

# India - Tiger Direct!

Naturetrek Tour Report

6 - 14 January 2013

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Tiger by Andrea Schalk



Tiger by Debbie Stewart



Common Langur by Debbie Stewart



Sambar by Andrea Schalk

Report compiled by PIndrajit Latey  
Images courtesy of Debbie Stewart & Andrea Schalk



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Tour Leaders: PIndrajit Latey naturalist & guide

Participants: Debbie Stewart  
Elaine Stewart  
Andrea Schalk +Tadoba extension

## Day 1

**Sunday 6th January**

Leave London

## Day 2

**Monday 7th January**

The guests arrived on time at the Nagpur airport. After receiving them we left for Pench in the comforts of the Tuli Corridor. En route we saw lots of Dusky Craig Martins, Drongo's, Black Kites and Indian Rollers. On arriving at the resort we checked in and had an early dinner and called it a day.

## Day 3

**Tuesday 8th January**

Our first drive in Pench Tiger Reserve was very exciting. The guests had gelled well and were sharing experiences of the other reserves that had just been to. With the previous knowledge of a tigress that had killed a large Sambar stag, we all rumbled towards the location of the kill but the tigress was not around. We saw lots of birds and mammals like Nilgai, Chital, Jackal and Wild Boars on the morning drive. After a sumptuous lunch we went for an afternoon drive and saw some lovely Parakeets, Coucals and storks. With luck not favouring us today we left the park. That evening we saw the film 'Tiger – Spy in he Jungle'. Seeing the film in the place where it was shot was truly great because we could relate to some of the places in the film!

## Day 4

**Wednesday 9th January**

We went for a birding trail in the buffer of Pench. We saw over 40 different bird species on that day and had breakfast on the banks of the lovely Kokah Dam. We left for Kanha National Park hoping a change of park will change our luck as well. Driving through some lovely villages and markets we arrived in Kanha where we were received by Dimple at the Kanha Jungle Lodge. Post checking in we went for a lovely nature trail along the banks of the Banjar River. Jay, the youngest naturalist of India, and also Tarun and Dimple's son lead the nature trail. With lots to look forward to tomorrow we went off to bed.

## Day 5

**Thursday 10th January**

The morning was very cold. The temperature was about 5 degrees Celsius. With hot water bottles and blankets we went for the first safari in Kanha. We saw some lovely Barasingha, Gaur and Wild Dogs here. Post lunch we were well rewarded. One of our local guides informed us about a tigress with 4 cubs was seen in the morning in a particular area. We drove straight to that area and we found a 5-year-old tigress with her 4-month-old cubs busy feeding on a Gaur kill. She came beside our car and just sat there looking and then sashaying down the slope of a small hill she went to a waterhole and quenched her thirst.

The cubs were going to follow her but were very shy and kept themselves in the undergrowth. We took many photos and very reluctantly left that area and came back. It was the best day of the tour so far! With a checklist and dinner the guests went off to bed.

## Day 6

Friday 11th January

The morning was very cold again. We went to a different zone called Kisli. With meadows and water available everywhere we hoped that we could get some good sightings. We saw a variety of birds like Crested Serpent Eagle, Greenish Warblers, Brown Cheeked Fulvetta and Asian Open-bill Storks. In the afternoon we had driven to an area where there was a sighting in the morning. We heard many alarm calls of spotted deer and langur, but time was against us. We came back to the resort and had a splendid display by the Flying Squirrel at the resort. After that was a cooking demonstration and a delicious dinner before we all went off to bed.

## Day 7

Saturday 12th January

With the temperature at 5 degrees, we all piled into the cars and left for the safari. The early morning drives always come up with something unexpected. As we were driving along, just 100 metres away from our car we heard a male Tiger roar. We all jumped out of our skins! Hoping luck would change we tracked him until he was hidden less than 20 metres from us! Waiting for over an hour at that spot our expectations dwindled. We moved on, into another area hoping this tiger would appear later on and some lucky jeep will be able to see him. After lunch we again went to the same area and as luck would have it we saw a Sloth Bear! With it foraging amongst the sal forest looking for termites it gave us very good insights into its behaviour. With another Jungle Cat while on our way back we all were very pleased with the days safaris. After a wonderful dinner and a session of star-gazing we called it a night.

## Day 8

Sunday 13th January

The last safari has always been very memorable. Just as we entered the park our guide yelled, STOP TIGER! We were just 300 metres inside the gate when sitting amongst the bushes was a big male Tiger. Screeching to a halt we saw him come out and walk like a king in front of us. He disappeared into the morning mist within 5 seconds. We all saw him in awe. The elephants were waiting for us as we had booked them for 1 hour. Seeing lots of Chital and Barasingha so close from elephant-back was truly memorable. After breakfast we all left for Nagpur. Checking into the Tuli Imperial we all had a farewell dinner and called it a night.

## Day 9

Monday 14th January

The guests left for the airport to catch the flight for Mumbai and then the onward flight to London after a successful tour...

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## Species List

Birds (✓ = recorded but not counted)

	Common name	Scientific name	January					
			8	9	10	11	12	13
1	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>		✓	✓		✓	
2	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	
3	Little Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax niger</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
4	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	
5	Intermediate Egret	<i>Egretta intermedia</i>	✓	✓			✓	
6	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>				✓		
7	Indian Pond-heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
8	Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	
9	Asian Openbill	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	
10	Woolly-necked Stork	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>			✓			
11	Lesser Adjutant	<i>Leptoptilos javanicus</i>					✓	
12	Black-headed Ibis	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>	✓					
13	Red-naped Ibis	<i>Pseudibis papillosa</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	
14	Lesser Whistling-duck	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	
15	Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>	✓	✓				
16	Cotton Pygmy-goose	<i>Nettapus coromandelianus</i>		✓	✓		✓	
17	Common Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	
18	Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	
19	Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>					✓	
20	Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	✓					
21	Oriental Honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>		✓				
22	Black-shouldered Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	
23	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>		✓				
24	Grey-headed Fish-eagle	<i>Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus</i>	✓					
25	White-rumped Vulture	<i>Gyps bengalensis</i>	✓					
26	Crested Serpent-eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>	✓	✓			✓	
27	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>	✓					
28	Changeable Hawk-eagle	<i>Spizaetus cirrhatous</i>					✓	
29	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	✓	✓				
30	Jungle Bush-quail	<i>Perdica asiatica</i>						
31	Red Jungle Fowl	<i>Gallus gallus</i>			✓	✓	✓	
32	Red Spurfowl	<i>Galloperdix spadicea</i>			✓	✓		
33	Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	
34	Ruddy-breasted Crake	<i>Porzana fusca</i>		✓				
35	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>		✓			✓	
36	Bronze-winged Jacana	<i>Metopidius indicus</i>		✓				
37	Yellow-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus malabaricus</i>		✓		✓		
38	Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	
39	Little -ringed plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	✓					
40	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	✓					
41	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	✓	✓				
42	River Tern	<i>Sterna aurantia</i>	✓	✓				
43	Oriental Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>					✓	
44	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>		✓				
45	Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
46	Laughing Dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>		✓	✓		✓	
47	Yellow-footed Pigeon	<i>Treron phoenicoptera</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	

	Common name	Scientific name	January					
			8	9	10	11	12	13
48	Alexandrine Parakeet	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>	✓	✓	✓			
49	Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	✓	✓			✓	
50	Plum-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	
51	Sirkeer Malkoha	<i>Phaenicophaeus leschenaultii</i>					✓	
52	Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	
53	Indian Scops-owl	<i>Otus bakkamoena</i>	✓			✓		
54	Brown Fish-owl	<i>Ketupa zeylonensis</i>				✓		
55	Jungle Owlet	<i>Glaucidium radiatum</i>		✓	✓		✓	
56	Spotted Owlet	<i>Athene brama</i>	✓			✓	✓	
57	Indian Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus asiaticus</i>	✓					
58	Savannah Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus affinis</i>	✓					
59	Crested Treeswift	<i>Hemiprocne coronata</i>				✓	✓	
60	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>			✓			
61	White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
62	Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
63	Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
64	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	
65	Indian Grey Hornbill	<i>Ocyrceros birostris</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
66	Brown-headed Barbet	<i>Megalaima zeylanica</i>	✓		✓			
67	Black-rumped Flameback	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i>	✓			✓	✓	
68	Ashy-crowned Sparrow-lark	<i>Eremopterix grisea</i>		✓				
69	Dusky Crag-martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne concolor</i>	✓		✓	✓		
70	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓			✓	✓	
71	Wire-tailed Swallow	<i>Hirundo smithii</i>	✓				✓	
72	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	
73	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>					✓	
74	White-browed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla madaraspatensis</i>	✓	✓				
75	Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	✓					
76	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	
77	Olive-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus hodgsoni</i>				✓		
78	Large Cuckoo-shrike	<i>Coracina macei</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	
79	Scarlet Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus flammeus</i>				✓		
80	Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
81	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>			✓		✓	
82	Ashy Prinia	<i>Prinia socialis</i>		✓				
83	Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i>	✓					
84	Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>	✓	✓				
85	Greenish Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochiloides</i>				✓	✓	
86	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>				✓		
87	Asian Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa dauurica</i>	✓		✓		✓	
88	Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>		✓				
89	Tickell's Blue-flycatcher	<i>Cyornis tickelliae</i>					✓	
90	Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher	<i>Culicicapa ceylonensis</i>	✓					
91	Oriental Magpie-robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>		✓		✓		
92	Indian Robin	<i>Saxicoloides fulicata</i>		✓				
93	Common Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquatus</i>			✓	✓	✓	
94	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	✓	✓				
95	Black-naped Monarch	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>				✓		
96	Jungle Babbler	<i>Turdoides striatus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
97	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	✓					
98	Purple Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i>	✓					

	Common name	Scientific name	January					
			8	9	10	11	12	13
99	Eurasian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>		✓				
100	Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
101	Long-tailed Shrike	<i>Lanius schach</i>	✓	✓		✓		
102	Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
103	White-bellied Drongo	<i>Dicrurus caerulescens</i>	✓					
104	Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
105	Rufous Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
106	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	
107	Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
108	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	
109	Asian Pied Starling	<i>Gracupica contra</i>			✓			
110	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>		✓				
111	Chestnut-shouldered Petronia	<i>Petronia xanthocollis</i>	✓					
112	Nutmeg Mannikin	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>	✓				✓	

### Mammals (F= female; C = cubs)

1	Royal Bengal Tiger	<i>Panthera tigris tigris</i>			1F4C			✓
2	Jungle Cat	<i>Felis chaus kelaarita or kutas</i>					✓	
3	Rhesus Macaque	<i>Macaca mulatta</i>	✓	✓				
4	Common Langur	<i>Presbytis entellus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
5	Common Mongoose	<i>Herpestes edwardsi</i>		✓				
6	Ruddy Mongoose	<i>Herpestes smithii</i>					✓	
7	Golden Jackal	<i>Canis aureus</i>	✓		✓			
8	Dhole (Asiatic Wild Dog)	<i>Cuon alpinus dukhunensis</i>			✓			
9	Sloth Bear	<i>Merursus ursinus</i>					✓	
10	Indian Flying Fox	<i>Pteropus giganteus</i>	✓					
11	Indian Tree Shrew	<i>Anathana ellioti</i>	✓				✓	
12	Indian or Black-naped Hare	<i>Lepus nigricollis</i>					?	
13	Three-striped Palm Squirrel	<i>Funambulus pennarum</i>	✓			✓	✓	
14	Five-striped Palm Squirrel	<i>Funambulus pennanti</i>	✓					
15	Indian Giant Flying Squirrel	<i>Petaurista philippensis</i>		✓	✓	✓		
16	Gaur (Indian Bison)	<i>Bos guarus</i>			✓		✓	
17	Sambar	<i>Cervus unicolor</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	
18	Barasingha (Swamp Deer)	<i>Cervus duvauceli branderi</i>			✓	✓	✓	
19	Chital (Spotted Deer)	<i>Cervus axis</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	
20	Indian Muntjac (Barking Deer)	<i>Muntiacus muntjak</i>			✓		✓	
21	Chousingha (Four-horned Antelope)	<i>Tetracerus quadricornis</i>	✓					
22	Nilgai (Blue Bull)	<i>Boselaphus tragocamelus</i>	✓					
23	Indian Wild Boar	<i>Sus scrofa</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	

### Other fauna

1	House Gecko species	<i>Hemidactylus or Gehyra etc sp</i>		✓				
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