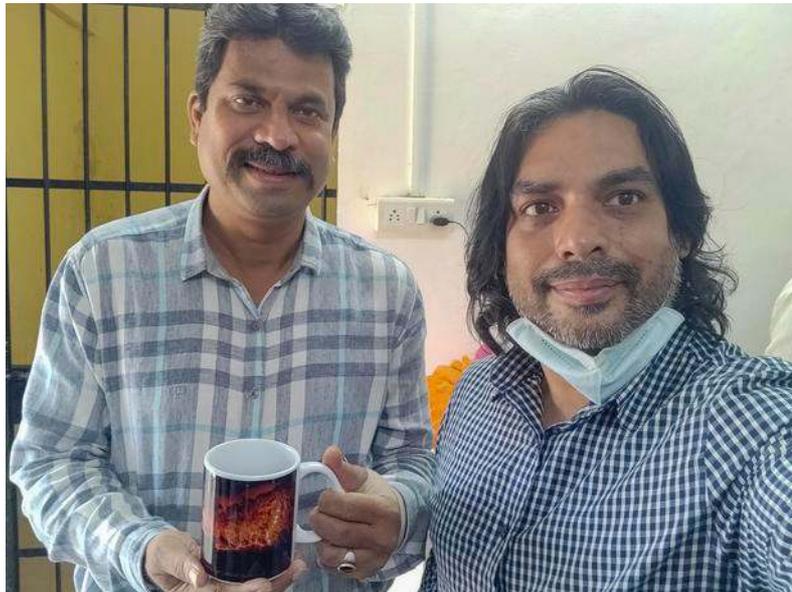
पी ५०० कॅमेरा, सोन्याच्या
अंगठ्या, चांदीचे ब्रेसलेट

घटनास्थळी भेट देऊन वरिष्ठ
पोलीस निरीक्षक राजकुमार



Special thanks to
detective
crime branch
team.

The Behind Story



As for a nature lover like me, I wanted to create a video of this lovely place but to my utter shock and surprise, I was robbed right in broad daylight of cash and valuables worth Rs. 1.8 lakh at 1pm on August 17, 2021.

The assailants took my mobile, a bracelet, cash and my most important possession, my camera, which had all my wildlife photos stored away on its chip.

But thanks to the exceptional work and due diligence of the Chaturshringi Police Station and Balewadi High Street Chowky my items were recovered and handed back to me.

I salute the whole team for all their dedication, effort, and support.

They visited the isolated location thrice which is difficult to climb, worked day and night and finally nabbed the criminals.

They were confident about getting my super expensive camera back so I would be able to resume my wildlife photography again.

I was greatly inspired by this incident and thought to form a Nature Lover's Community so that we could explore the wilderness together.

Exploring Nature facebook group was formed building a community of likeminded nature lovers and walking in the direction of conserving the Wilderness.

For conservational practices documentation is a must which we learned in the community from potential photographers and writers. So we thought to come up with the E-Magazine, "Whispering Wilds" for creating awareness and conservational purposes.

"Chaturshringi Police Station has been my second home and an extended family; without them my passion for wildlife photography would have met an early death."

Featured

Pune: TOI NEWS

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/pune/duo-rob-man-of-valuables-worth-rs-1-8l-on-baner-hill/articleshow/85669842.cms>

Jai Hind! Jai Hind! Jai Hind!

I Salute Chaturshringi Police Station and the Maharashtra Police!

Mukul Mukherjee,
Wildlife Consultant,
Exploring Nature



Author:

**Ms. Maia
Duishvili,**

*Senior
Executive
Assistant to
Regional
Director,
The World
Bank Georgia
Office*

Stepantsminda Village

View of Stepantsminda village, Gergeti Trinity church (elevation of 2170 meters) and Mountain Kazbegi (Kazbeg) - elevation 5,034 m (16,516 ft), Georgia.

This place is around 11 km from Larsi Checkpoint (Russian Federation border). Kazbegi is a dormant stratovolcano and one of the major mountains of the Caucasus, the third-highest peak in Georgia and the second-highest volcanic summit in the Caucasus, after Mount Elbrus



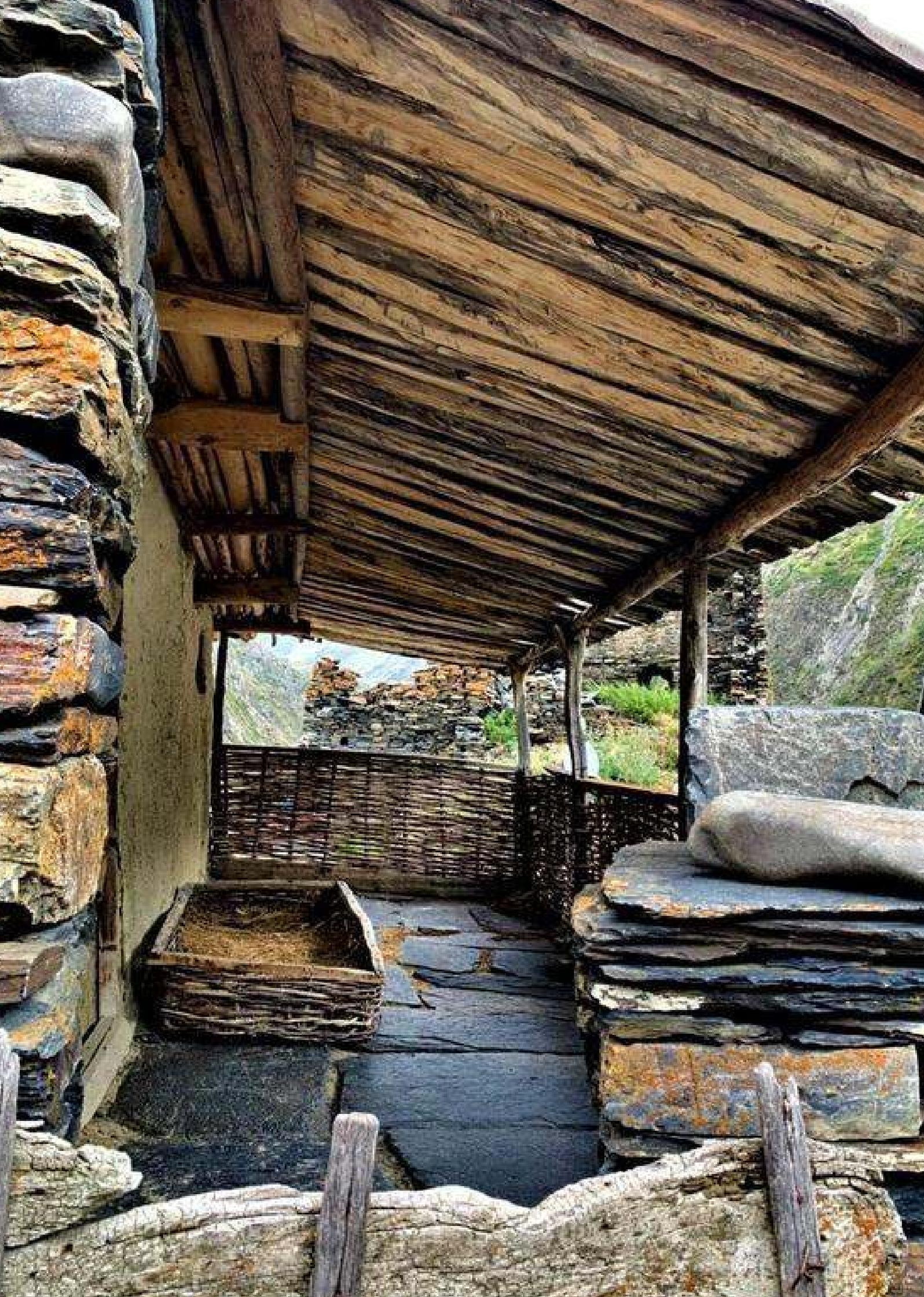
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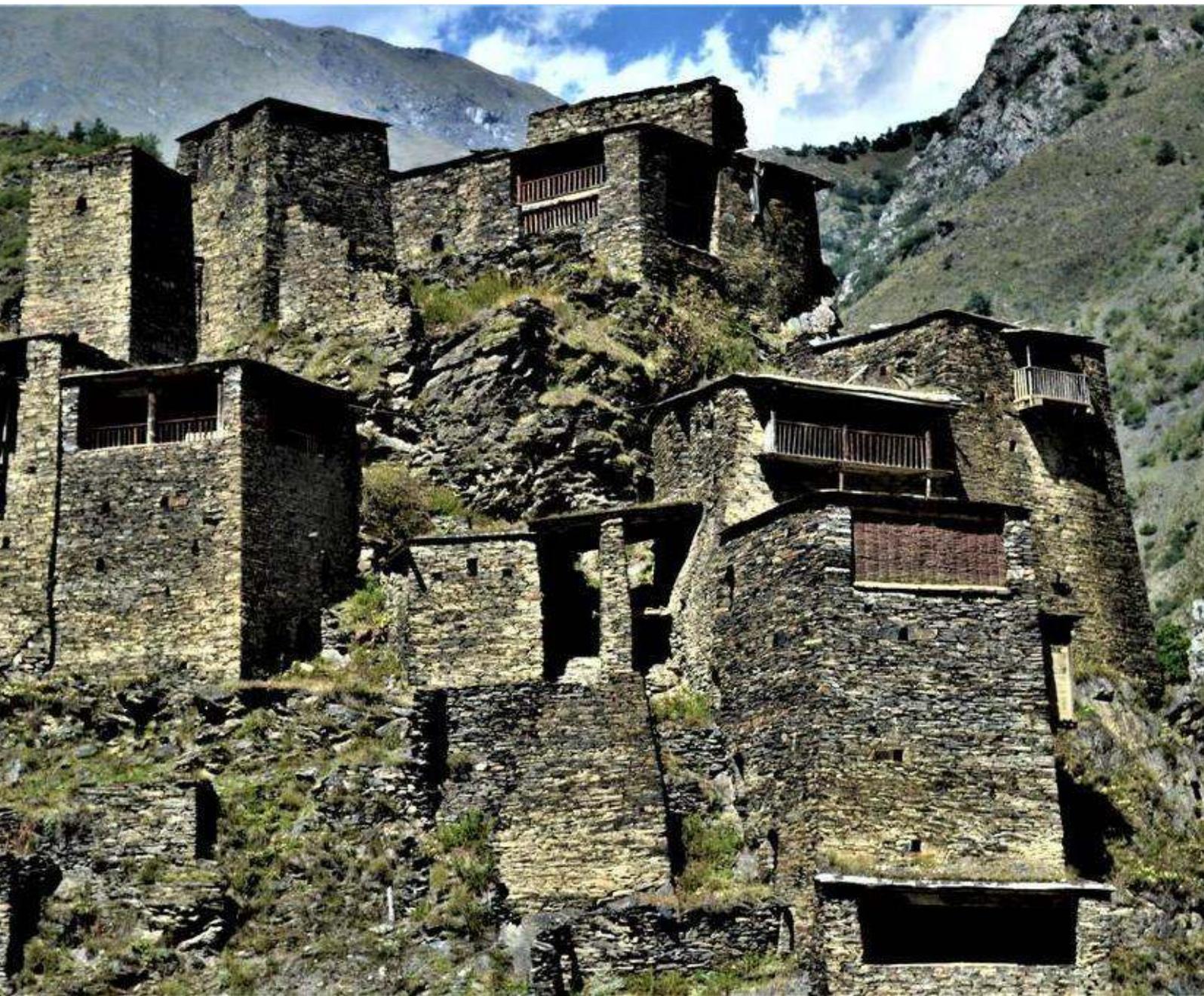
**Ms. Maia
Duishvili,**

*Senior
Executive
Assistant to
Regional
Director,
The World
Bank
Georgia
Office*

Sunrise at Javakheti Plateau in Georgia

Javakheti Plateau is a volcanic plateau within the Caucasus Mountains that covers the Samtskhe-Javakheti region of Georgia (southern Georgia), along the border with Turkey and Armenia. Its elevation is over 2,000. The largest lake of Georgia is located on this plateau - Paravani Lake, which is between Abul-Samsari and Javakheti Ranges rising 2070 m above sea level. The plateau is a large alpine area with many wetlands and along with Paravani Lake there are five more alpine lakes there: Tabatskuri, Paravani, Khanchali, Madatapa, Kartsakhi, and Saghamo. The Javakheti Wetlands are included in the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance. Didi Abuli mountain is one of the highest peaks of this plateau - 3,301 m (10,830 ft). It is considered the highest peak of the Lesser Caucasus Mountains of Georgia. Didi Abuli is an extinct stratovolcano.



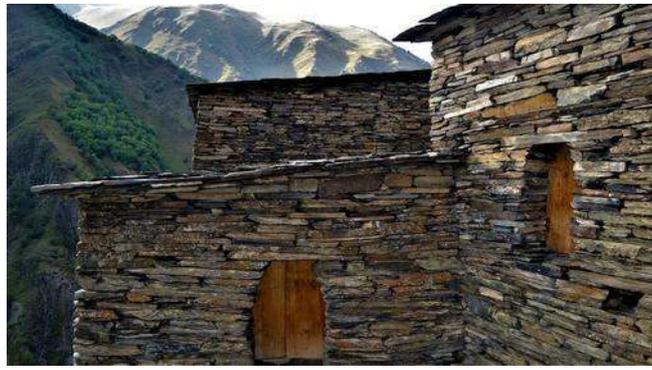


Author:

**Salome
Kerashvili,**
*Officer at The
World Bank
Georgia
Office,
Georgia
Country*

Georgian Highlander Villages

The historical-ethnographic region of Khevsureti is located in eastern Georgia. The place is populated by a Kartvelian (Georgian) ethnic group who live on the northern and southern slopes of the Great Caucasus Mountains. The villages Shatili, Mutso, and Artodi acted as historic guardians and protectors of the Khevsureti entrance and are one of the most magnificent and unique monuments of Georgian Construction Art.



Unique monuments of Georgian Construction Art

Georgian highlander villages have historically had some autonomy. Georgia was never able to develop a traditional feudal structure during the Middle Ages.

Local lords were never acknowledged by the Khevsurs; instead, they chose their leaders, known as Khevisberi (elders), and brought them together by forming a council of elders.

They were superb warriors who were frequently promoted as royal bodyguards because of their traditional Georgian attributes of courage, openness and honesty as well as fraternity, independence, and love of freedom. They were regarded by kings as trustworthy guardians of the Caucasus Mountains.







*Education
Participation
Inspiration
Conservation*

Outdoor Skills 4Kids Pty Ltd, Australia

The benefits of engaging in outdoor activities in nature is well validated in research to improve your overall physical, psychological and emotional well being. Tyrone Kolbe founded Outdoor Skills 4Kids in 2021 to share with the world what he has been teaching his kids since they were toddlers, the value of engaging, learning, observing and immersion into the ecosystem to fully appreciate nature's beauty that surrounds us. Their love for nature extended into learning and living symbiotically in nature using modern and primitive wilderness living skills. The benefits of this knowledge extends into many aspects of life, and this is something that everyone will find value in.



Establish and maintain balance in connection with the real world in a rapidly advancing digital and virtual world.

Inspire kids to set and achieve their goals and dreams of adventure pursuits and exploration.

« FAMILIES CONNECTING IN NATURE »

Connecting kids and families in nature while building and strengthening the core family bond. This forms the foundation of character development that has a multi-generational impact.

We need to foster the next generation to be environmental custodians that

restore and maintain the natural resources and beauty that nature offers. The best place to build communities and populations that are environmentally responsible is within the family unit, which will then extend and have a multi-generational influence. There is the need to find a balance with a technologically advancing world and our natural world – one cannot exist without the other.

We live in an increasingly busy, distracting, disconnected and virtual world that despite the technological benefits, is harming our physical, emotional and psychological health. Kids are missing out on developing their self-confidence and personal

resilience with the disconnection from the natural world around them.

Develop and deliver education that is easily accessible to anyone in the world. Motivate and inspire further learning, love and respect for nature.

Product and market validation was completed in late 2021 and the first product officially launched in January 2022. Within 7 weeks from launching we have reached over 5,000 people across Australia, South Africa, United States, Sweden, UK, New Zealand, Greece and Ireland.



Tyrone Kolbe, Founder and Managing Director

I am an outdoor enthusiast with over 25 years of wilderness and mountaineering experience. I served in the military where I gained formal wilderness and sea survival training. I have experience in high altitude mountaineering and enjoy expeditions focused on self reliance. I am a proud dad to two teenage girls who I've taught outdoor skills to since they were toddlers. Not only has this helped them develop a love of nature, but it has also strengthened our bond. My mission is help parents, kids and families engage and connect with nature. Outdoor skills is more than "survival skills". What we learn in nature overflows into many other aspects of life.

Fairy Tales of Okhrey, Hilley and Varsey Rhododendron Wildlife Sanctuary

“Begin afresh, afresh, afresh.”



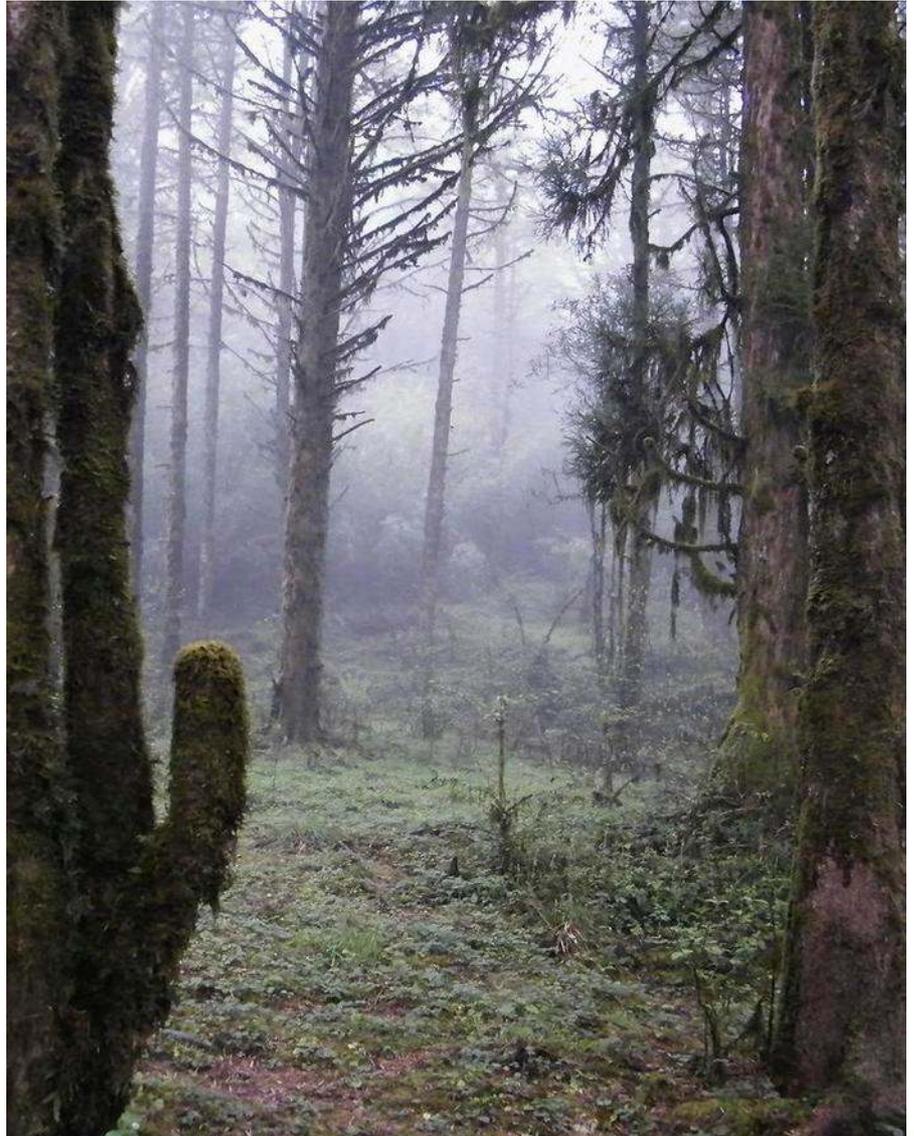
Those who know me know that my heart does not want to stay at home for long, and I have an obsession with The great Himalayas. In 2016 when I was thinking of visiting any mountain destination, I heard that some of my friends were planning to visit Okhrey. It was the first time I had heard about Okhrey. I googled and found that Okhrey is a less densely populated, small village in West Sikkim. Okhrey is a less populated small village - made me interested in visiting Okhrey.

Spring arrives in Okhrey with the blooming of rhododendrons. March to May is the best time to experience the appearance of this rhododendron in Okhrey. So, we planned to visit Okhrey in April.

Okhrey is accessible only by roads from Siliguri, NJP, Bagdogra and Gangtok. Cars are readily available from any of these places. So, we boarded a train to NJP. Then we rented a car from NJP to reach Okhrey.

At Okhrey, only homestays are available for night stays. So, we had booked rooms in the Royal Varsey homestay beforehand. We were 15 travelers, including children and adults.

It was already afternoon when we reached Okhrey. The location of our homestay on the slopes of the mountain in a quiet secluded environment was very captivating. Clouds were all around, and a layer of fog had covered the area. The rooms of our homestay had a picturesque view from the window.



**If you are
searching for
peace, you must
visit Okhrey in
West Sikkim.**

Rhododendron Sanctuary

The Varsey Rhododendron Sanctuary is under Singalila National Park.

For those who are afraid of trekking, you can try this route. It is a very simple and easy route. The distance is about 4 km.

Author: Sumana
An avid traveller, West Bengal



Clouds were all around, and a layer of fog had covered the area.

Homestay

Enjoy the dance of birds and feel the wind as it ruffles your hair or caresses your skin. Listen to the mountains; listen to the sounds of silence; listen to the whisperings of your inner self opening up to you.

I can spend hours looking at the magnificence of the landscape. Honestly, lazing up with a cup of tea and staring at the beauty of the terrain ahead is the best thing one can do at Okhrey. Watch the clouds embracing the mountain and disperse soon. Enjoy the dance of birds and feel the wind as it ruffles your hair or touches your skin. Listen to the mountains; listen to silence; listen to the self.

The owner of the homestay was a Sherpa couple. We were impressed by their hospitality. Though their staple food is thuppa, they served us regular dal, vegetables, rice and roti.

After lunch, we went for a walk in the village. There is a local monastery nearby. But suddenly, rain-bearing clouds came from nowhere and darkened all around. So we hurried back to the homestay. We were lucky that we reached on time. After that, it started

raining in torrents with lightning and thunder. It was the first time I had seen the rain in the mountains, horrible but beautiful. I have enjoyed the rain from the closed window of my room. The power went out as soon as it started raining. The whole house was illuminated by candlelight. It was a beautiful experience.

We had early dinner with the delicious home-cooked meal of the Sherpa couple and laid the weary bodies on the bed. It was still raining outside.

The next day we woke up early. Our destination that day was Varsey Rhododendron Sanctuary, a long walk from Hilley. The day dawned crisp and clear. There was no sign of heavy downpour the night before.

Before breakfast, we visited the local monastery where we could not go last evening. If possible, visit the monastery during morning prayers.

Candlelight

The whole house was illuminated by candlelight. It was a beautiful experience.





Rhododendrons were everywhere.



White Rhododendrons.

I returned with a promise that I would visit someday again in spring.

during morning prayers. The entire village was bustling with various bright coloured flowers. Wildflowers and, of course, rhododendrons were everywhere. After breakfast, we started for Hilley. One has to take a permit from Hilley to trek in Varsey Rhododendron Sanctuary. The Varsey Rhododendron Sanctuary is under Singalila National Park. After getting the permit from Hilley, one has to start the trek from Hilley.

For those who are afraid of trekking, you can try this route. It is a very simple and easy route. The distance is about 4 km. If you miss this opportunity, you will be bereft of the beauty of nature. There is a fear of bears on this route. So you can take a guide. This route has seating arrangements every kilometer. So, you can take a rest from time to time.

While walking through the dense pine, deodar, birch forests, I forgot the rat race of the city. After crossing the blue-green bamboo bushes and pine forest as we climbed a little high, we saw the kingdom of rhododendrons. I had never seen rhododendrons of so many colors before. Dark red, pink, light pink, white rhododendrons adorn this sanctuary. While I was enjoying the beauty of rhododendrons, someone told me that older people could no longer walk, so we had to go back. Though unwilling, I had to return.



The picturesque view from the window.

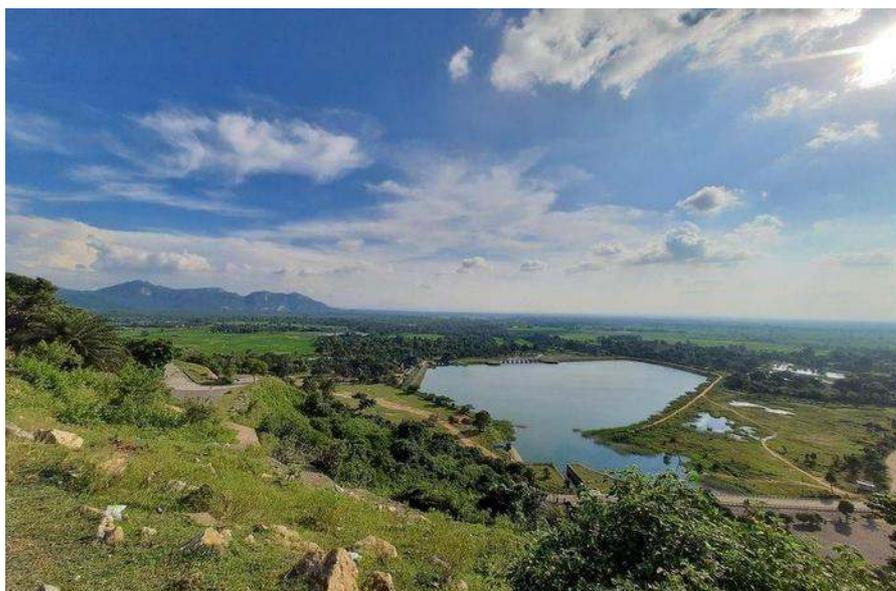
The Promised Land

A part of Chota Nagpur Plateau, Ajodhya Hills in Purulia, West Bengal, looks ethereal after the monsoons.

The greenery around, the royal blue sky with cumulus clouds floating like fluffy cotton balls here and there, and the vagabond in you ! Why not celebrate our soul?

Stay there for a while to visit these three old yet young fellows – Gorgaburu, Mathaburu and Kiriburu, the three hillocks of Ajodhya Hills range; born only 540 million years ago. “Buru” in the local native language means an old and knowledgeable person.

The Matha Forest range welcomes you to its elephant corridor and ‘Pakhi Pahar’ (Bird Hill) is where you can see how sculptors unleashed their imagination. If lucky, you may meet some peacocks in the jungle. If luckier, then maybe elephants!



Paradise can be nearer than you think!

Don't forget to roam around in Charida – the village that prepares masks for the ‘Chhau’ dance. One popular Chhou dancer was Gambhir Singh Mura, a Padma Shri awardee. The locals are helpful but might not know much about sightseeing.

So, please Google before your trip.



The Mask being used for Chou Dance at Charida - The village

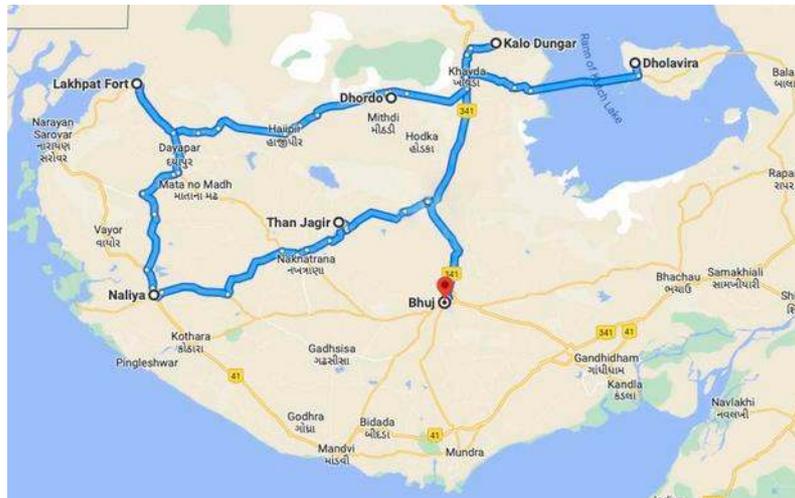


Author

Ishani Chakraborty

Assistant Manager,
WeSchool, Bangalore

(Seven Days road trip in the Kutch region of Gujarat for Astro Photography.)



“If you haven’t seen Kutch, you haven’t seen anything”

Astro-Photography Road Trip to Kutch (“Kutch Nahin Dekha to Kuch Nahin Dekha”)

So, choosing a location for shooting nightscapes, well, the decent ones I mean, involves a lot of research, planning and good amount of preparation. And planning and research I did before I embarked on my dedicated Astro Photography Road trip to Kutch, Gujarat, in Feb-Mar 2022, along with three other friends.

Kutch in the state of Gujarat, is the largest district in India. The administrative headquarters is the city of Bhuj which is geographically in the centre of the district. Gandhidham is the Financial Headquarters of Kutch. Few other major towns are Rapar, Nakhatrana, Anjar, Mandvi, Madhapar, Mundra and Bhachau.

Kutch is surrounded by the Arabian Sea in the west; the Gulf of Kutch in south and southeast and Rann of Kutch in north and northeast.

The best thing about Kutch is that it offers a variety of geographical features to shoot nightscapes along with Bortle 2 skies at many of these places. So I spoke to a couple of friends who had been to the place and started planning the trip.

Planning

We decided to hire a self drive vehicle (Innova) and do a road trip from Bhuj along the route shown in the map below and end our trip in Bhuj after 6 nights. The route as per Google maps is approximately 600Km. Though of course we ended up logging almost 1200Km for the trip.

We chose the dates based on the New Moon, which was on 02 Mar 2022. So we decided to arrive at Bhuj on 27 Feb 2022 and end the trip on 05 Mar 2022, a total of six nights spaced equally around the New Moon night.

Author

Santanu Majumder Group Captain (Retd.)

My interest in photography, especially nightscapes, has meant I have travelled extensively across the country in search of dark skies.

The problem with finding dark skies, is that no app or map can tell u exactly how good or bad a place is for nightscapes.

You cannot actually get a hang of the place unless you are at the site at night. You cannot do a recce at night at a place you are visiting for the first time.



« Bhuj to Dholavira »

27 Feb 2022

The vehicle that we had hired was handed over to us at the Bhuj Railway Station and set course for our first destination, Dholavira, which is a village situated on an island called Khadir Bet in the Rann of Kutch Lake. We took the new road from Bhuj through Khavda to Dholavira. The red colour of the gravel road (last 40 Km) is contrasted with the white salt of the Rann on either side, then it changes to somewhat pinkish water on both sides. And before you have taken all in, you reach the island of Khadir Bet. Our Resort was right at the entrance to the Island, on the outskirts of Dholavira. Our first Point of Interest was Chipper Point. It's an hour's drive from the Resort. The highlight of the point is a flat piece of Rock overhanging the cliff like a cantilever.

We also surveyed several other spots and finally found a small water body in the white Rann area which we guessed would give us a few decent shots of the Milky Way. That night, post dinner, I shot star trail image from the very premises of the Resort.

At about 0215h in the morning, we reached the pre-identified spot for shooting the Milky Way. Realised that there was a bit of light pollution in the horizon, and would have to wait till the Milky Way core was pretty high up in the sky to get a decent shot. I did get a few shots, including a shot with the crescent moon and Venus along with the Milky Way. We shot till sunrise and then returned to the resort.



During Sunrise



The Crescent Moon and Venus along with the Milky Way.

From the very premises of the Resort.





28 Feb 2022

Dholavira

In the afternoon of Day 2, we visited two places which we had targeted for the second night's shoot. First was the Fossil Park, located 10 km away from Dholavira. This park, which has been built by the Forest Department, has fossils of 16 million years old tree trunks. From the Fossil Park, we moved on to our next destination, the Sunset point. This is a spectacular location, usually visited by tourists for the Karni Mata Temple located there and the gorgeous sun set view. We were excited after the initial reccee. That night we reached the spot at 0130 h. And without much ado, I put both my cameras to work to shoot star trails in two different directions. After about two and a half hours I moved one of my Cameras to the other side of the Karni Temple to shoot the Milky Way.



*Milky Way
with an
abandoned
factory as a
foreground
subject*

01 Mar 2022

On Day three we drove to Lakhpat with brief halts at Kala Dungar, the highest point in Kutch, and Dhordo, famous for its White Rann.



Dholavira to Lakhpat

We reached Lakhpat at about 1730 hours. Lakhpat is a sparsely populated habitation in the Kutch district of Gujarat, located at the mouth of the Kori Creek. The place is enclosed by 7km-long, 18th-century fort walls. There is a Gurudwara, which according to the Granthi there, was built in the 16th century. There are no tourist accommodations available in Lakhpat. The nearest Hotel was approximately 35 Km away, near a town called Narayan Sarovar.

We were told that there are a few rooms in the Gurudwara, which are offered to the travelers who wish to spend the night there. Stay and food is free subject to a small donation which you may make at the reception. That night we shot the Milky Way with an abandoned factory as a foreground subject.



02 Mar 2022

Lakhpat to Naliya

We returned to our rooms in the Gurudwara at around 0600h. We rested for a while and at around 0730h decided to move on to our next destination - Pingleshwar. Pingleshwar Beach lies close to Mandvi Kutch and is not a frequently visited tourist beach. So you can truly enjoy moments of bliss at this place. It is close to the bird sanctuary of Naliya. The beach is also very popular as a wetland and attracts a plethora of migratory birds. The only issue is that there is no decent place to stay within at least 20-25 km of the place. The nearest town is Naliya, which also has few options for boarding and lodging. At around 1600h, we drove to the Pingleshwar Beach. We scoured the area to identify some interesting frames. And we did shortlist quite a few frames. We then shot a few sunset images, before returning to our base.



That night, we reached the shooting spot at about 0200h.

We were greeted by a couple of foxes right in the parking area.



We spent the rest of the night shooting multiple compositions with Milky Way and Star Trails and never felt lonely due to the incessant howling of countless foxes.









03 Mar 2022

Naliya to Than Jagir

Naliya to Than Jagir is approximately 75km. Road is decent and we reached in about 90 minutes. We had booked our accommodation in Kunj Homestay. We reached the place on Day five at around 1130h. At around 1600h, we visited our first destination, Khadiya Dhro, which has been listed as one of the top 52 beautiful places in the world, by New York Times in 2021. It is about 25 km from the Kunj Homestay. You need to negotiate some pretty rough terrain (off-road) to reach the place.

It is mainly a landscape of gorges—narrow valleys between hills, typically with steep rocky walls and water flowing through them. Khadiya Dhrow is situated on the banks of Nirona River. We surveyed the area and identified a few frames for shooting nightscapes. And then we returned to our home stay. Had our dinner and retired for a few hours of sleep. We left at around 0130h again for the night shoot. Reached the place at around 0230h. Rest of the night was spent shooting the Milky Way and Star Trails.

We kept shooting till sunrise and then returned to The Kunj for a well deserved rest.

















04 Mar 2022

Than Jagir - Laiyari River Bed

We slept till Noon on Day six. Our final shoot destination was the Laiyari River Bed. That evening we visited the place for identifying our nightscape frames. What we saw was really amazing. Years of water and wind erosion had created amazing rock sculptures on this dry river bed. Each rock formation was different and unique. We returned to the Home stay, excited about the prospect of that night's shoot.

Early morning around 0130h, we were off for the last time during the trip to shoot our nightscapes at the Laiyari River Bed. The following images were the outputs from that night.









After about a couple of hours' rest we had our breakfast and then packed all our stuff and left for Bhuj at around 1100h

We reached Bhuj at about 1230h.

Stopped at a Restaurant for Lunch and then returned the Vehicle to the owner and reached the Railway station at around 1500h. The train to Mumbai was at 1600h.

For those who wish to travel to this region for regular sightseeing, may consider staying for a day or two at Bhuj itself and see the local points of interest. Also they may consider visiting and staying at Narayan Sarovar instead of Lakhpat. Similarly, they may stay at Mandvi Beach instead of Naliya.



05 Mar 2022

Than Jagir - Bhuj



FROM **MAXIMUM FIELD OF VIEW** TO **MAXIMUM MAGNIFICATION.** **VICTORY HARPIA**

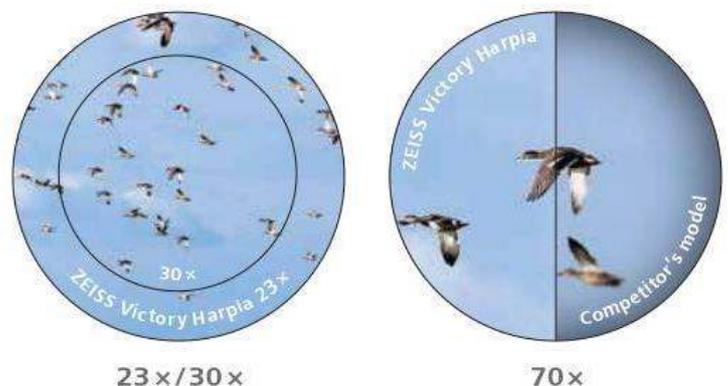
The great outdoors are already truly fascinating when observed with the naked eye. But viewing nature through a Victory Harpia transforms it into an entirely new experience.

This spotting scope offers a new, exceptional lens system with 3x wide-angle zoom and up to 70x magnification with a choice of 85 or 95mm lens diameter. Extremely wide fields of view are impressive in every situation. DualSpeed Focus enables fast and accurate focusing, even at high magnification.

Whether far away or up close, the unmatched dynamic performance of the Victory Harpia ensures that you remain in command of any unexpected observation situation.

ComfortVision concept

Exceptionally wide viewing angle from 23x to 70x magnification for a noticeably enhanced overview in the field.



Field of view comparison of a spotting scope at 30x minimum magnification (small circle) with the field of view of the Harpia at 23x minimum magnification (large circle).

Common Cuckoo snacking a Common Castor Larva

Our Dussehra vacation was coming to an end and we had a day left in hand. Not ready to waste the day, we (my wife Priya and son Savyasachi 10 years) planned to drive towards the Nallamalla forest which is 150 KM drive from Hyderabad. The idea was to just go on a drive and watch out for the flora and fauna on the way up and down till Uma Maheshwaram temple at the forest fringes of Nallamalla range.

This year rains have been persistent and it's been raining through the Dusheera, most of the places we crossed were lush green with deep foliage. After taking the turn from Kalwakurthy on NH 765 we came upon a small patch that looked like a rain shadow area, the plants were not as green and the ground was dry. We were driving slowly with little expectation until we suddenly saw a commotion of birds on a wire adjacent to the highway. At closer look we saw a few Cuckoo, Drongo, Mayna and Large grey babblers stooping from the wires onto the field below. It looked like a feeding frenzy was going around. I pulled up the car and took out my binoculars to have a closer look at the cuckoo's, to my utter surprise it was Common Cuckoo, the yellow ring of the eye was a clear give away. Now I was looking for more and lo and behold we could find not 1 or 2 but a total of 12 common cuckoos in a patch less than 1 acre.

Common cuckoo so far was an elusive bird for me, I had heard it many times with its distinct "COO-koo" call and even had a few record shots, however seeing them in such large numbers and so close to the highway was beyond imagination. These birds migrate from Europe and central Asia to India and are seen in Central India only for a short period of time. Upon close examination we found that the field was one for Castor and due to lack of insecticide or otherwise was infested with common castor larvae which almost exclusively eat out of castor plants. This sudden bloom of larvae had pulled all the cuckoo's in such a small field.

Not able to give up on the chance to get a closer photo, we requested the farmer's permission to enter the field which he readily obliged.

We were covered in camo clothing which allowed me to mix well with the 4 feet tall castor plants. I trudged my foot very cautiously with one step at a time and as little movement as possible.



I would see the birds snooping down to the plants, sometimes till the root level, and fight their way out with the larva that stuck to the twigs for their dear life. They would then perch on a top twig and munch their way through the larva. When the bird went down I would inch a few feet closer and then wait until it reperched and started eating when I would make a few more strides forward. My Observation and patience paid off and I got a whole portfolio of the bird from flight to perch to kill to preening in a matter of 30 min or so.

The trip turned out to be a very successful one and we returned happy bunnies at the end seeing the beautiful show of nature unfold.

On the way back I was just recollecting an old saying from my father "....a farmer feeds many before he feeds his own, some goes to the insects, some to birds, yet some to animals and weather, what is left is what the farmer harvest, we should be grateful to the farmer...."

*Author:
Manik Lal Dutta,
Senior Director, SAP India,
Hyderabad*

The trip turned out to be a very successful one and we returned happy bunnies at the end seeing the beautiful show of nature unfold.

The Highest Flyer: Bar-headed Goose

To be natural is to allow and ensure animals and birds have their natural environment. For birds, specifically, it is to allow them to live with their inborn instincts like migration. That's the lesson I learnt from the movie "Fly Away Home" (Canada Goose of Anatidae family were featured in this movie).

The BAR-HEADED GOOSE (*Anser indicus*), a member of the same family (as Canada Goose) that visits India, is a unique and fascinating high altitude migrant bird. When I spotted them just a few feet away in the wetlands of Najafgarh, I pondered over their daredevilry. In awe I asked myself: What are the physiological mechanisms behind their high-altitude migration?

A bit about this bird, before we get into their craft of flying. During autumn (around October) they visit the Indian Subcontinent from Russia, Tibet, Kazakhstan and Mongolia and return back around/after spring (mid-March). It is a graceful bird with an amalgam of grey, brown and white colours. It has two broad black bars across its nape from which the bird has earned its name. They rest during day time but start eating from dusk till dawn. Therefore, these geese are well known as crepuscular as well as nocturnal in nature.

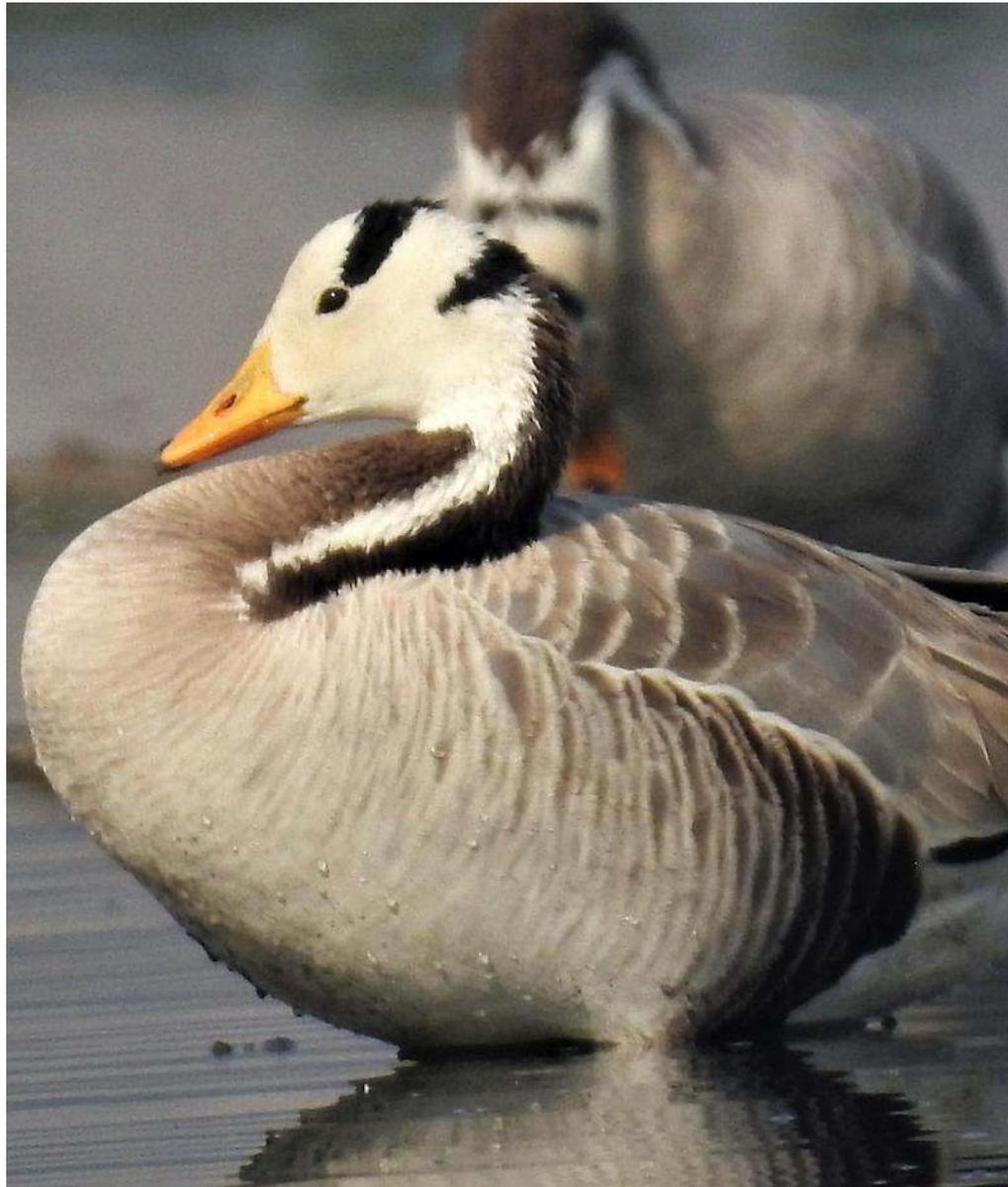
We all know that a bird's migration is genetically programmed. That means birds needn't take special training for migration. It is still a mystery why they choose an energy-draining migratory path above 23,000 feet. But scientists have decoded how they do it.

First, Bar-headed Goose can tolerate extreme hypoxia, or Oxygen deficiency in blood. This enables them to fly at a high altitude where Oxygen level is very low. Secondly, they can transport Oxygen to flight muscles and other tissues to fulfil the high energy requirement in flight at this altitude. Third, they have a larger wing area compared to their body weight that helps them to fly at high altitudes.

Bar-headed geese fly in V-formation or in straight ribbon formation to conserve energy and for better visual assurance while in flight. Henri Weimerskirch (Research Director of French National Centre for Scientific Research, Paris) says, "The birds that fly in formation glide more often and conserve energy." Each bird flies slightly above the bird in front of him/her resulting in a reduction of wind pressure. As the front bird flaps its wings it creates lift for the bird following thus allowing flying with less effort. When a goose falls off the formation s/he realises quickly that it takes a lot of energy to fly alone. This, in turn, brings him/her back to the formation.

While travelling a great distance in a large group, it is essential to keep track of every member in the group. Flying in a V-formation gives that opportunity. One way it makes communication and coordination easier among them in this formation.

Perhaps above all they teach us the importance of teamwork; efficiency, effectiveness and success can be attained only if we work together while aiming to achieve a common goal!



« While travelling a great distance in a large group, it is essential to keep track of every member in the group. Flying in a V-formation gives that opportunity. One way it makes communication and coordination easier among them in this formation. »

Author:

*Gargi Mishra,
Orinthologist*



Author:
Ashish Kr.
Gupta,

*Managing
Director -
TRULAM,
Kolkata,
West Bengal,
India*

The Untamed Asian Emerald Cuckoo

This photograph was taken in Mahananda Wildlife Sanctuary, North Bengal, India in August 2021. It was monsoon time. The terrain was wet and slippery and leech -infested. The leeches did a clever job of camouflaging themselves. I had to walk almost half a kilometre in such challenging conditions to capture it. But the reward is the happiness I feel in sharing this photograph of a unique and beautiful bird that is found mostly in the Asian subcontinent: China, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Vietnam. This jewel of a bird has a green upper body and a black and white under body. Its natural habitat is tropical, moist lowland forest and montane forest. It feeds on insects and bugs. This species has a wide range and is found in a sizable population.



PRODUCT PROFILE
COMPACT ZEISS QUALITY.
TERRA ED.



ED Pocket 8/10x25
 The Terra ED Pocket is extremely compact and lightweight, delivers outstanding visual quality in its class, and stands out due to its user-friendly operation.



ED 8/10x32
 Impressive optical performance, precise focusing, and a compact design are the hallmarks of the 32mm version of the Terra ED.



ED 8/10x42
 The Terra ED 42 features a bright viewing experience that is rich in detail as well as outstanding ease of use.



- Perfect for when on the go.**
- Smooth and easy-to-grip focusing wheel for particularly simple and fast focusing.
 - Fiberglass-reinforced and waterproof housing for rugged environments.
 - ED glass and the hydrophobic multicoating deliver true-color images.

Birding Trail at Sultanpur National Park

Birding Trail at Sultanpur National Park along with **WeNaturalists** as digital partner and **ZEISS** as Equipment partner

Delhi is no stranger to foreign visitors being the capital city of India. But these visitors are special and don't need visa and official invitations. They are governed by the natural laws of planet Earth.

We are talking about the migratory birds of the world. Advent of winter in India marks the start of the world's North-to-South bird migration. Most migratory birds to India come from Central Asia, Siberia and Mongolia. The Delhi-National Capital Region (NCR) is a much sought-after landing ground for these foreign avian friends. This is because the region has an extensive network of wetlands and waterbodies. No wonder, it is also the season of exhilaration for the bird watchers.

To mention a few popular wetlands of NCR, the Sultanpur National Park, Najafgarh Jheel, Surajpur Wetlands, Basai Wetlands and the Okhla Bird Sanctuary feature prominently among bird watchers' ports of call. Famed as a 'Ramsar Site', Sultanpur National Park is located at Sultanpur village on Gurugram-Jhajjar highway. It attracts huge number of migratory birds. It is not just the migratory birds from foreign habitats land here, but also birds from the Himalayan region make these waterbodies their temporary habitats.



ZEISS & Exploring Nature Team

Each of these avian visitors has a story to be told about. On November 6, 2022, Exploring Nature, a wildlife consulting company, undertook a birding excursion to the park to not just document the birds but also to tell other bird enthusiasts the many stories of this annual great migration. The excursion included a photography workshop for birders as well. The support from the world-renowned companies like Zeiss, Nikon and WeNaturalists made the excursion a grand success, and engaging. The participants sighted a total of 72 different species and 981 individuals of birds. Of this, many were migratory species mostly from Central Asia and Siberia. Rest of the birds were non-migratory, or local migrant species.



Report by

Mrs. Gargi Mishra
Orinthologist,
Exploring Nature

1. Grey-lag Goose-25
2. Knob-billed Duck-3
3. Northern Shoveler-25
4. Gadwall-20
5. Eurasian Wigeon-10
6. Indian Spot-billed Duck-30
7. Common Pochard-20
8. Aythya sp.-10
9. Indian Peafowl-2
10. Gray Francolin-6
11. Black Francolin-1 call only
12. Little Grebe-6
13. Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon)-8
14. Eurasian Collared-Dove-6

Below is the list of species the participants sighted.

15. Laughing Dove-2
16. Yellow-footed Green-Pigeon-3
17. Greater Coucal-2
18. Common Hawk-Cuckoo-1
19. Eurasian Moorhen-10
20. Eurasian Coot-50
21. Gray-headed Swamphen-10
22. White-breasted Waterhen-2
23. Black-winged Stilt-3
24. Red-wattled Lapwing-25
25. Green Sandpiper 3
26. shorebird sp.-1
27. Asian Openbill-3
28. Black-necked Stork-1
29. Painted Stork-300
30. Oriental Darter-5
31. Little Cormorant-80
32. Great Cormorant-50
33. Indian Cormorant-70
34. Gray Heron-5
35. Purple Heron-4
36. Great Egret-9
37. Intermediate Egret-6
38. Little Egret-3
39. Cattle Egret-8
40. Indian Pond-Heron-2
41. Black-headed Ibis-15
42. Red-naped Ibis-8
43. Bonelli's Eagle-1
44. Eurasian Marsh-Harrier-1
45. Shikra-1
46. Black Kite-2

Curious children under the guidance of ornithologist Mrs Gargi Mishra.



This event was organised to create awareness about the nature.

WeNaturalist and Zeiss were our official partner in this event.

- 47. White-throated Kingfisher-3
- 48. Asian Green Bee-eater-6
- 49. Rose-ringed Parakeet-8
- 50. Black Drongo-2
- 51. Isabelline Shrike-1
- 52. Long-tailed Shrike-3
- 53. House Crow-4
- 54. Common Tailorbird-2
- 55. Ashy Prinia-10

- 56. Plain Prinia-8
- 57. Wire-tailed Swallow-2
- 58. Red-vented Bulbul-10
- 59. Common Chiffchaff-3
- 60. Lesser Whitethroat-3
- 61. Large Gray Babbler-8
- 62. Jungle Babbler-10
- 63. Indian Robin-8
- 64. Oriental Magpie-Robin-2
- 65. Red-breasted Flycatcher-1
- 66. Black Redstart-4
- 67. Siberian Stonechat-1
- 68. Indian Silverbill-10
- 69. Red Avadavat-6
- 70. House Sparrow-2
- 71. Sind Sparrow-5
- 72. Tree Pipit-1



Image : Participants

"It has been a wonderful experience to join hands with Mr. Mukul Mukherjee, founder of Exploring Nature & Mrs. Gargi Mishra an Ornithologist on Sultanpur bird walk and Dalma Bird Walk.

The bird trail with them was knowledgeable for young birders and pleasant visual satisfaction for professional birders.

Their knowledge and experience to locate bird species truly compliment the quality of ZEISS optics to see nature at its best."

Vipin Sharma

Digital Sales - Consumer Optics Carl Zeiss India (Bangalore) Pvt. Ltd, A-26/6, Mohan Cooperative Industrial Estate, Mathura Road, New Delhi – 110044, India Mobile : + 91 9289516707 www.zeiss.com



Binoculars from ZEISS have a legendary reputation.



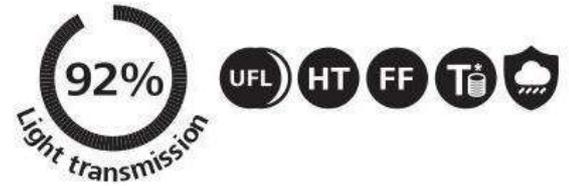
ZEISS

Exceptional Optical Performance

A reputation founded over the years on exceptional optical performance, outstanding ergonomics, robust construction and a world of innovations that have constantly expanded the limits of the technically possible. Today, ZEISS offers highest-quality equipment for a wide range of different needs – from special binoculars for observation in the twilight hours and at night to compact binoculars for everyday use. Our binocular range includes, Victory SF, Victory HT, Conquest HD, Terra ED and the all-new SFL (Smart Focus & Lightweight). Our Spotting Scope range has Victory Harpia and Conquest Gavia.



IDEAL VISIBILITY INTO THE TWILIGHT HOURS. VICTORY SF 42.



SF 8/10x42

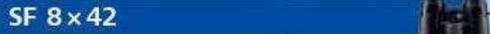
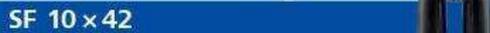
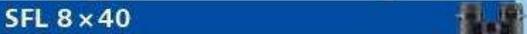
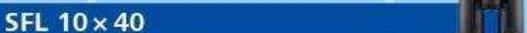
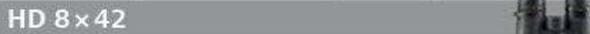
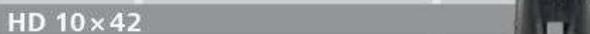
In addition to outstanding optical performance, the SF 42 model offers perfect ergonomics – the focusing wheel, which is perfectly positioned thanks to the SmartFocus Concept, enables fast and precise focusing.



The best for every situation.

- 92 % light transmission.
- Vibrant details thanks to the UFL Concept.
- Exceptionally wide field of view of up to 148 meters at a distance of 1,000 meters.
- ZEISS FieldFlattener technology: extreme edge sharpness, even at wide fields of view.
- Perfect ergonomics and ruggedness thanks to TripleLink bridge and lightweight design with state-of-the-art magnesium materials.
- Minimum object distance of 1.5 meters for exploring the smallest details.

COMPARISON OF VICTORY SF AND SFL.

		Main use		
		 Outdoor/ recreational	 Birding/ nature observation	 Twilight/ night
 Light transmission	 Optical quality			
ZEISS Victory SF  92% <small>SF 42</small>  90% <small>SF 32</small>	 UFL  HT  FF   T*		 SF 8×42  SF 10×42  SF 8×32  SF 10×32	
ZEISS SFL  90%	 UHD  FF   T*		 SFL 8×40  SFL 10×40	
ZEISS Victory HT  95%	 HT  FL   T*			 HT 8×54  HT 10×54
ZEISS Victory Pocket  91%	 FL   T*		 Pocket 8×25  Pocket 10×25	
ZEISS Conquest HD  90%	 HD   T*		 HD 8×42  HD 10×42  HD 8×32  HD 10×32	 HD 8×56  HD 10×56  HD 15×56
ZEISS Terra ED/Pocket  88%	 ED   T*		 ED 8×42  ED 10×42  ED 8×32  ED 10×32  Pocket 8×25  Pocket 10×25	

*Hydrophobic and antireflective coating.

*Participants using
ZEISS Binoculars
for bird watching*

Birding Trail at Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary along with **WeNaturalists** as digital partner and **ZEISS** as equipment partner



Birding Trail at Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary

Dalma Wildlife sanctuary was inaugurated in 1975 and is centre for Elephant conservation located 10 km away from highly organised industrial city Jamshedpur in the Jharkhand state.

It lies between 22° 05' 15" N 86° 01' 59" E. This sanctuary is assembly of hills named on the name of Godage Dalma Mai, worshiped by local communities of the area. This sanctuary covers about 195 km² area.

The sanctuary is spreaded over 193km² of forest of East Singhbhum and Saraikela-Kharsawan District of Kolhan region.

The hills are as high as 915 m from sea level. The DWS is a Sal forest. The forest is technically grouped as Dry Peninsular Sal and Northern Dry Mixed Deciduous. This sanctuary is rich in flora and fauna. It shelters elephants, barking deer, sloth bear, porcupine, pangolin, mongooses, snakes like python, cobra, krait and vipers.

This sanctuary is also rich in avian diversity. More than hundred bird species has been recorded.

Resident birds are Crested serpent eagle, Woodpecker, Hornbills, Flycatchers, Indian pea fowls and pheasants.



Monkeys and langurs are well present. This sanctuary is inhabited by Giant squirrel (*Ratufa indica*). It is also rich in bat population and diversity. Summer and winter migratory birds has been recorded from this sanctuary. Serpentine Suburnrekha river flows in the side of Dalma range that beautify the region. Having bird eye view, the Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary is a complete study package gift by the nature to the state of Jharkhand.

Report by,
Dr. Mithilesh Dutta Dwivedi,
 Chief Zoologist,
 Exploring Nature

"Exploring Nature participated in a birdwalk conducted by Zeiss at Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary, Jharkhand. The event was organized by Mr. Mukul Mukherjee, Zeiss influencer and Founder – Exploring Nature and Dr. Mithilesh Dutta Dwivedi, Chief Zoologist – Exploring Nature. WeNaturalist was the digital partner of the event. Participants from Jamshedpur, Bokaro and Nagpur took part in this event.

Dr. Dwivedi shared useful information on different bird-sounds and their activities. He also spoke about what type of plants we can keep at our terrace or garden so that birds can build their nest! Participants used Zeiss binoculars to locate birds and happily shot images to their best. Team Exploring Nature plan to continue such activities across the country so that citizen could learn about birds and can join their hands with the team for bird-conservation."

by Mr. Abhishek Kumar

Mr. Abhishek Kumar
Sales Account Specialist

Carl Zeiss India (Bangalore) Pvt. Ltd.
 ZEISS Group C/o,
 Victoria Park, Plot, 37/2,
 Block GN, 9th Floor, Sector V,
 Salt Lake,
 Kolkata 700 091
 West Bengal
 Phone :- +91 9599080757
 Mobile No: +91 7654526000



SFL30 New Launch

ZEISS, a 177-year-old heritage brand in the lens manufacturing business launches ZEISS SFL 30 Ultra-Compact Binoculars for nature enthusiasts, wildlife & travellers' community

The ZEISS SFL (Smart Focus and Lightweight) stands out for its exceptional optical performance combined with an extremely compact design and low weight. The new binoculars come in two models, the ZEISS SFL 8×30 and 10×30 configurations.

1

SFL – SmartFocus & Lightweight – outstanding optics in compact shape



Light weight & compact size

- **Optical design devoted to optimal compactness due to**
 - Reduced lens diameter
 - thinner lens elements
 - reduced distance between lens elements in the optical design
- **Magnesium housing** – lightweight and long-lasting

→ Long-term usage without tiring



Great optical performance with UHD Concept

- **New Ultra-High-Definition (UHD) concept** – lifelike color reproduction due to optimal combination of new lens coatings and optical design
- **90% light transmission**
- **Comfortable viewing behaviour** despite compact size – increases ease of use
- **Wide field of view**¹: SFL 30 – 142/120m
- **Close focusing distance** of 1.5m
- **T* coating** and **LotuTec**

→ Outstanding optical performance packed in a small size

Perfect ergonomics with SmartFocus Concept

- **Perfect positioning** of large focus wheel avoiding over-stretching of focusing finger
- **Fast but still precise focusing** – even with gloves on

→ Relaxed viewing experience due to easy product handling



Finely tuned binoculars accessories

- **Removable flipping lens covers** – can stay permanently on or can be removed with ease
- **Tripod interface** – for a perfectly stable view during long term observations

→ Full flexibility for every application



« Praying Mantis »

Nature has always soothed me more than anything else in this world of material abundance. Luckily due to my work, I stay amidst one of the biggest national parks in India, the Pench National Park. Every morning or evening, I usually take a stroll in and around the resort and now it feels my eyes are quite sensitive to very minute beauties of nature. This mantis was quietly sitting on the pretty red flower and like most of the time, my eyes did not miss it. I am always amused to see such unseen dimensions of nature and love capturing them with my camera to share to the world, the world that exists parallelly and unnoticed.

These insects get their name because they have very long front legs that they hold in a position that reminds people of praying. There are about 1,800 species of praying mantids around the world. People often refer to any mantid as a praying mantis, but mantises are part of a smaller group within the mantids.

Praying mantids are carnivores, eating mainly insects and other small animals. Many gardeners and farmers welcome mantids, because the insects they eat are often pests that hurt crops. In addition to insects such as crickets and grasshoppers, mantids eat spiders, frogs, lizards, and even small birds.



Praying mantids have long necks topped by a triangular head. They can turn their heads 180 degrees—an entire half circle. They're well-camouflaged, adapting colors that help them blend with plants. Some also have amazing body shapes that make them look like leaves or branches. Their front legs have rows of sharp spines to help them hold on to their prey, which they usually begin to eat head first!

Author:
Ananta Ghosh,
Tathastu Resort,
Pench Tiger Reserve

« Praying mantids have long necks topped by a triangular head. »

Author:
Pratik Prabhakar Chile,
Mumbai,
Maharashtra,
India.

*Pursuing Zoology
from Bandodkar College,
Mumbai University*



Bengal Fox / Indian Fox (Vulpes Bengalensis)

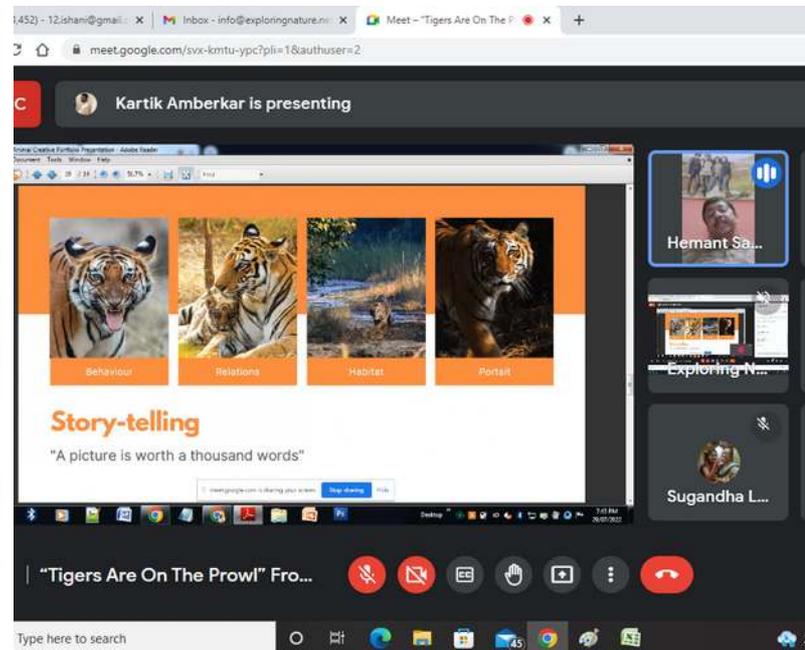
Bengal fox is a species of fox endemic to the Indian subcontinent. We had the pleasure of sighting one this time when on a birding trip in Baramati district in Maharashtra, India.

We reached the birding spot early in the morning and were searching for birds. All of a sudden, we saw this little fella emerging from the bushes having caught some kind of a bird in his mouth, which looked like a fowl. The main point of interest was to watch him hide his food .

Foxes have been known to bury their kills and save them for later, sometimes even digging them up multiple times and reburying them just to make sure they're still there. They also use chemicals as a way to communicate by marking areas where they have buried their kills with urine so they can find them later or let other foxes in their family return to feed.



Mr. Hemant Sawant



*Tigers Are on The Prowl
from Jahangir Art Gallery
to Jungle Chimes*

« International Tiger Day 2022, 29th July »

My name is Hemant Sawant, a businessman by profession and photographer by passion. I started photography over 40 years ago but the ability of cameras to freeze moments fascinated me from a young age.

My work includes wedding photography, product and model shoots, printing, personalisation of products and more.

After spending majority of my career with commercial photography, I was introduced to a very different field of photography which allowed me to explore the unknown. Never in my wildest dream would I have imagined that I would be sitting in a jeep for hours together waiting to capture the perfect wildlife shot. My interest in wildlife photography grew stronger with every jungle safari I took.

From the very first time I laid eyes on the magnificent bengal tiger, I was captivated by its power, grace and ferocity. Every time I crossed paths with them, they lured me into a world that he didn't know much about initially. From that intimate, one-on-one perspective, I began to learn more about these animals and the worlds that they are part of.

Empathy is important to me. To see yourself in others and vice versa, is essential to my work as a photographer. Instead of looking at animals through a big lens mounted on a tripod, which can emphasize a detached point of view, I prefer to connect with them on a spiritual level. It is fascinating to go back to the same place and reconnect with the same individual animals.



Chief Zoologist

International Tiger Day was celebrated on 29th July 2022 by Exploring Nature under the banner Jungle Chimes. It was a pleasant moment for me to introduce Mr. Hemant Sawant as Guest Speaker on wildlife photography and judge for photo competition skill in reference to the big cats, "Tigers".

This talk show is the story of a wedding photographer who fell into love with wildlife photography. Mr. Sawant is now an established wildlife photographer and naturalist. I hope that his judgements will give new light to Exploring Nature and the magazine Whispering Wilds.

Dr. Mithilesh Dutta Dwivedi

Tiger Day Celebration



*MOM & CUBS...
QUENCHING THEIR THIRST
Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve*

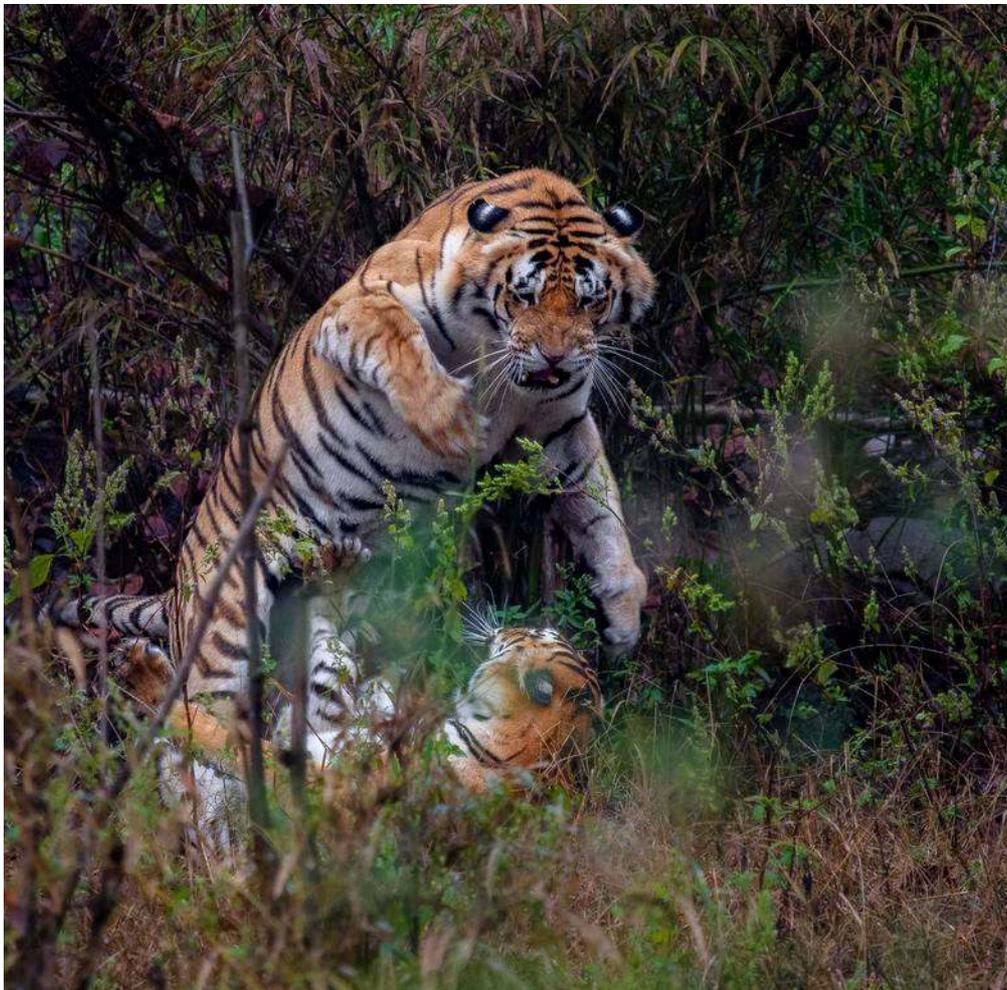


*Expressing... Their overwhelming feeling of Love Pain and
Aggression... During Courtship...
Ranthambhore National Park*



*Marking his territory to attract female
partner and to warn competitors.
Bandhavgarh National Park*

Author:
Ricky Patel from Tamluk, West Bengal



FIGHT OF LOVE IN COURTSHIP

One morning, we heard that Balwaan male killed an Indian Gaur in Sarhi zone. So we decided to go there. On our way we heard a call in Karaighati area but we ignored it. After the end of our morning safari we heard that a male and a female were seen in Karaighati. In the evening we went to Karaighati and it was raining. When we reached the spot, they were not found. Passengers of a full day safari jeep said us that they climbed the hill just then after mating. So we waited there and after sometime we heard the sound of mating. Then we were sure that they were on the top of the hill. And suddenly they came down. The female came down first. The tigress sat on a rock and then the male came. They mated with joy and aggression. At the end of their mating, the tigress moved the male away a little angrily.

Kisli Zone, Kanha National Park

*In the midst
of black dry
forest...
Enhancing
the beauty of
the nature...*

Panna Tiger Reserve



**Tigress of
Grassland**

**Dhikala,
Jim
Corbett
National
Park**

An Art by

Anil Kumar Sharma

« My Journey as an Artist »



« because of my love for wildlife and the frequent visits to the various national parks, most of my sketches were of the wild animals »

Like all kids I had the habit of drawing something or the other on my school notebooks and in the process used to get the expected treatment from my parents and the respective subject teachers. However I was never too much inclined towards arts and it was only during my high school that I started having an inclination towards arts. Since I never had any formal or informal training in drawing/sketching/painting and neither did my parents ever wanted me to divert my attention towards anything other than academics, I started sketching with graphite pencils and slowly started making portraits of celebrities, however those sketches were very basic.

After I finished my 10 th I started experimenting with oil paints but without proper knowledge of brushes and paints the end results were not very encouraging so I shifted back to graphite pencils. This carried on till my graduation and once I got enrolled for MBA, the sketching's became very infrequent and after I got placed it stopped all together. Placement resulted in marriage and I completely forgot about sketching or arts. However destiny had other plans for me. It so happened that my inquisitive wife Annapurna Sharma once going through my documents chanced upon my sketching book. She asked me about it and I casually remarked that it was just a time pass.

She insisted that I start the sketching again but I had lost all interest mainly due to my busy schedule as a Media Planner working for a prestigious Advertising Agency.

However she was very persistent and literally cajoled me into going to a famous art supplies store in Kolkata and that was the first time I saw Camlin charcoal stick, I bought it and started

making some rudimentary sketches. Though the results were pathetic to be precise, my wife used to encourage me and finally even I started making serious attempt in improving myself. Youtube gave me a lot of idea and slowly I graduated into Charcoal pencils and other stuffs which were used by artists. In between I tried my hands at acrylic but failed miserably so I concentrated only on charcoal and after few years down the line could make some decent sketches and because of my love for wildlife and the frequent visits to the various national parks, most of my sketches were of the wild animals. A year back I casually bought Soft pastels but couldn't muster the courage to do anything with it, and I continued with my first love Charcoal. Guess destiny was very upset that I was not inclined towards colour and decided that the colours should vanish from my life as well. Tragedy struck and my wife to whom I would dedicate my better part of the artistic journey without whom I would have never restarted sketching decided to leave me and who is mainly responsible for the development of the artistic aura of mine. It was only after the divorce was imminent that I finally touched the soft pastels and the first painting was that of a butterfly that I had shot in Jayanti forest. Encouraged by the result I decided to make a Tiger painting as I have a certain love and knack for Tiger sketches. The result is in front of everyone. With my friends encouragement I have decided to make a series of Soft pastel paintings of Tigers depicting the various moods and emotions. The second in the series is already work in progress and it would be of an inquisitive tiger cub, post that would be of a white tiger cub then the piercing eyes of a Royal Bengal Tiger.



anil '23



Exploring Nature Awards International Tiger Day

29th July 2022



WINNER

KISOR MUKHOPADHYAY



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29th July 2022



1ST RUNNER UP

HYMAKAR VALLURI



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2ND RUNNER UP

DEBASIS SAHA



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29th July 2022



BEST BEHAVIOUR

KRISHNA ROY



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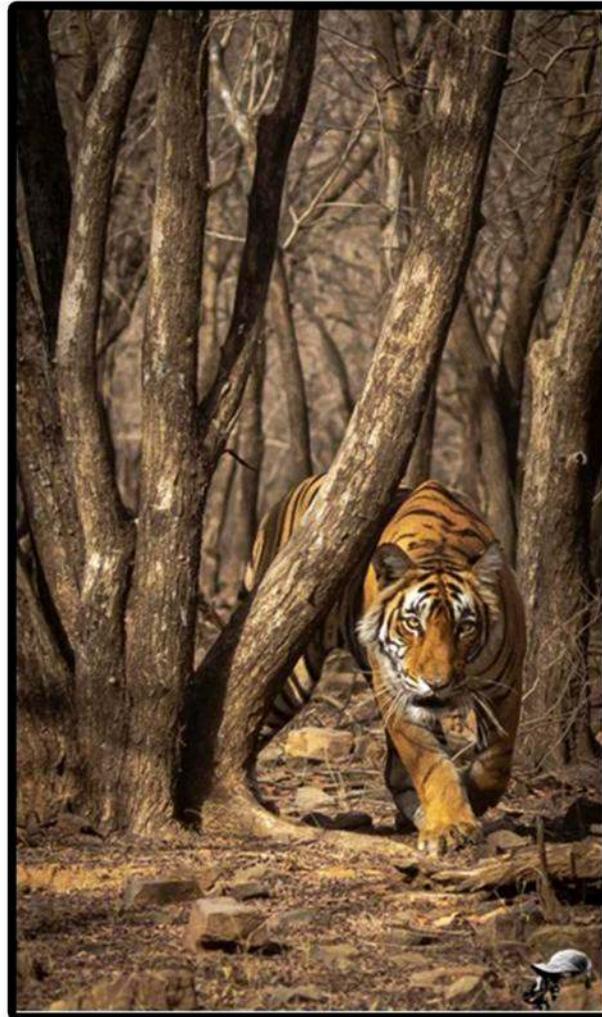
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Exploring Nature Awards International Tiger Day

29th July 2022



BEST PORTRAIT

RAJAT SUBHRA PRAMANICK



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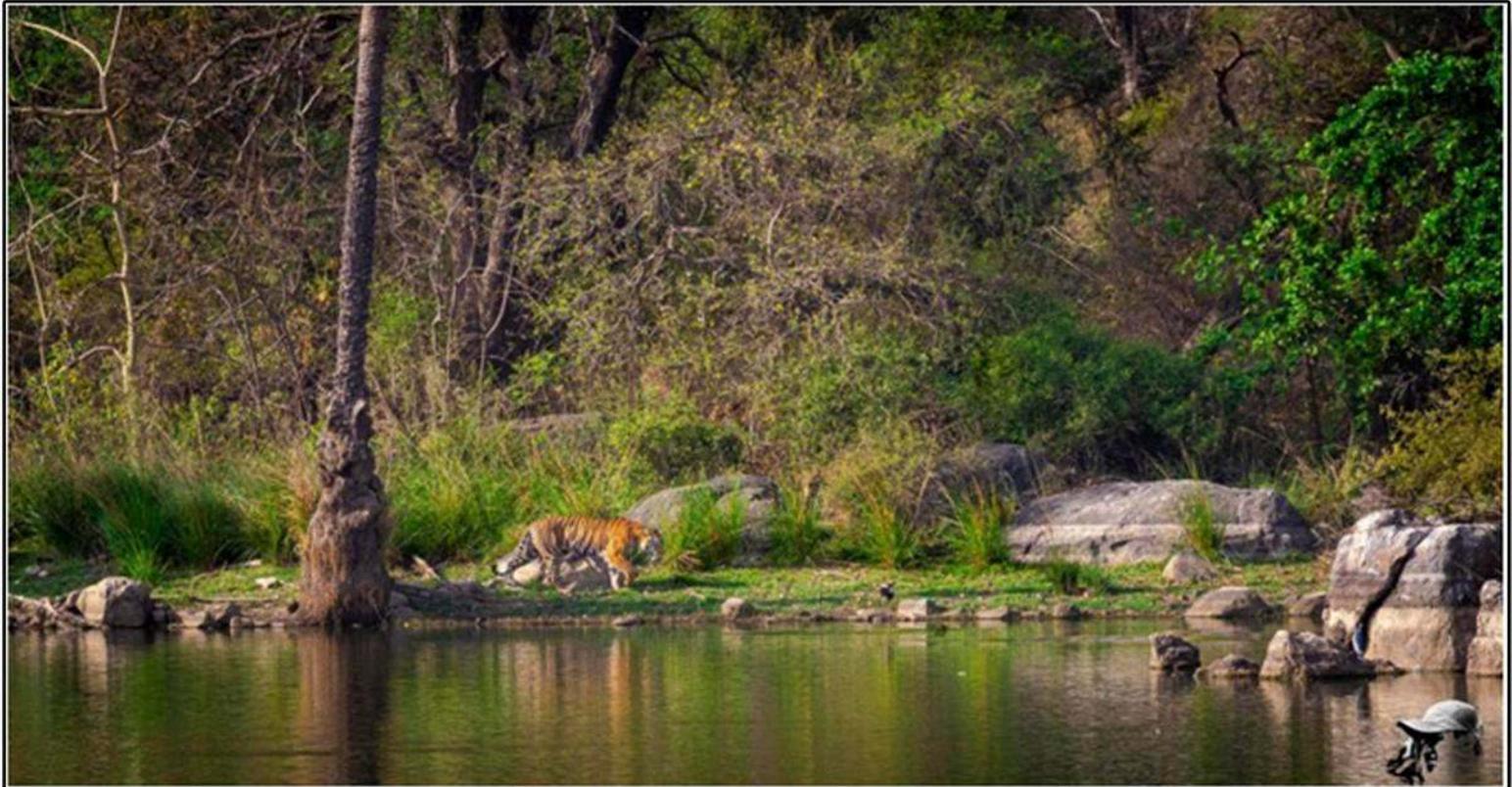
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BEST HABITAT

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We invite the experts in the field of Nature and Wildlife to share your experience with us. It can be your work on conservation, it can be your love for photography, or any such think that brings forth our reciprocity with mother nature.

You can write to us at exploringthenature1981@gmail.com for your participation for Jungle Chimes !!!

Our YouTube Channel :
Exploring Nature
@exploringnature1981



Ms. Ishani Chakraborty is a management graduate and associated with academics for more than a decade. She loves to cherish the beautiful world beyond the urban concrete. A writer, traveler and Vlogger, she is heading the Jungle Chimes !!! talk show at Exploring Nature platform and also taking care of corporate communications for the organization.

Ishani Chakraborty

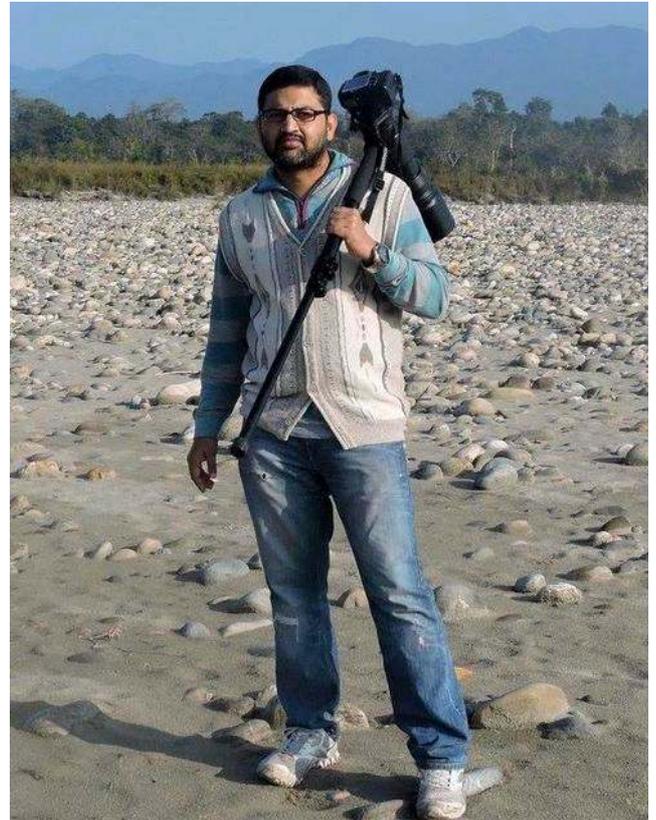
CEO - Jungle Chimes (Honorary)

Rituparno Majumder

Jungle Chimes : The wilderness of “Desert National Park”

The Speaker: Mr. Rituparno Majumder, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Mines, Government of India

Date : 16th Jan, 2022



Samrat Moulik

Jungle Chimes : Cherish the “Bible of River Babbles”

The Speaker: Mr. Samrat Moulik (The River Cyclist) India Book of Record Holder

Date : 30th Jan, 2022

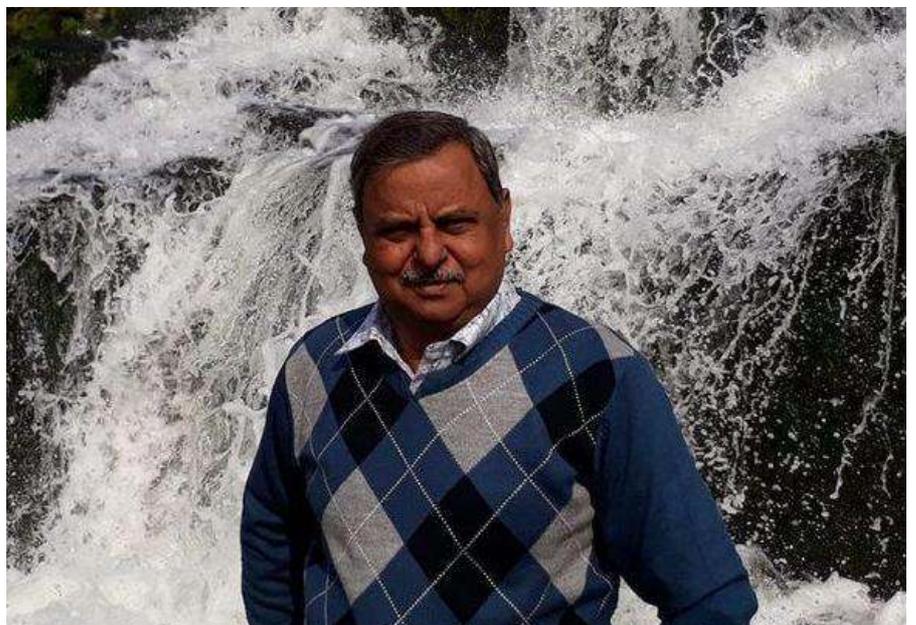
Dr. Mithilesh Dutta Dwivedi

Jungle Chimes : Three Decades of Following The Flapping of Wings

The Speaker: Dr. Mithilesh Dutta Dwivedi, (Ph.D – Zoology, VBU)

Date : 30th Jan, 2022

Watch the recording in our YouTube Channel : Exploring Nature @exploringnature1981



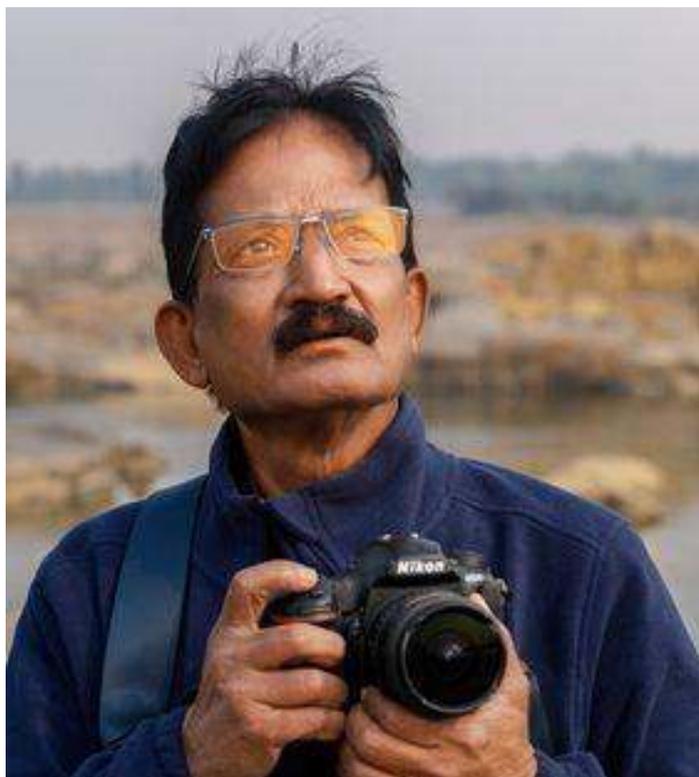
Hymakar Valluru

Jungle Chimes : Wildlife Photography Across the Globe

The Speaker: Mr. Hymakar Valluru, (Chartered Accountant by Profession & Wildlife photographer by passion)

Date : 7th May, 2022

Watch the recording in our YouTube Channel : Exploring Nature @exploringnature3006



Mukesh Srivastava

Jungle Chimes : Explore The Less Explored Zanskar

The Speaker: Mr. Mukesh Srivastava, FIE, EFIAP, FFIP (Engineer-Photographer-Author) Nikon's Official Mentor and Brand Ambassador during 2015-17

Date : 19th June 2022

Watch the recording in our YouTube Channel : Exploring Nature @exploringnature3006

Apurv Jadhav

Jungle Chimes : Journey as a Wildlife Macro Photographer

The Speaker: Mr. Apurv Jadhav (Award Winning Wildlife Macro Photographer)

Date : 2nd July 2022

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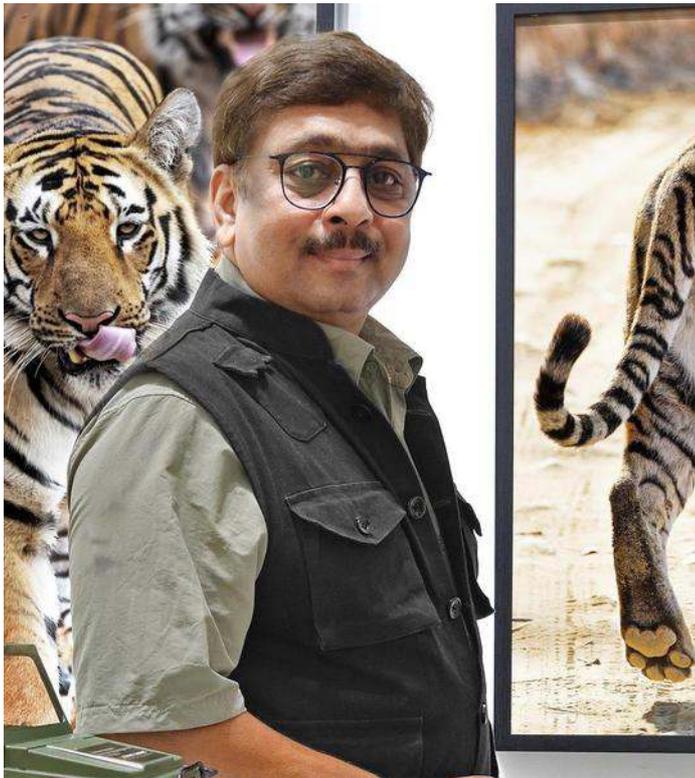
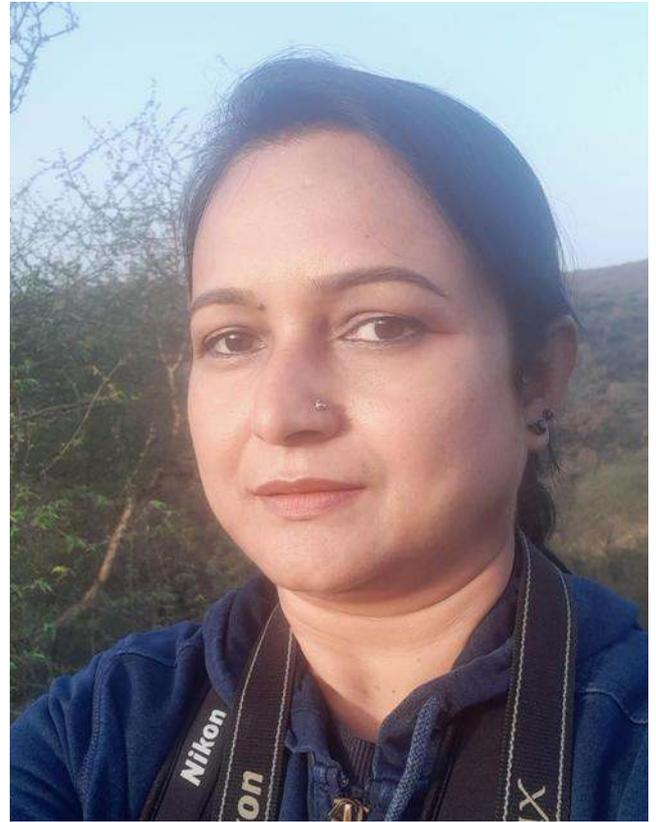
Gargi Mishra

Jungle Chimes : “The Universe of Birds” - A Peep Into Their Evolution

The Speaker: Mrs. Gargi Mishra, Orinthologist

Date : 17th July, 2022

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Hemant Sawant

Jungle Chimes : “Tigers Are On The Prowl” From Jahangir Art Gallery To Exploring Nature

The Speaker: Mr. Hemant Sawant (Hobbyist - Wildlife Photographer from Mumbai)

Date : 29th July, 2022

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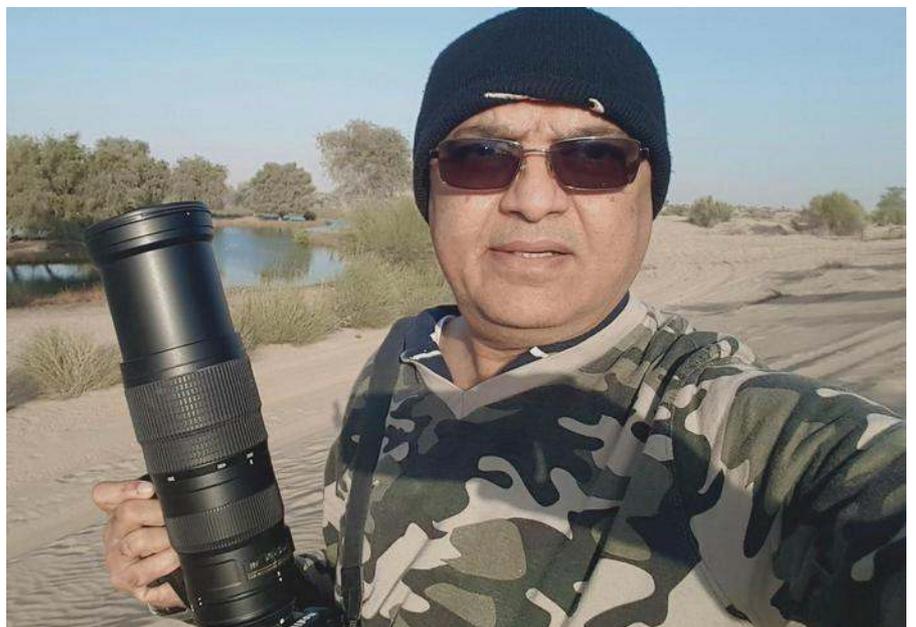
Mukund Dass

Jungle Chimes : “Avian scape of UAE”

The Speaker: Mr. Mukund Dass
Pharmacist by Profession
(Hobbyist - Wildlife Photographer from UAE)

Date : 18th Sep, 2022

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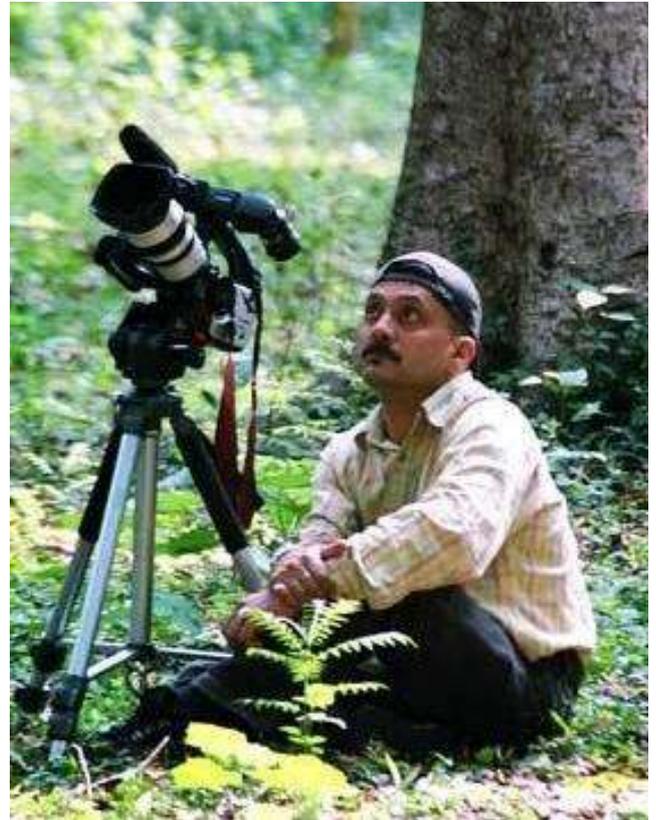
Prateek Panwar

Jungle Chimes : The Great Himalayan Bird Count”

The Speaker: Mr. Prateek Panwar, Pioneer Bird Conservationist ARCH – Action & Research for Conservation in Himalayas

Date : 9th Oct, 2022

Watch the recording in our YouTube Channel : Exploring Nature @exploringnature3006



Santanu Majumder

Jungle Chimes : “Chasing Dark Skies Across India

The Speaker: Mr. Santanu Majumder, Retired Indian Air Force Officer Landscape & Astrophotographer

Date : 30th Oct, 2022

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Sasankar Boruah, AFIP (Admin & Judge)

Welcome to the world of Exploring Nature. Alongwith other platforms, our Facebook page is also a good place to showcase your works. I being a photographer with an experience of 34 years, with an AFIP distinction from FEDERATION OF INDIAN PHOTOGRAPHY and also being the Writer & Editor of a photography book "THE Beginners Diary" - A book on Basics Of Photography, like & love to stay close to nature - is looking after the Competitions going on the Facebook page of Exploring Nature as a Judge/Admin. So, with no second thought, start posting your valuable works/photos in our page and keep yourself connected to the world - learning out of it, creating awareness about nature.



Bappa Debnath (Admin)

Bappa Debnath is a Landscape & Nature photographer by passion and also an admin of Exploring Nature Facebook group and page.

Bappa enthusiastically showcase the best photo of the day across different social media accounts of Exploring Nature.

Exploring Nature is a forum where nature lovers can display their photography, videos, writeups etc. and connect with like minded people.





Exploring Nature Awards 2022

Top Contributors



**SYAMALA
RUPAKULA**



**ARUN
TYAGI**



**MAMTA
GOEL**



**BIPAD TARAN
MANDAL**



RAJ PISE



**BISHAL
MAHATO**



**RAMA
DHIMAN**



**RAJAMANOхар
STEPHEN**



**PRAKASH
JOSHI**



**ATUL
CHAPHEKAR**



**AMAR
BARAIK**



**KALEEM
KURESHI**



**NAGENDRA
PRASAD**



**RIDHA
NARAIN**



**ASHISH
KUMAR
GUPTA**



**MUKUND
KUMAR**

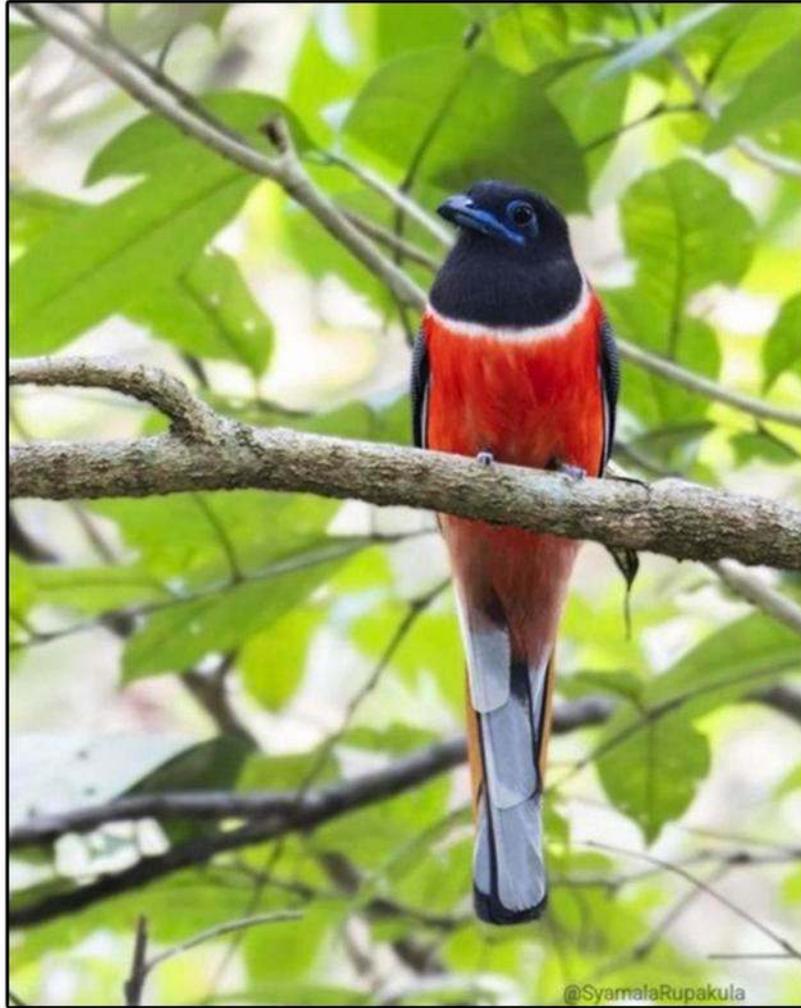


**DEBADITYA
SARKAR**



Exploring Nature Awards December 2022

Top Artist



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WINNER



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RAJAMANOHAR STEPHEN

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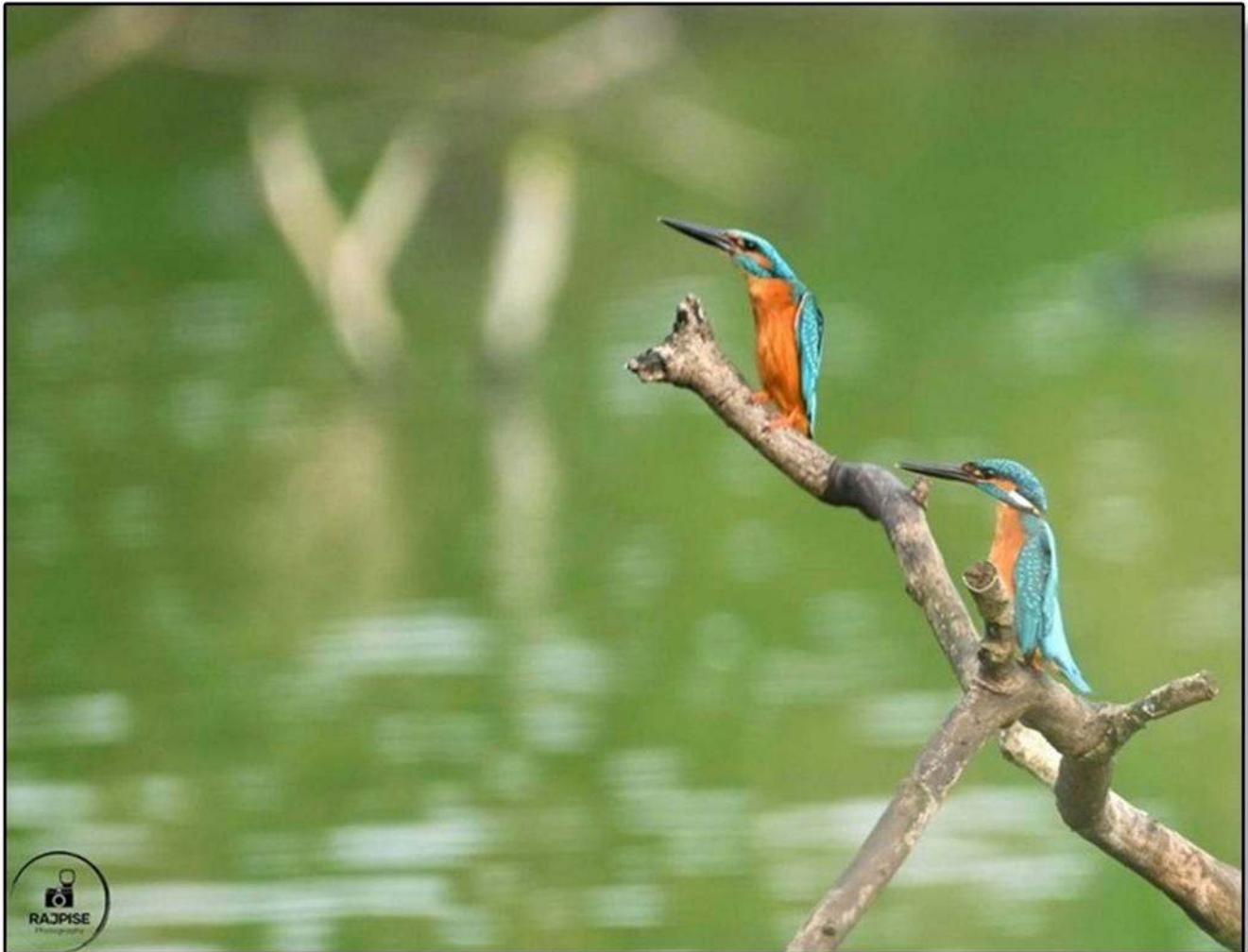
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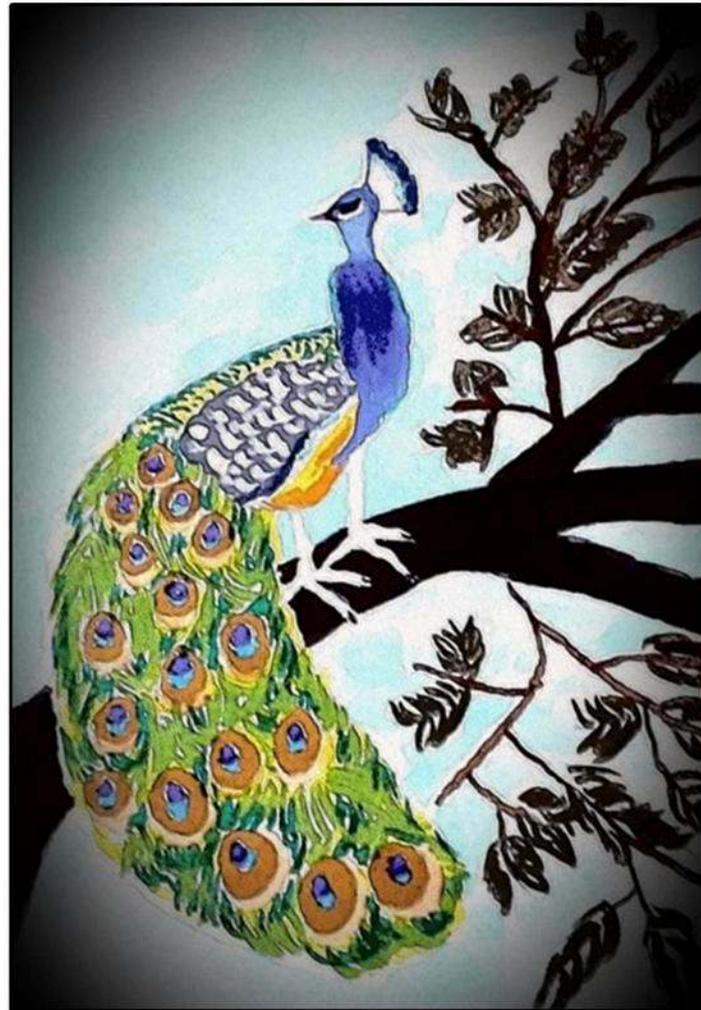
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WINNER



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MICHAL EM

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RAMA DHIMAN

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Top Artist



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WINNER



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MAIA DUSHVILI

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SOMA DE

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MUKUND KUMAR

WINNER



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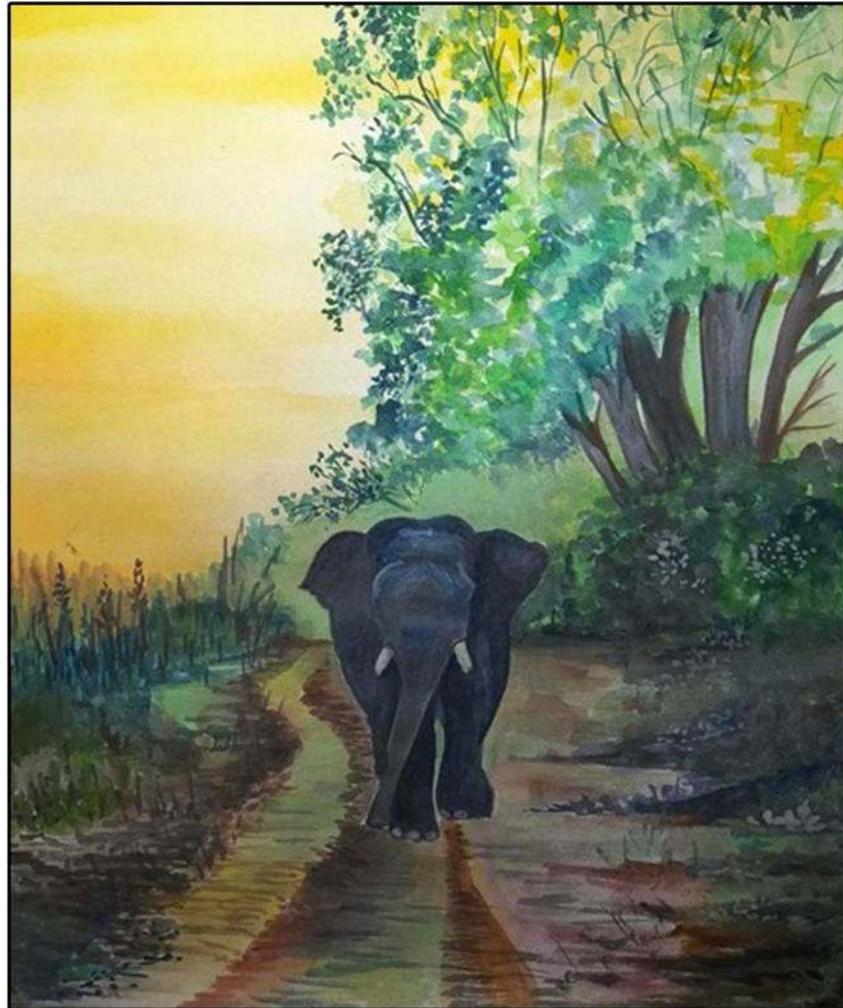
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Exploring Nature Awards February 2022

Top Artist



RAMA DHIMAN

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Top Artist



AMIR JASPA

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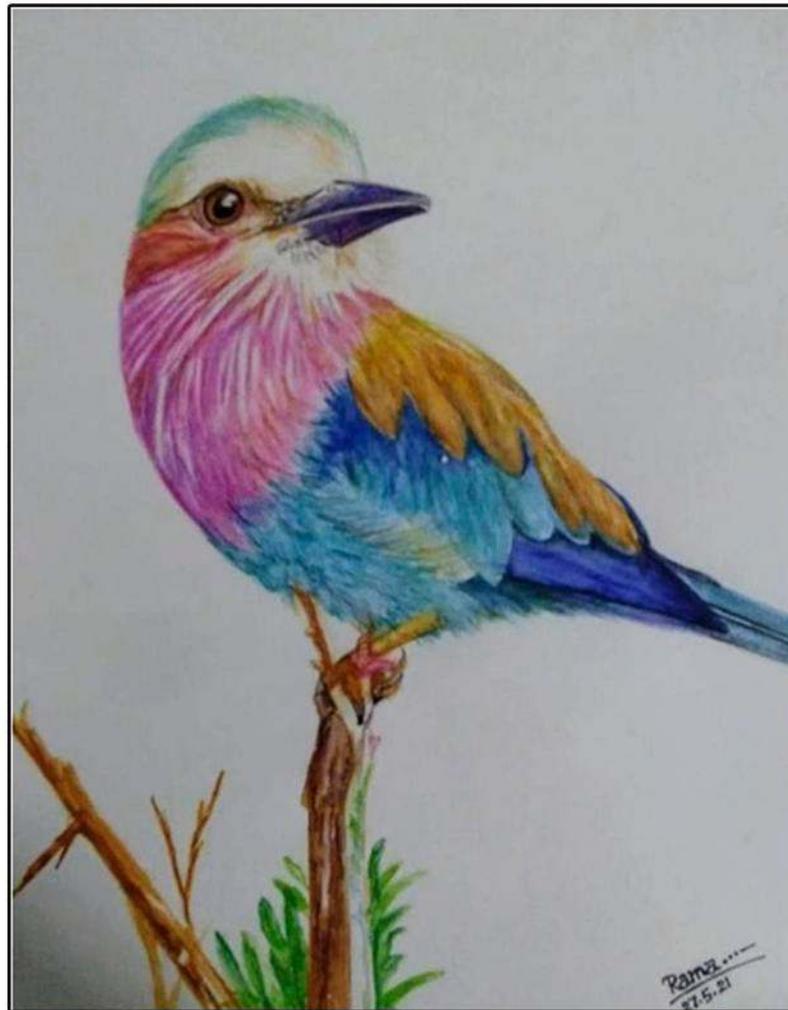
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RAMA DHIMAN

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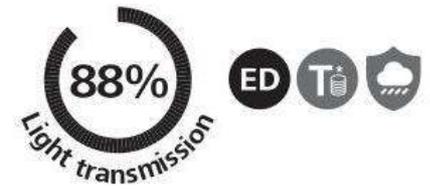
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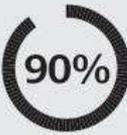
COMPACT ZEISS QUALITY. TERRA ED.



Perfect for when on the go.

- Smooth and easy-to-grip focusing wheel for particularly simple and fast focusing.
- Fiberglass-reinforced and waterproof housing for rugged environments.
- ED glass and the hydrophobic multicoating deliver true-color images.

COMPARISON OF **TERRA ED MODELS.**

		Main use			
					
		Outdoor/ recreational	Birding/ nature observation	Twilight/ night	
ZEISS Victory SF   SF 42 SF 32	   		SF 8×42 SF 10×42 SF 8×32 SF 10×32	 	
ZEISS SFL 	  		SFL 8×40 SFL 10×40		
ZEISS Victory HT 	  			HT 8×54 HT 10×54	
ZEISS Victory Pocket 	 		Pocket 8×25 Pocket 10×25		
ZEISS Conquest HD 	 		HD 8×42 HD 10×42 HD 8×32 HD 10×32	  	
ZEISS Terra ED/Pocket 	 		ED 8×42 ED 10×42 ED 8×32 ED 10×32 Pocket 8×25 Pocket 10×25	  	

*Hydrophobic and antireflective coating.



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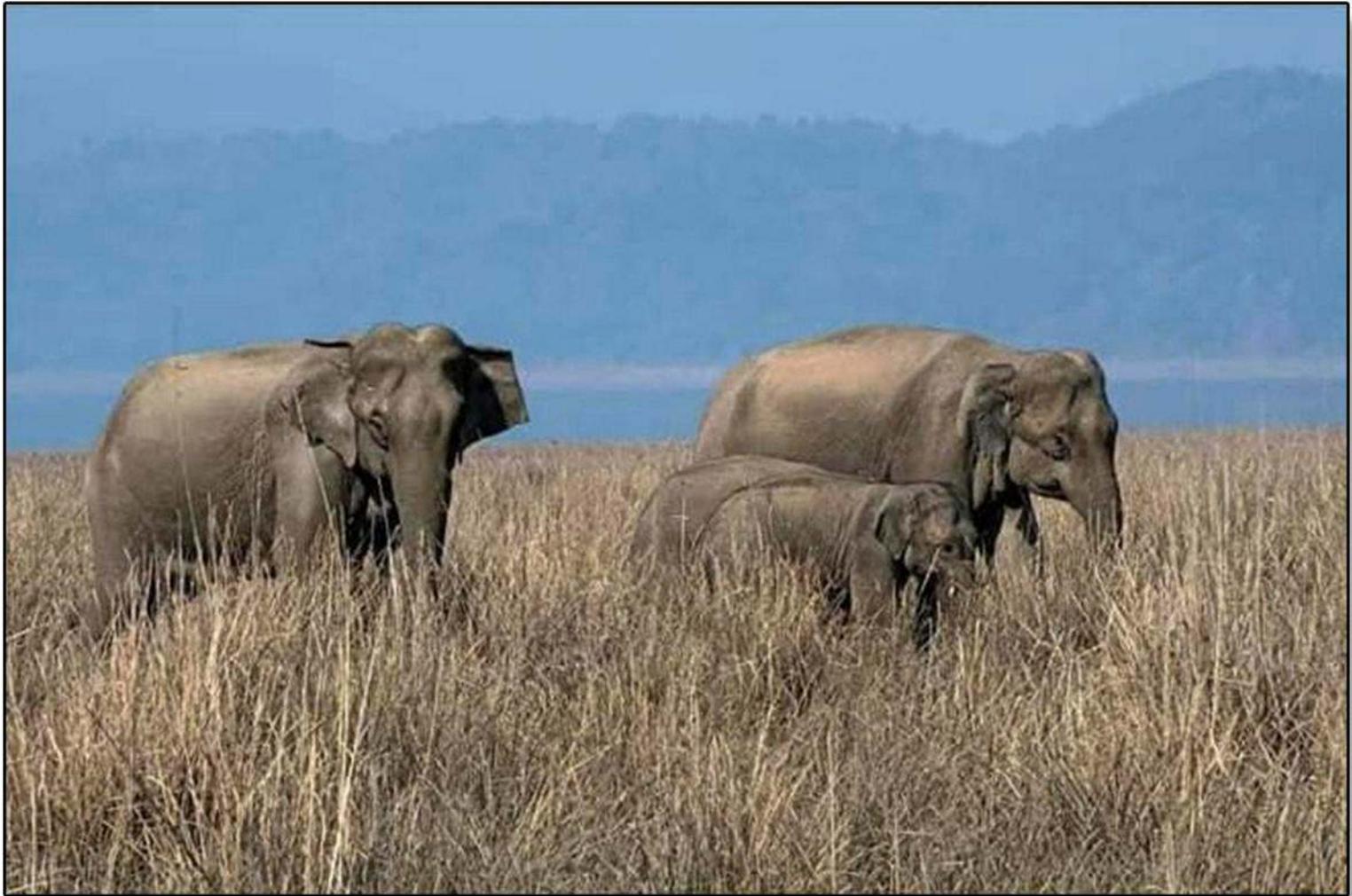
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Email Id

exploringthenature1981@gmail.com