

# Tiger Direct

Naturetrek Tour Report

31 January - 11 February 2013

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Report by Indrajit Latey



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Tour Leader: Indrajit Latey - Local Guide & Naturalist

Participants: Michael Atkinson  
Margaret Atkinson  
Barry Baker  
Maureen Baker  
Heather Bell  
Jane A'Court \*

Ben Fisher \*

Tessa Fisher \*

\* Tadoba pre-tour extension

## Pre-tour Tadoba Extension

### Day 1

Thursday 31st January

#### Travel to Nagpur

The clients arrived at different times as some of them had made their own flight arrangements. We met for dinner at the Tuli Imperial and discussed the tours program before settling into the rooms later.

### Day 2

Friday 1st February

#### Nagpur to Tadoba

A late start from Nagpur ensured that the guests rested well this morning before we set off to Tadoba. We arrived in Tadoba at Svasaara Resort by noon. A quick lunch and we got into the jeeps for our first game drive in Tadoba. Lots of mammals like Chital, Sambar, Barking Deer, Muntjac, Langurs and Wild Boar were seen. All enjoyed birds like Parakeets, Buzzards and Ibis. Exiting the park at 5 30pm we had an early dinner and went off to bed.

### Day 3

Saturday 2nd February

#### Tadoba

During this morning's drive we saw fresh pugmarks on the road and we looked forward to our first encounter with the striped cat... Some alarm calls were also heard but we were not in luck yet. We went to the main lake and were enjoying the birds around. Hoping our luck would change in the afternoon drive we came out of the park at 10 30am. After lunch, we had information of some tiger activity in a different range. We headed straight to the waterhole and saw a gathering of jeeps. We joined them and saw a Tigress with her 4 cubs relaxing in the water. We all had great views of her and watched the cubs playing in the water for over 30 minutes. What a sight! We felt very privileged to see the cubs in their natural habitat. Leaving them we exited the park as the sun was setting. After dinner we watched a film on Tadoba and went off to bed.

## Day 4

### Sunday 3rd February

#### Tadoba

Excitement was high after yesterday's tigers. We were hoping that we could carry on that luck today also. We went to a waterhole for some birding and out of the blue out came a Tigress and sat next to the rocks! No alarm call, no sign of a predator...nothing at all... We spent some time with her and then moved on to see other mammals and birds. Honey Buzzards, Serpent Eagles, Lapwings and some River Terns were seen. Later after lunch we went to the Telia water body where we saw a Tigress sleeping in the tall grass. Just her stomach with the zebra-like patterns was visible but even that was enough for us to get excited. We drove back in awe...

## Main Tour starts

## Day 5

### Monday 4th February

#### Tadoba to Pench

We were hoping that our last day at Tadoba would be a memorable one. And it was. We saw a Tigress resting by the lakeside for over 40 minutes. Rolling over onto her side and grooming herself she was totally at ease, and fully aware of our presence.

With an early lunch we left for Nagpur, where we had lunch and then arrived in Pench at the Tuli Corridor. We met the other members of the group – who were doing the main tour, and we all had dinner and went off to bed.

## Day 6

### Tuesday 5th February

#### Pench National Park

Pench has always been a birders paradise. We went for the first game drive and enjoyed a lot of water birds like Ospreys, Storks and Ducks. The Gaur and the Jackals were the mammal highlights. After lunch we drove to the eastern side of the park. Alarm calls greeted us. We knew there was a predator around. A large Leopard came out in front of us and walked along the road before disappearing into the undergrowth with utmost ease. WOW. Another of our cars also saw the highly elusive Jungle Cat. It had been a memorable afternoon. After the checklist we had dinner and watched the film Tiger – Spy in the Jungle.

## Day 7

### Wednesday 6th February

#### Pench to Kanha

Since it was Wednesday the park was closed. We went instead for a bird watching drive to Kokha Lake and saw over 20 different birds. Our highlight was a Short-toed Eagle coming down to the water and drinking when we were having breakfast. It was a great sight!

We left for Kanha hoping that we could see the striped animal. On arriving at Kanha Jungle Lodge we settling in, did the checklist and went off to bed.

## Day 8

### Thursday 7th February

#### Kanha

The first drive in a park is always a memorable one. This one was no different. We saw a Tigress coming through the meadow stalking a deer. With alarm calls going all around her, she simply ignored them, and was so focussed on her prey that she nearly stumbled onto some deer. We watched the behaviour between predator and prey...in the end she was unsuccessful in hunting and moved on to try her luck elsewhere.

In the afternoon we drove to the same place but the rain gods decided to bless us. Our safari was a total washout and we all returned to the resort. With hot tea and sitting around the fire we all hoped that the next day would be a sunny one.

## Day 9

### Friday 8th February

#### Kanha

The morning started with a lot of rains! Our safari started at 7am with information that only the main road was open. Not deterred by this information we all drove inside the park. As we drove, one of the jeeps stopped and saw a Tiger cub peeping out from the bushes next to the main road. It was simply amazing!

In the afternoon there was some sunshine and we saw Flycatchers - after the rains there were a lot of termites and they feasted on them with gusto. We returned to the lodge and saw the Flying Squirrel doing her show. After a good dinner we went off to bed.

## Day 10

### Saturday 9th February

#### Kanha

Since it had been raining there was a lot of fog in the morning, but once the sun came out we saw birds like Minivets, Drongos and Parakeets. The rutting calls of the Barasingha filled the morning air. It was a beautiful day.

Later on in the afternoon we went to the hilly side of the park hoping for some cat activity. Instead we saw a Sloth Bear foraging in the bushes for termites and grubs. It was a great sight and our guests enjoyed seeing it. After coming back to the lodge there was a lot of excitement because of that sighting. We had dinner, did the checklist and went off to bed.

## Day 11

### Sunday 10th February

#### Kanha to Nagpur

Today was the last day in Kanha and the excitement was high because we were going on an elephant back ride into the park. The elephant ride is one of the highlights of this tour and it lived up to its expectations. One full hour in the thick of the jungle with real close proximity to the forest denizens.

After an early breakfast we reluctantly left for Nagpur. We had taken a packed lunch, which we enjoyed under the mango trees en route. On arriving at the Tuli Imperial we had our farewell dinner and went off to bed.

## Day 12

Monday 11th February

Nagpur – Mumbai – UK

The guests left for their flight to Mumbai and then on to the UK.

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## Species Lists

Bird (✓ = recorded but not counted)

	Common name	Scientific name	February								
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>						✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Indian Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax fuscicollis</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
3	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>					✓				
4	Little Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax niger</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	Oriental Darter	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>				✓	✓				
6	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>		✓			✓	✓			
7	Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8	Intermediate Egret	<i>Egretta intermedia</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓				
10	Indian Pond-heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
11	Cattle Egret	<i>Bubulcus ibis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
12	Painted Stork	<i>Mycteria leucocephala</i>									
13	Asian Openbill	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
14	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>					✓		✓		✓
15	Lesser Adjutant	<i>Leptoptilos javanicus</i>							✓		✓
16	Black-headed Ibis	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>		✓							✓
17	Red-naped Ibis	<i>Pseudibis papillosa</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
18	Eurasian Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>					✓	✓			
19	Lesser Whistling-duck	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
20	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>							✓	✓	
21	Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>					✓	✓	✓		
22	Cotton Pygmy-goose	<i>Nettapus coromandelianus</i>									✓
23	Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>							✓		✓
24	Common Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>							✓		✓
25	Spot-billed Duck	<i>Anas poecilorhyncha</i>					✓				
26	Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>					✓		✓		✓
27	Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>					✓				
28	Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>		✓			✓				
29	Oriental Honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>		✓	✓			✓	✓		
30	Black-shouldered Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
31	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>	✓								
32	Grey-headed Fish-eagle	<i>Ichthyophaga ichhyaetus</i>		✓							
33	Short-toed Eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>			✓			✓			✓
34	Crested Serpent-eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
35	Shikra	<i>Accipiter badius</i>		✓						✓	
36	White-eyed Buzzard	<i>Butastur teesa</i>	✓	✓							
37	Changeable Hawk-eagle	<i>Spizaetus cirrhatus</i>			✓		✓		✓		✓
38	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	✓	✓					✓		
39	Painted Francolin	<i>Francolinus pictus</i>					✓				
40	Grey Francolin	<i>Francolinus pondicerianus</i>								✓	
41	Red Spurfowl	<i>Galloperdix spadicea</i>		✓			✓		✓		
42	Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
43	Brown Crake	<i>Amaurornis akool</i>						✓			
44	White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amaurornis phoenicurus</i>	✓				✓	✓			
45	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>						✓			
46	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>		✓							
47	Yellow-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus malabaricus</i>						✓	✓		

	Common name	Scientific name	February								
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
48	Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
49	Little -ringed plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>		✓			✓				
50	Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>								✓	
51	Common Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>					✓				
52	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>					✓			✓	
53	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>			✓		✓				✓
54	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	✓				✓		✓		✓
55	River Tern	<i>Sterna aurantia</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
56	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>						✓			
57	Spotted Dove	<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
58	Laughing Dove	<i>Streptopelia senegalensis</i>		✓	✓						
59	Yellow-footed Pigeon	<i>Treron phoenicoptera</i>		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓
60	Alexandrine Parakeet	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
61	Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
62	Plum-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
63	Common Hawk-cuckoo	<i>Cuculus varius</i>									✓
64	Sirkeer Malkoha	<i>Phaenicophaeus leschenaultii</i>									✓
65	Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓
66	Indian Scops-owl	<i>Otus bakkamoena</i>					✓		✓	✓	✓
67	Brown Fish-owl	<i>Ketupa zeylonensis</i>							✓		✓
68	Jungle Owlet	<i>Glaucidium radiatum</i>							✓	✓	
69	Savannah Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus affinis</i>					✓				
70	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>								✓	
71	White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
72	Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
73	Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
74	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
75	Indian Grey Hornbill	<i>Ocyrceros birostris</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
76	Malabar Pied-hornbill	<i>Anthracoceros coronatus</i>					✓				
77	Brown-headed Barbet	<i>Megalaima zeylanica</i>							✓		✓
78	Streak-throated Woodpecker	<i>Picus xanthopygaeus</i>									✓
79	Black-rumped Flameback	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i>					✓		✓	✓	✓
80	White-naped Woodpecker	<i>Chrysocolaptes festivus</i>								✓	
81	Ashy-crowned Sparrow-lark	<i>Eremopterix grisea</i>						✓			
82	Oriental Skylark	<i>Alauda gulgula</i>						✓			
83	Dusky Crag-martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne concolor</i>							✓		
84	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓					
85	Wire-tailed Swallow	<i>Hirundo smithii</i>	✓								
86	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>	✓					✓		✓	✓
87	White-browed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla madaraspatensis</i>						✓			
88	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
89	Olive-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus hodgsoni</i>						✓			
90	Large Cuckoo-shrike	<i>Coracina macei</i>		✓			✓	✓			✓
91	Small Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus cinnamomeus</i>						✓			
92	Long-tailed Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus ethologus</i>									✓
93	Scarlet Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus flammeus</i>							✓		✓
94	Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
95	Orange-headed Thrush	<i>Zoothera citrina</i>							✓		
96	Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>		✓	✓	✓					
97	Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i>			✓						

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			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
98	Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>				✓					
99	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>			✓						
100	Asian Brown Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa dauurica</i>				✓		✓	✓		
101	Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>									✓
102	Tickell's Blue-flycatcher	<i>Cyornis tickelliae</i>							✓		✓
103	Siberian Rubythroat	<i>Luscinia calliope</i>								✓	
104	Oriental Magpie-robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
105	White-rumped Shama	<i>Copsychus malabaricus</i>								✓	✓
106	Common Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquatus</i>						✓			
107	Indian Robin	<i>Saxicoloides fulicata</i>			✓			✓			
108	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>		✓	✓						
109	Pied Bushchat	<i>Saxicola caprata</i>		✓	✓						
110	White-browed Fantail	<i>Rhipidura aureola</i>					✓				
111	Black-naped Monarch	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>									✓
112	Yellow-eyed Babbler	<i>Chrysomma sinense</i>									✓
113	Jungle Babbler	<i>Turdoides striatus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
114	Purple Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i>		✓		✓		✓			
115	Oriental White-eye	<i>Zosterops palpebrosus</i>									✓
116	Eurasian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>									✓
117	Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
118	Brown Shrike	<i>Lanius cristatus</i>									✓
119	Long-tailed Shrike	<i>Lanius schach</i>	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
120	Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
121	White-bellied Drongo	<i>Dicrurus caerulescens</i>									✓
122	Hair-crested Drongo	<i>Dicrurus hottentottus</i>							✓		
123	Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
124	Ashy Woodswallow	<i>Artamus fuscus</i>									
125	Rufous Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
126	House Crow	<i>Corvus splendens</i>	✓					✓			
127	Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
128	Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
129	Asian Pied Starling	<i>Gracupica contra</i>						✓			
130	Brahminy Starling	<i>Temenuchus pagodarum</i>					✓	✓			
131	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	✓					✓			
132	Chestnut-shouldered Petronia	<i>Petronia xanthocollis</i>		✓				✓			
133	Red Avadavat	<i>Amandava amandava</i>			✓						
134	White-throated Munia/Indian Silverbill	<i>Euodice malabarica</i>			✓						

## Mammals

1	Royal Bengal Tiger	<i>Panthera tigris tigris</i>		4C	1F+1F	1F			1F	1M	
2	Leopard	<i>Panthera pardus</i>					✓				
3	Jungle Cat	<i>Felis chaus kelaarita or kutas</i>					✓		✓		
4	Rhesus Macaque	<i>Macaca mulatta</i>				✓	✓	✓			
5	Common Langur	<i>Presbytis entellus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6	Common Mongoose	<i>Herpestes edwardsi</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	Three-striped Palm Squirrel	<i>Funambulus pennarum</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓



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			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
12	Indian Giant Flying Squirrel	<i>Petaurista philippensis</i>						✓		✓	✓
13	Gaur (Indian Bison)	<i>Bos guarus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
14	Sambar	<i>Cervus unicolor</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
15	Barasingha (Swamp Deer)	<i>Cervus duvauceli branderi</i>							✓	✓	✓
16	Chital (Spotted Deer)	<i>Cervus axis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
17	Indian Muntjac (Barking Deer)	<i>Muntiacus muntjak</i>	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓
18	Nilgai (Blue Bull)	<i>Boselaphus tragocamelus</i>					✓				
19	Indian Wild Boar	<i>Sus scrofa</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

## Other fauna

1	Marsh Mugger Crocodile	<i>Crocodylus palustris</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓					
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