

# Just Tigers!

Naturetrek Tour Report

23 March - 2 April 2013

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Report compiled by Pradeep Singh



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Participants: Greg Spencer  
Angela Spencer  
Steve Cunliffe \*  
Mike O'Brien \*  
Janet O'Brien \*  
Chris Wilkshire \*\*  
Jane Wilkshire \*\*

\* Chambal and Bharatpur extension

\*\* Bharatpur and Ranthambore extension

## Day 0

Friday 22nd March

Travel from the UK to Delhi

## Day 1

Saturday 23rd March

Met with the group at the airport and took them to the Westin Hotel Gurgaon. They checked in and we met again to go to the Sultanpur Bird Sanctuary. We did some good birding in the sanctuary and came back around 6.30pm and then after letting them know about the programme for tomorrow morning I left the guests to relax at the hotel for the rest of the evening.

## Day 2

Sunday 24th March

We went to do some sightseeing of Delhi at 8.15am – we saw Qutub Minar, Humayoon's tomb and drive around India gate and parliament buildings and then went to have lunch in Pindi restaurant before heading to the train station to catch the overnight train to Jabalpur. On the way we saw Sarus Crane, Crested Lark, Indian Silverbill and other good species of birds from the train. We had dinner around 7pm and then after some chatting went to sleep.

## Day 3

Monday 25th March

We reached Jabalpur at 8am as the train was a little late and then drove to the hotel for a wash and change and to have breakfast. After breakfast around 9.30am we left in two vehicles to Kanha National Park. We reached there in time for lunch and started our afternoon game drive at 3 pm. We all went to the park and had a good drive with a number of good sightings but no Tigers today. We got back from the park and met for the species checklist at 7.30pm, followed by dinner and then lights off.

## Day 4

Tuesday 26th March

We got up at 4.30am and met for tea and coffee. We had a good drive with some alarm calls in the park and good birds but didn't see a Tiger again. We came back from park and met for lunch at 1.30pm and then left for park at 3pm. We had a good drive again and some had a Tiger sighting from a distance as he was sitting in a stream bed over a rock. We met for dinner and checklist at 7.30pm and then lights off.

## Day 5

## Wednesday 27th March

We got up at 5.15am and met for tea and coffee and then left for a nature walk in the buffer zone at 6.15am. We saw some very nice birds on the walk and then got back to the hotel and had breakfast and then met to play Holi with other guests...we then went to shower and had lunch at 1.30pm and then met again for a bird walk at 4.30pm in the evening. Later we met for the checklist and dinner again before retiring to bed.

## Day 6

## Thursday 28th March

We got up at same time like previous days and met for tea and coffee and then left for the park with a hope that we'll see a Tiger today. We drove around in the park and saw Brown Fish Owl, Black Stork and some other good birds. On way back from the park we crossed one of the gates (Kisli) and we were about to reach the Khatia gate when about 400 metres from the main gate we saw a female Tiger sitting on a rock and had some nice views of her! We met for lunch with very happy faces and then started again for the park drive and had a good drive hearing a Tiger roar and alarm calls but no sightings.

## Day 7

## Friday 29th March

This morning we saw some nice eagles and vultures in the park and had some good sightings of Blackbuck in the breeding fenced area. Had breakfast in the camp and then got the news that at one of the places in the Kanha zone there was a sighting of a Tiger with cubs and then we rushed to the place and waited there for a long time but no sign of Tigers there. Got back from park and then start again for the park drive in the afternoon and saw a Jackal with the bone of Spotted Deer in his mouth – it crossed the road in front of our jeeps. We finished the day again with the checklist and dinner and then bed.

## Day 8

## Saturday 30th March

We got up and went to the park and as we reached the gate we heard alarm calls of Sambar Deer and checked the area where we heard the alarm calls but didn't get sightings and kept driving around and saw nice new birds and got back from park. We started the afternoon drive at the other zone and saw a Common Rat Snake in the meadows and Lesser Adjutant Stork and then we heard the roar of a Tiger and went to the place to check around... we heard a call from the other side of the stream bed from the other jeep and we rushed to the place and then we saw the other jeep – they were telling us that a Tiger was moving towards our end of the stream bed and as we rushed there we saw a large male Tiger coming towards us...we made a gap so that the Tiger could cross the road between our vehicles, and then he went inside the forest and started roaring loudly and the whole jungle was surrounded by his roar! After this we moved from this place and reached another junction and saw jeeps waiting for another male Tiger in the bushes!

We waited there for only few minutes and then I moved our jeeps to just the right place to see this male Tiger called Munna come out of the bushes and cross the road in front of our jeeps. He then started walking on road between our jeeps, and after some time we had to leave him as we were running short of time to get out of the park. We met back at the hotel to do the checklist and have dinner and then lights off.

## Day 9

## Sunday 31st March

We got up at same time and went into the park and as we went in and reached Kanha meadows and found fresh footprints of a female Tiger and we followed the pugmarks and then soon after we saw a Leopard walking on road before going inside the forest and we saw him again hiding in the bushes. Then after we went to check another place as we went into that road we saw a female Tiger sitting on the road and then she got up and started walking towards us and then went inside the bushes and she started calling her cubs - we could hear the sound of the dead leaves crunching but didn't see the cubs even though we waited there for a long time. We had breakfast and came back to the hotel.

As usual after lunch and we met again for the park drive at 3pm and tried to check the places where we saw the Tiger yesterday and heard a roar and alarm calls again and then we moved to another place and waited there some time and it was almost time to leave the park when one of the jeeps saw a male Tiger coming out of the stream bed and walk all the way from the stream bed to the meadow...he was walking towards us slowly and then he sat down and we had a very good look at him and then we had to leave the park again as we were running short of time. We finished the day with the usual checklist and dinner and then off to bed.

## Day 10

## Monday 1st April

This was our last drive into the park – we saw Changeable Hawk-eagle, Honey Buzzard and other birds and then we heard alarm calls and then moved to a place and after trying for quite a long time I saw a female Tiger sitting behind a bush - it was quite difficult to see her but I showed everybody in the group and then we headed back from the park - on the way back we heard that there was a rock with a Leopard sitting on it but we went to the place and didn't see him as he was gone by then. We had breakfast and then we went in again to the park and saw one jeep at the rock, and when we got there the Leopard was there...only 3 of us could see him as he was hiding very well in the bushes - we saw him moving around and then he went up the hill. We met for early lunch at 12.30 pm and left from Kanha around 1.30pm and reached Jabalpur at 4.30pm We picked up our packed dinners from the hotel and then caught the overnight train at 0610pm. We did the checklist on the train and had dinner and after settling down, we all went to sleep.

## Day 11

## Tuesday 2nd April

We had breakfast around 7am and reached Agra around 9am. We went to the ITC Mughal Hotel for a freshen up and then started our sightseeing tour of Agra. We went to the Taj Mahal first and then went to have lunch in the restaurant and then saw the Agra Fort and after that we visited the baby Taj. After the sightseeing we all split up as this was the end of the main tour - three people began the extension to Chambal and two were going off to Bharatpur. I went to Delhi with the last people in the group and we reached Hotel Gurgaon Westin around 10 pm and said goodbye to them. All together it was a very nice group and everything went well with the number of good sightings of Tigers, birds and other animals.

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