

India - Tiger Direct!

Naturetrek Tour Report

13th – 23rd February 2026



Tigers

Tour report by Yusuf Rizvi



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Tour participants: Yusuf Rizvi (leader) and Jason T. Das (co-leader) with 14 Naturetrek clients

Summary

The tour was a significant success, despite the weather being dicey, with rain off and on. We managed to see eighteen Tigers, one Leopard, Dholes, and 151 different species of birds.

Pre-tour extension

Day 1

Friday 13th February

The last guest arrived at 2.45am at Nagpur airport. After breakfast, we departed for Tadoba at 10.30am. We arrived at Svasara Lodge at 12.30pm. Post lunch, we went for our first safari and saw some interesting birds and mammals, but had no luck with Tigers. In the evening, we met to complete the checklist, followed by dinner.

Day 2

Saturday 14th February

During the morning safari, we saw two sub-adult Tigers around the Jamuni meadows. Later, guests in the second jeep saw an adult Female Tiger. Apart from good sightings of the big cats, we also saw Gaur, Sambar, and Chital. The afternoon safari was equally interesting, as we saw three sub-adult female Tigers around the Telia zone.

Day 3

Sunday 15th February

In the morning, we got lucky with two sub-adult male Tigers in the Jamuni area, and saw a Ruddy Mongoose crossing the road. Later in the evening, we saw two sub-adult female Tigers, in the Telia zone. In the evening, we met again to do the checklist and had dinner.

Day 4

Monday 16th February

In the morning, we went to the Kolara buffer zone and our guests in one jeep saw the female Tiger 'Junabhai' near a waterhole. In the evening, we visited Alizanza and saw some interesting birds, including Grey Heron and Greenshank.

Meanwhile, main tour guests departed London.

Main tour

Day 1

Tuesday 17th February

The main tour guests arrived at 2.30am at Nagpur airport and checked in to the Radisson Hotel to rest. They proceeded to Pench after breakfast, at 10.30am. The other five, who were doing the pre-extension with Yusuf, joined up at MHKS (where we stopped to use the restrooms), and we arrived at Tuli Resort at 12.30pm. Post lunch we had our first safari together. The highlight of the afternoon safari were a sighting of a courting pair of Tigers,

and a Leopard. Good birds like Olive-backed Pipit, White-rumped Munias, two Black-hooded Orioles, Little Grebe and Grey-headed Fish Eagle were also sighted. We met for the checklist and dinner at 7.45pm.

Day 2

Wednesday 18th February

During the morning safari, we saw three different Tigers and a Leopard. As it was a Wednesday, we did our afternoon safari in Pench, at Kursapar. One jeep saw a Leopard with a kill, and for the other jeeps, there were many other mammals and birds to see.

Day 3

Thursday 19th February

Today's morning safari turned out to be another interesting one. One jeep had two sightings of Tigers. One was a male, and the other was a female with two cubs, almost three months old. Another jeep saw three Leopards, and the third and fourth jeeps saw one too. Every jeep saw two Dholes as well.



Tigers

We exited the park earlier than usual at 11.00am, and had an early lunch at 12.30pm. Post lunch, we checked out, and made a visit to a local tribal village, Khamba. After the village visit, the group set off for Kanha, arriving at 6.00pm. We completed the checklist at 7.30pm.

Day 4

Friday 20th February

Neither morning nor afternoon safaris today produced any cat sightings. However, the sightings of Blackbucks and Barasinghas were interesting, as they were the first for this tour.

Day 5

Saturday 21st February

Today's morning drive turned out to be another catless safari. However, the afternoon safari was brilliant, with a sighting of a female Tiger with two cubs for two of our jeeps.

Day 6

Sunday 22nd February

On the morning drive today, three jeeps saw a Tiger with two cubs, and one jeep saw a male Tiger. On the afternoon drive, two jeeps saw two male Tigers, and two jeeps saw 'only' one Tiger!

Day 7

Monday 23rd February

In the morning, we went for a bird walk inside the property. There was good bird activity today. The highlights of the walk were a sighting of a Hair-crested Drongo, and the sound of Tigers, possibly a courting pair. It was exciting! Some guests checked out at 9.30am and proceeded to Satpura for a post-tour extension, and the rest proceeded to Nagpur at 11.30am, with packed lunches. After two breaks on the way, they checked in to the Radisson Hotel at Nagpur. The group had their dinner, checked out at 12.45am, and proceeded to the airport, leaving India with a lot of fantastic memories to cherish.

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Species lists

Birds

E=Endemic, N=Near-endemic, I=Introduced		February 2026										
Common name	Scientific name	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Lesser Whistling Duck	<i>Dendrocygna javanica</i>	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Cotton Pygmy Goose	<i>Nettapus coromandelianus</i>						✓		✓	✓	✓	
Ruddy Shelduck	<i>Tadorna ferruginea</i>					✓	✓	✓				
Red-crested Pochard	<i>Netta rufina</i>						✓					
Ferruginous Duck	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>						✓					
Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>						✓		✓			
Indian Spot-billed Duck	<i>Anas poecilorhyncha</i>						✓					
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>						✓		✓	✓	✓	
Green-winged Tea	<i>Anas crecca</i>						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Indian Peafowl	<i>Pavo cristatus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Red Spurfowl - E	<i>Galloperdix spadicea</i>	✓		✓	✓					✓	✓	
Red Junglefowl	<i>Gallus gallus</i>						✓		✓	✓	✓	
Grey Junglefowl - E	<i>Gallus sonneratii</i>		✓	✓	✓							
Jungle Bush Quail - N	<i>Perdica asiatica</i>				✓							
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>							✓		✓		
Greater Coucal	<i>Centropus sinensis</i>			✓		✓				✓	✓	✓
Sirkeer Malkoha	<i>Taccocua leschenaultii</i>			✓				✓				
Common Hawk-Cuckoo	<i>Hierococcyx varius</i>			✓		✓		✓		✓		
Indian Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus micropterus</i>							✓				
Spotted Dove	<i>Spilopelia chinensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Laughing Dove	<i>Spilopelia senegalensis</i>					✓						
Oriental Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia orientalis</i>								✓	✓		
Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓					
Orange-breasted Green Pigeon	<i>Treron bicinctus</i>			✓								
Yellow-footed Green Pigeon	<i>Treron phoenicopterus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
White-breasted Waterhen	<i>Amauornis phoenicurus</i>			✓			✓					
Indian Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus indicus</i>			✓			✓					
Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>				✓		✓					
Yellow-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus malabaricus</i>			✓					✓	✓		
Red-wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Bronze-winged Jacana	<i>Metopidius indicus</i>	✓		✓								
Pin-tailed Snipe	<i>Gallinago stenura</i>											✓
Common Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>											✓
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>							✓				
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>						✓	✓		✓		
Marsh Sandpiper	<i>Tringa stagnatilis</i>									✓	✓	
Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>									✓		
Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>				✓				✓	✓	✓	
River Tern	<i>Sterna aurantia</i>			✓				✓				
Asian Openbill	<i>Anastomus oscitans</i>	✓										✓
Lesser Adjutant	<i>Leptoptilos javanicus</i>	✓										
Painted Stork	<i>Mycteria leucocephala</i>				✓							
Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>			✓						✓	✓	
Asian Woolly-necked Stork	<i>Ciconia episcopus</i>				✓							
Oriental Darter	<i>Anhinga melanogaster</i>	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓	

E=Endemic, N=Near-endemic, I=Introduced		February 2026										
Common name	Scientific name	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Little Cormorant	<i>Microcarbo niger</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>			✓								
Indian Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax fuscicollis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				
Red-naped Ibis	<i>Pseudibis papillosa</i>	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	
Black-headed Ibis	<i>Threskiornis melanocephalus</i>	✓	✓	✓								
Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	
Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>			✓								
Little Heron	<i>Butorides atricapilla</i>	✓		✓								
Indian Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Medium Egret	<i>Ardea intermedia</i>			✓	✓				✓	✓		
Eastern Cattle Egret	<i>Ardea coromanda</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>				✓							
Savanna Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus affinis</i>			✓								
Crested Treeswift	<i>Hemiprocne coronata</i>		✓	✓								✓
Spotted Owlet	<i>Athene brama</i>						✓					
Jungle Owlet	<i>Glaucidium radiatum</i>	✓	✓	✓			✓					
Indian Scops Owl	<i>Otus bakkamoena</i>						✓	✓		✓	✓	
Brown Fish Owl	<i>Ketupa zeylonensis</i>				✓				✓	✓	✓	
Mottled Wood Owl - E	<i>Strix ocellata</i>					✓		✓				
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>						✓					
Black-winged Kite	<i>Elanus caeruleus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓		
Crested Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓					
Red-headed Vulture	<i>Sarcogyps calvus</i>				✓					✓	✓	
Cinereous Vulture	<i>Aegypius monachus</i>								✓			
White-rumped Vulture	<i>Gyps bengalensis</i>								✓	✓	✓	
Indian Vulture - N	<i>Gyps indicus</i>						✓					
Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>										✓	
Crested Serpent Eagle	<i>Spilornis cheela</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Changeable Hawk-Eagle	<i>Nisaetus cirrhatus</i>						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Shikra	<i>Tachyspiza badia</i>			✓	✓			✓				
Grey-headed Fish Eagle	<i>Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus</i>	✓		✓		✓	✓					
White-eyed Buzzard	<i>Butastur teesa</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓	
Common Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>					✓	✓			✓	✓	
Indian Grey Hornbill	<i>Ocyrceros birostris</i>		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Indian Roller	<i>Coracias benghalensis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Asian Green Bee-eater	<i>Merops orientalis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	✓		✓	✓		✓					
Pied Kingfisher	<i>Ceryle rudis</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓					
Stork-billed Kingfisher	<i>Pelargopsis capensis</i>					✓				✓		
White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrnensis</i>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Coppersmith Barbet	<i>Psilopogon haemacephalus</i>					✓			✓			✓
Brown-headed Barbet	<i>Psilopogon zeylanicus</i>			✓				✓	✓			✓
Rufous Woodpecker	<i>Micropternus brachyurus</i>						✓					
Black-rumped Flameback	<i>Dinopium benghalense</i>	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
White-naped Woodpecker	<i>Chrysocolaptes festivus</i>								✓	✓		
Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker	<i>Yungipicus nanus</i>	✓										
Yellow-crowned Woodpecker	<i>Leiopicus mahrattensis</i>		✓				✓			✓		✓

E=Endemic, N=Near-endemic, I=Introduced		February 2026										
Common name	Scientific name	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Alexandrine Parakeet	<i>Psittacula eupatria</i>	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Rose-ringed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Plum-headed Parakeet	<i>Psittacula cyanocephala</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		
Small Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus cinnamomeus</i>		✓			✓						
Scarlet Minivet	<i>Pericrocotus flammeus</i>								✓	✓	✓	
Common Iora	<i>Aegithina tiphia</i>		✓									
Common Woodshrike	<i>Tephrodornis pondicerianus</i>		✓									
Black-hooded Oriole	<i>Oriolus xanthornus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
White-spotted Fantail - E	<i>Rhipidura albogularis</i>		✓									
White-browed Fantail	<i>Rhipidura aureola</i>			✓	✓	✓						
Greater Racket-tailed Drongo	<i>Dicrurus paradiseus</i>	✓					✓			✓	✓	
Hair-crested Drongo	<i>Dicrurus hottentottus</i>											✓
White-bellied Drongo	<i>Dicrurus caeruleus</i>		✓	✓			✓			✓		✓
Ashy Drongo	<i>Dicrurus leucophaeus</i>											✓
Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Black Drongo	<i>Dicrurus macrocercus</i>				✓							
Black-naped Monarch	<i>Hypothymis azurea</i>				✓		✓			✓		
Indian Paradise Flycatcher	<i>Terpsiphone paradisi</i>				✓			✓				
Bay-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius vittatus</i>		✓	✓								
Long-tailed Shrike	<i>Lanius schach</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓				
Rufous Treepie	<i>Dendrocitta vagabunda</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Large-billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cinereous Tit	<i>Parus cinereus</i>											✓
Ashy-crowned Sparrow-Lark	<i>Eremopterix griseus</i>						✓	✓				
Common Tailorbird	<i>Orthotomus sutorius</i>					✓	✓					
Jungle Prinia	<i>Prinia sylvatica</i>									✓	✓	
Plain Prinia	<i>Prinia inornata</i>			✓					✓			
Zitting Cisticola	<i>Cisticola juncidis</i>			✓				✓				
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>			✓					✓	✓	✓	
Eastern Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>						✓	✓		✓	✓	
Greenish Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochiloides</i>					✓			✓	✓		
Red-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus cafer</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Brown-cheeked Fulvetta	<i>Alcippe poioicephala</i>								✓	✓		
Jungle Babbler	<i>Argya striata</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rosy Starling	<i>Pastor roseus</i>					✓						
Common Myna	<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Orange-headed Thrush	<i>Geokichla citrina</i>						✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Tickell's Thrush	<i>Turdus unicolor</i>			✓								
Indian Robin	<i>Copsychus fulvicatus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Oriental Magpie-Robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
White-rumped Shama	<i>Copsychus malabaricus</i>								✓	✓	✓	
Verditer Flycatcher	<i>Eumyias thalassinus</i>									✓		
Tickell's Blue Flycatcher	<i>Cyornis tickelliae</i>				✓							
Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula parva</i>							✓		✓		
Taiga Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula albicilla</i>							✓				
Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>		✓					✓				
Pied Bush Chat	<i>Saxicola caprata</i>					✓						
Siberian Stonechat	<i>Saxicola maurus</i>								✓	✓	✓	
Purple Sunbird	<i>Cinnyris asiaticus</i>	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓			✓

E=Endemic, N=Near-endemic, I=Introduced		February 2026										
Common name	Scientific name	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Jerdon's Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis jerdoni</i>											✓
Indian Silverbill	<i>Euodice malabarica</i>								✓			
Scaly-breasted Munia	<i>Lonchura punctulata</i>					✓						
White-rumped Munia	<i>Lonchura striata</i>				✓							
Red Avadavat	<i>Amandava amandava</i>								✓			
Yellow-throated Sparrow	<i>Gymnoris xanthocollis</i>		✓			✓	✓					
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Paddyfield Pipit	<i>Anthus rufulus</i>			✓	✓		✓	✓				
Olive-backed Pipit	<i>Anthus hodgsoni</i>				✓							

Mammals

E=Endemic		February 2026										
Common name	Scientific name	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Rhesus Macaque	<i>Macaca mulatta</i>					✓	✓	✓				
Bengal Sacred Langur - E	<i>Semnopithecus entellus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Indian Hare	<i>Lepus nigricollis</i>				✓			✓				
Indian Palm Squirrel	<i>Funambulus palmarum</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓			
Indian Flying Fox	<i>Pteropus medius</i>					✓	✓	✓				
Golden Jackal	<i>Canis aureus</i>					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Dhole	<i>Cuon alpinus</i>							✓			✓	
Leopard	<i>Panthera pardus</i>					✓	✓	✓				
Tiger	<i>Panthera tigris</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Indian Gray Mongoose	<i>Urva edwardsii</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓							
Ruddy Mongoose	<i>Urva smithii</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	
Blackbuck	<i>Antilope cervicapra</i>								✓			
Nilgai	<i>Boselaphus tragocamelus</i>				✓		✓					
Gaur	<i>Bos gaurus</i>	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Chital	<i>Axis axis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Barasingha	<i>Rucervus duvaucelii</i>								✓	✓	✓	
Sambar	<i>Rusa unicolor</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Northern Red Muntjac	<i>Muntiacus vaginalis</i>			✓					✓	✓	✓	
Eurasian Wild Pig	<i>Sus scrofa</i>	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Reptiles

		February 2026										
Common name	Scientific name	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Marsh Crocodile	<i>Crocodylus palustris</i>	✓	✓	✓								
Indian Flapshell Turtle	<i>Lissemys punctata</i>					✓	✓			✓		
House Gecko	<i>Hemidactylus frenatus</i>			✓								
Indian Desert Monitor	<i>Varanus griseus koniecznyi</i>							✓				
Peninsular Rock Agama	<i>Psammophilus dorsalis</i>				✓							
Oriental Garden Lizard	<i>Calotes versicolor</i>				✓							
Keeled Indian Mabuya	<i>Eutropis carinata</i>				✓							
Checkered Keelback	<i>Xenochrophis piscator</i>					✓						