

VOLUME 1/JUNE 2017

WILDLIFE DESTINATIONS, TOURS, RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION IN ASIA.

WILD CREATURES

DESTINATIONS

- India & the Tigers of Tadoba
- Thailand's Kaeng Krachan National Park

ANIMALS

- Mammals: Maya the Tiger
- Birds: The Black Kite
- Reptiles: Painted Bronzeback
- Amphibians: Brown Tree Frog
- Arthropods: The Lantern bug
- Fish & Marine: Hawksbill turtle

CONSERVATION

- Animals in wildlife tourism

PHOTOGRAPHY

- How & why to shoot at ISO 800+
- ISO assignment
- Wide Angle Macro image critique





MISSION

Inspire people to care about our planet and its wildlife

PROMOTING ECO-TOURISM

Assisting responsible, sustainable wildlife travel

DON'T FORGET TO SUBSCRIBE TO

WILD  **CREATURES**

It is free of charge.

You will get an e-mail notification for the next magazine, and occasional updates. We will not use your e-mail for any other purposes. Simply click [HERE](#) to never miss another issue.

Dear explorer,
Welcome to the pilot issue of *WildCreatures*.

One of the greatest joys in life is being filled with wonder at discovering something new, and nothing beats wildlife travel and exploration for these rewarding moments. We have made it our goal to connect you with nature, and to help find the destinations, organisations and people that can best help you make these wonderful discoveries and moments to cherish as you explore the natural world in Asia. This growing trend of Ecotourism is a good thing as it inspires people to care more about their planet, it conserves the environment, and improves the well being of local people and the wild creatures that live there.

Our aim is to publish an informative, educative, and entertaining guide showing the extraordinary beauty and vital importance of wildlife in Asia, along with practical

and specific details on how to get there, and who best to trust with your adventure.

Looking at nature and wild creatures - even in our own backyard - has the power to enthrall and transform us all. Adventure is all around us. Add a bit of knowledge, stir in a passion for discovery, and then, oh so naturally a camera pops up in our hands, and we are off to find the wonder of wildcreatures.

Robert Ferguson.
Publisher,
Wildcreatures.



📷 All the images Exif (camera setting) data can be found on Flickr. Images are in page order.

📘 Please “like” us on Facebook. Daily image uploads for your viewing pleasure. Ask questions/post great photos/recommend tours and tell us about your adventures.

To subscribe - its free - simply send us an email to info@wildcreatures.org with “subscribe” in the subject line. We will send you a link when the next issue is ready to view and download. Please also view and bookmark our website www.wildcreatures.org for more information.



EXPLORE



EXPERIENCE



DISCOVER



CAPTURE

Travel Asia with **ORYX**

For over 7 years ORYX has created and led the world's finest photographic expeditions worldwide. Our recipe is simple:

- ▶ Small group departures.
- ▶ Visit the world's finest photographic locations at the best time of year.
- ▶ It's all about our clients, their needs, their expectations.
- ▶ 25 countries on all 7 continents.
- ▶ Pro Photo Tour Leaders and partners with expert guiding skills, hands-on tutoring and in-depth knowledge of our subjects.
- ▶ Office team with combined experience of over 68 years in the travel industry and work around the clock to ensure every tour runs smoothly.

For more information, please email info@oryxphotography.com or visit our website at www.oryxphotography.com



www.oryxphotography.com



WILD CREATURES

recommends that you use [ecosia.org](https://www.ecosia.org) as your search engine

<https://www.ecosia.org>

Plant trees while you search the web

Ecosia is the search engine that plants trees with its ad revenue. Get the free browser extension and use Ecosia every time you search.



ADD TO CHROME



Photo: Himanshu Badge

“This beautiful, vast, diverse country is made for open-hearted explorers. With some preparation and a positive attitude, India’s wilds will reveal infinite magical moments to nature lovers. Enjoy your trip!”

Julian Matthews,
Founder TOFT tigers

India is a paradise for wildlife adventurers and photographers.

As we roll pre-dawn into Tadoba National park, the grasslands are stunning, with an early morning sunrise across a misty vista dotted with many white spotted deer, whilst massive Golden orb spiders clutch shimmering insects in webs the size of fishing nets, that billow in the breeze as you drive past. Nature always offers wonderful scenes of beauty and drama for those that look, even when the big animals are elusive.

India travel marketing is keen to highlight the “Big 8” safari advantage; On your travels you can see the Asian elephant, the Asiatic lion, the Indian leopard, the Asian one-horned rhino, the Asian water buffalo, the Guar or Indian bison, the Sloth bear and of course, the one that most people are focused on seeing, the magnificent Bengal tiger.



Driving early afternoon we came across this small baby leopard out hunting on its own, whilst above, the ever watchful Langur monkeys chatter. Below, the striking Golden orb spider. Photos and information taken during a trip 3rd-14th November, 2016 across Bandhavgarh, Kanha and Tadoba parks. Thank you to our Ground agents, Nature Safari India



TAKE YOUR BODY WHERE YOUR MIND HAS BEEN LATELY.
TAKE YOURSELF TO ODISHA.

Odisha Tourism



Scenic • Serene • Sublime
The Soul of Incredible India



*Similipal
A UNESCO National Park awaits
for your wild amazement.*

If you're looking for an extraordinary holiday destination, look closely at Odisha. Dotted with some of the world's finest beaches and waterfronts at Puri, Chandipur, Gopalpur, Talasari and Astarang, Odisha is the sun, sand and surf paradise like none other. But it isn't only the beaches that will bring you to its shores. Odisha's resplendent past, evident at Khandagiri, Udayagiri, Ratnagiri and Konark; pristine wildlife beauty at Bhitarkanika, Similipal and Chilika; and unflinching devotion at Jagannath, Lingaraja, Ananta Vasudeva and Mukteswara temples will leave you spellbound for years. So make it to Odisha this year. It promises to be a one-in-a-million holiday.

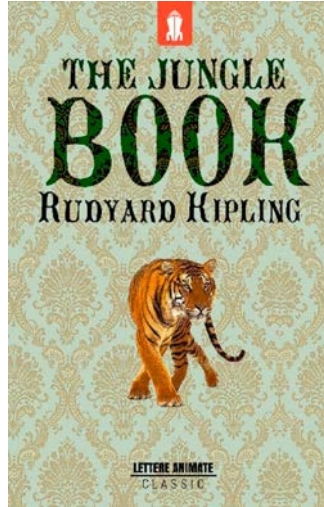
Website: odishatourism.gov.in/www.visitodisha.org • E-mail: oritour@gmail.com
Toll Free: 1800 208 1414 • OTDC Central Reservation Counter (10 am-6pm): Tel.: +91674 2430764

The real life Jungle Book

India is one of the few places in the world where you are likely to see tigers in the wild, and Tadoba is one of the best places to see them. These secretive big cats have got used to tourists in vehicles that drive around designated areas in tiger reserves, which are becoming increasingly popular. But seeing one of these elusive big cats is not a given. There is no guarantee that you will see a tiger on any drive, or any day, so to improve your chances you should allow three to four days minimum, and be prepared for hours of driving in boneshaking, exposed, dusty vehicles, and long hours of motionless waiting. Tigers are wild predators, and it is an extraordinary privilege to see these glorious and extremely rare big cats in the wild. When you do at last see a tiger, the impact can be highly emotional, as D. McCrohan of the Lonely Planet writes: “Two years ago I saw a tiger in the wild for the first time...It still makes the hairs on the back of my neck stand on end just thinking about it”

Kipling's jungle of the late 1800's, whether first read as short stories, as wonderful illustrated books, or found in Disney's movies, is familiar to us all. But in India the animal everyone wants to see is the one Kipling called “the big One”, the fearsome tiger, Shere Khan.

It is interesting to note that although Kipling lived in India in his twenties, he never visited the central region where his stories are set; rather he borrowed heavily from other accounts of Satpura.



An encounter with a tiger is always a magical experience. From left: tigers wrestling; two cubs remain wary in the long grasses, while their mother sits in front of our jeep, in the middle of the road.



The tiger, and how best to “catch” one.

Go at the right time of year. Plan and book well in advance. Find a reputable ground agent and experienced tour operator to ensure you get the best possible experience out of what will be, for most people, a long awaited dream come true. To help your research see the TOFT tips on the next page, and download their free guide.

Tracking and finding a tiger means getting the help of someone properly attuned to the rhythms of the jungle, and a great joy of any wildlife holiday is the presence of an expert guide. These naturalists/biologists/ornithologists can share a wealth of secrets, not only the behaviour and habits of animals, but for example identifying the different grasses or the lingering menthol scent of the herb we brushed by, and that now drifts around us as we wait patiently in our jeep...“its hoary basil” whispers our guide. The best guides bring you into their world, making you the hunter as they enlist you in tracking your prey, explaining how to use pug marks, spoor, and scat, to plot where the animals have been and the best places with the best chances of a sighting. We are taught to listen for the different alarm calls; the bark of a Sambar deer, the chatter of the monkeys, or squawking jungle fowl to decide where we pull over, and wait, patiently for our prey to appear, cameras at the ready. After only a few days we felt so much more in tune, and really able to read much more of the wild than before. What a wonderful feeling, to become our ancestors, imbedded in the natural world.



We were lucky enough to be guided in Tadoba by Himanshu Badge, self confessed “part naturalist, part conservationist, wildlife tracker, historian and social worker, and a mentor to people interested in wildlife.” He explains his passion: ‘Since I was a boy, I have always loved nature. Not just animals, but trees and birds... the aura of the forest,’ says Himanshu. ‘For a short while I worked for a pharmaceutical company, but in the end I decided I must obey my heart – and my heart is always in the jungle, and i love the diversity of my job.’

Picture of tiger with jeeps above: Himanshu. If photography is important to you, be sure to specify this to your tour agent/guide. See his article on Maya the tiger, and her first hunt on page 29.



“The Tiger is a large hearted gentleman with Boundless courage and that when he is exterminated - as exterminated he will be unless public opinion rallies to his support - India will be poorer having lost the finest of her fauna”. Jim Corbett



#opentheworld



kathmandu.com.au


Kathmandu®

Choosing any one of the operators, agents or accommodation providers highlighted in this guide means real peace of mind. Each operation has set out to not only ensure you have a life enhancing and memorable journey, but every business has made a commitment to ensure your visit supports both the wildlife you see and the rural communities bordering these parks through our internationally recognised PUG eco-rating certificate. Click here for your FREE download. <http://toftigers.org/GWTGdownload/>

Julian Matthews, founder of TOFTigers, a nature tourism action charity, has spent 15 years travelling through the forests of India himself, and gives you his top tips.

DO YOUR RESEARCH Every great holiday starts with a grand idea. Spend time finding out what's available, from where, and at what time of year. Then find travel companies or experts that can help you achieve it. Use a TOFTigers tour operator or agent or agent to help you, as they have committed to best standards in their operations.. Don't just accept the cheapest – it seldom delivers the best wilderness experiences. Make sure you use responsible lodges: Insist on using accommodation providers who have who have the TOFTigers PUG eco-rating certification, as their operations have met our minimum criteria for eco-friendliness and sustainability.

CHOOSE YOUR TIMING The astounding growth of nature tourism over the last decade now means that nearby cities empty into the countryside during the numerous holidays and festivals including Diwali (November), Christmas, Holi (around March) and Easter. Try and avoid these times in the parks, as it gets crowded. Tiger watching is good from November to April for most parks. May gets too hot for most people, and January and February can be very cold in the mornings remember.

PACK THE RIGHT GEAR The old saying that there's no such thing as bad weather, just inappropriate clothing, is very apt. Apart from cameras, remember a hat, suncream, binoculars, woolly hat and warm fleece for winters; its cold in the back of an open jeep!



BOOK IN ADVANCE With parks tightly restricting the number of visitors, you need to book early. It's the only way to ensure you can get vehicle permits and the lodges that you want.

HIRE A QUALITY GUIDE Great guides can turn an average nature holiday into an extraordinary one. Many lodges now have in-house naturalists, or will provide recommendations. They're worth every penny, so don't compromise – ask for the best you can get.

THE WHOLE PACKAGE The best way to see the most wildlife is to give it plenty of time and be patient. Most tigers are nocturnal and it's only in secure habitats (often tourism zones), where tigers and other animals have no fear of humans and can be seen in the daytime. Tigers are elusive, and it's all too easy to miss the rest of India's wildlife on the chase if your driver assumes it's all you're interested in. So enjoy the richness of the park for what it is, for what its guardians have managed to preserve – and try not to be too disappointed if you don't see a tiger. Seeing one is an awesome privilege, and certainly not guaranteed.

- In Summary: Research your travel options thoroughly - Use a TOFTigers tour operator or agent - Ensure your lodge accommodation has been PUG certified; Look for the logo - Respect the wildlife and its habitat.

TADOBA-ANDHARI TIGER RESERVE (TATR).

Tadoba, the largest National Park in Maharashtra, is off the well-trodden tourist track, offers excellent accommodation, and is one of the few parks open all year. They have the highest density of Bengal tigers in all the country and they have tight controls over the numbers of jeeps allowed in per day, which improves your chances, and makes things less busy. The park is getting better known all the time for its sightings, with an estimated 100 tigers (including 27 cubs) across the park and its surrounding areas. Three tiger families were commonly sighted in Tadoba in 2016, and things look even better for 2017.

HOW IT WORKS

Tiger safaris generally take place in small open jeeps called “Gypsies” that prowl around the parks on dusty roads and paths, within their daily designated areas. 2-4 people per jeep is ideal. There are typically two “drives” a day, both around 3 hours the first at dawn, and the afternoon one around 2pm. A cantor/ open bus is much cheaper, but is generally full of noisy local tourists. As there are only a limited number of jeeps/tours allowed into the park on any day, it is strongly advised to book well (many months) in advance.

Tadoba has a beautiful tropical deciduous forest, with dense woodlands dominated by teak forest and bamboo that cover most of the park. It's a rugged landscape comprising cliffs, caves, marshes, perennial lakes and boulder strewn streambeds, all excellent for biodiversity. Not to be missed: The Tadoba range, with entry through the Khutwanda Gate covers the Tadoba Lake where you can see the Indian Marsh Crocodile and a vast number of migratory birds during the winter. The park has continued good sightings of leopards, sloth bears, wild dogs, gaur and tigers. Walking is also available in the buffer regions, which has good forest. Like all parks, it is closed one day a week. Nearest Airport: Nagpur (then 3 hours/140km to park by car). Train Station: Chandrapur (49km)

Getting there: Nearest Airport: Nagpur (then 3 hours/140km to park by car). Train Station: Chandrapur (49km)

The glorious Indian Roller



3 striped Indian Palm squirrel.



Discover “Wild” India with expert naturalists



- ☞ Customized Jungle Safaris -
with or without an expert naturalist by your side
- ☞ Visit Historical & Cultural Places like Khajurao, Agra, Jabalpur, Jaipur, Nainital, Kolkata, Ahmedabad - and explore National Parks such as...
- ☞ Bandhavgarh, Kanha, Ranthambore, Corbett, Kaziranga, Tadoba, Bandipur, Sunderbans, Sasan Gir



Contact:
Vihang Jungle Safaris
Yuwaraj Gurjar -
ygurjar@gmail.com
Makarand Joshi -
+91 9869304053
[http://www.facebook.com/g](http://www.facebook.com/groups/128091287228796/)
[roups/128091287228796/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/128091287228796/)
www.yuwarajgurjar.com



ADVERTISEMENT

WHEN TO GO July - October is Monsoon season and most parks are closed. (Tadoba is one of the few parks open all year round). November to January: Cold in the mornings and evenings, wonderful misty sunrises. You need gloves, scarves, hats. The lush vegetation can make sightings more difficult, but the parks are definitely prettier and less burned out than in the hot safari season. Just after the monsoon most species give birth, so there are a lot of babies and mothers to see then. February-March: Optimum balance between sighting opportunities and blisteringly hot weather. After March temperatures begin to soar until the monsoon. Many operators say go as late in the dry season as you can, depending on your tolerance to the heat. April-June: Water is scarce, so tigers and other wildlife sightings are at their best, as they come out of the forests to get water. But with temperatures in the mid 40's centigrade, you need to be well prepared. Do not take children at the hottest times of year, as this is tough even on the most acclimatised adult. Indian public holidays and festivals are times to avoid (eg January 26th for Republic Day and Diwali which falls October or November).

PRACTICAL TIPS. Along with field guides you may want to bring, there are also many apps that you can download on your smartphone or tablet, to help identifying wildlife and even bird song. See our book review for more information on page 36. Take plenty of small change. It is the custom to tip virtually everyone and it can get expensive. A fine red dust will cover you every day. This can be a real issue for sensitive equipment such as Digital SLR cameras and lenses, so make sure you bring a case or appropriate cover, along with cleaning materials. Torches, candles, headlamps and a universal sink plug is useful as hotels do not use them. Quick dry towels, loo rolls/tissues, plenty of mosquito repellent, and a good hat.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR GROUND AGENT/OPERATOR

Let them know your level of experience, and if you have done safaris (in India) before. Confirm if you have any special interests, special requirements, or any specific mammals, or birds you wish to see. Tell them if you will be celebrating any special occasions during your safari. What category of hotels/resorts would you prefer to stay? Whether Luxury, 5 star, or 3-4 star, or homestay (highly recommended). Will accommodation be near to the gates/buffer zones for the Safaris? Who will be your guide? (drivers and guides can be fixed by the agent, but the park guide/guard is on a roster basis). Is the jeep sharing, or for my group only? Which parks have cubs at the moment?

HEALTH Bring plenty of sun protection and water, but prepare for cold weather in winter. Malaria and dengue fever is a risk in India, so take precautions. Recommended vaccinations for general travel to India are Hepatitis A, Tetanus and Typhoid. Stick with bottled water, and avoid ice if you are not sure. Take a basic medical kit, including Imodium for stomach upsets. Rehydrate using the following ratio: 1 tsp salt/8 tsp sugar/1 litre of water.



The real life Jungle Book.

Tadoba like most of the other parks, is home to many other mammals, including Indian leopards. Leopards normally become strictly nocturnal whenever tigers - which are much more powerful - are present in the area. During our trip we saw more leopards than tigers, and always during the day. This is perhaps unique to this area of India.

left, clockwise: Indian Leopard; White spotted Deer; Languar Monkey family; Buffalo; Dhol (wild dog).



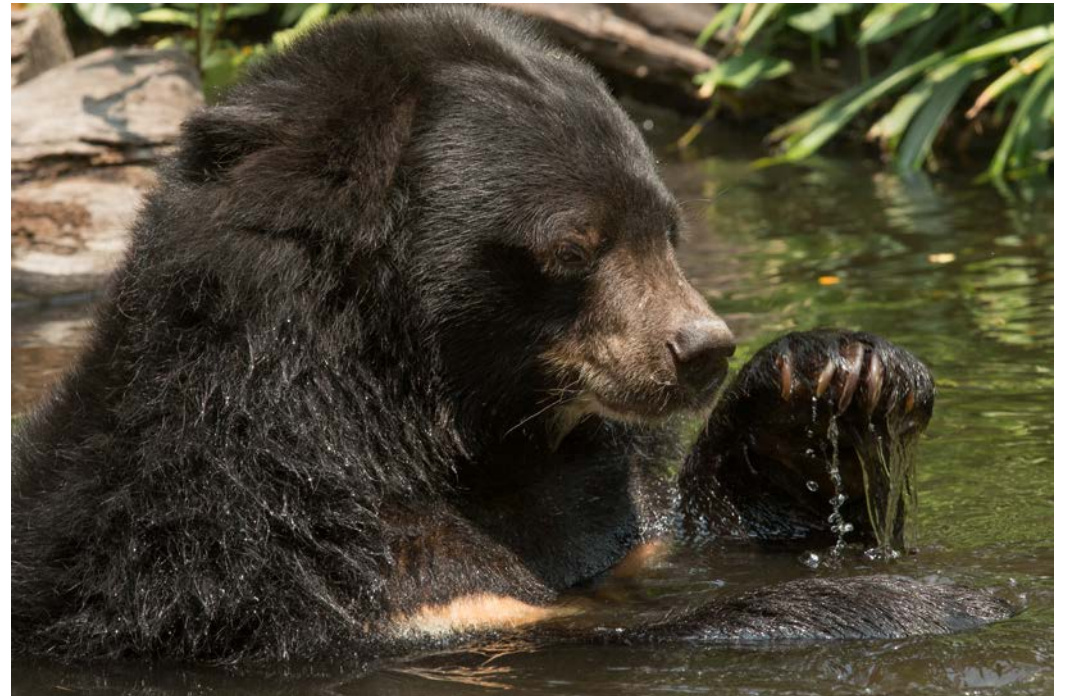
Experience the wilderness in India's Western Ghats



www.canopygoa.com

ADVERTISEMENT

The sloth bear is a wonderful shambling presence in the jungles of Tadoba reserve. Hairy, often dishevelled, playful, their dark features set against black fur make them difficult subjects to photograph. Described as a 'jungle bum' in the Disney film these bears feed mainly on termites, but nonetheless pose a real danger to villagers, and the unwary tourist, so it is best to keep your distance. These animals and the local villagers both collect the fleshy edible flowers of the mahua tree, and in the half-light of dawn, the locals may surprise the notoriously short-sighted and slightly deaf sloth bears, thus provoking an attack.



BIRDS

Tadoba, with its lake, is an ornithologist's paradise with a wide diversity of water birds, and raptors. 195 species of birds have been recorded. Often seen raptors are the Grey-headed fish eagle, the Crested serpent eagle, and the Changeable hawk-eagle. Other interesting species include the Orange-headed thrush, Indian pitta, Crested treeswift, Stone curlew, Crested honey buzzard, Paradise flycatcher, Bronze-winged jacana and Lesser goldenbacked woodpecker. The call of the Indian peacock is often heard. Here is a Lesser Adjutant Stork .





Birds of India: left, clockwise: Juvenile scops owls; Fish eagle with fish; flame backed woodpecker; Blackwinged Kite; Indian Roller; Parrots; Kingfisher.

INDIA

21

DO GO and see tigers if you are passionate about wildlife and conservation. They are highly endangered, so now is the time to go.

DO manage your expectations. Tigers, leopards, and bears are often elusive.

DO GO if you want to see other wildlife, and to enjoy the wilderness and atmosphere.

BONUS: Combine your trip with cultural and heritage destinations.

GET ORGANISED: You need to book well in advance. Using a good ground agent minimises unpleasant surprises.

DON'T GO: If you just want to see tigers...you may be disappointed. There are no guarantees.

DON'T GO: If you do not like dust, cold, very hot, long journeys, unfathomable bureaucracy, and are not patient.

“The most magnificent creature in the entire world, the tiger is.”

Jack Hanna





TROPICAL HERPING

WWW.TROPICALHERPING.COM

*Amphibians and reptiles are awesome...
we show it!*



*An opportunity to escape from the routine
and join us on an exciting adventure to
experience tropical wildlife at its best!*

THAILAND

Kaeng Krachan National Park, Thailand's largest park, is only 3 hours from Bangkok, and one of Asia's premier butterfly and birdwatching locations. The overall list of biodiversity is impressive, though due to the low visitor numbers the animals tend to be very shy.

Most of the forest here is in an excellent condition with both evergreen mixed with deciduous tree species. The mountainous terrain makes hiking a bit difficult at times, but the scenery and encounters make it worth the effort.

Hornbills are some of the most memorable birds in Thailand and Kaeng Krachan presents a great opportunity to see all seven species of these wonderful birds up close. Here a Great hornbill takes flight.



This park is not commonly visited by foreign tourists apart from the birding community, but the scenery and animal encounters make this a great 2-3 day trip out of Bangkok, and on most trails you are more likely to see endangered wildlife than to see other tourists. This park is very diverse, with elevations from 100-1,500m, comprising salt licks, caves and waterfalls. You will certainly see some primate species including the Dusky langurs, the Stump-tailed Macaques and maybe even a Gibbon family. The other 57 mammals, include frequently seen porcupines, civets, black giant squirrel, and martens, mixed with the more rare leopards, clouded leopards, bears, stump-tailed macaques, deers, elephants, wild dogs, golden jackal, and gaurs. It has an impressive 420 species of birds and 300 butterfly species. Thanks to TonTan



travel for insight and information about National Parks of Thailand.

PRACTICAL NOTES: Tour operators can organise jungle hiking and safari drives, and private tours can be tailor-made. See our directory listing. Kaeng Krachan does see quite a large number of local visitors, especially in the weekends, so try and avoid Saturday and Sundays. March-April is the best time for birds, with migration at its peak, and this continues until June/July when birds then take care of their hatchlings. The park closes for three months August to October each year. There are many resorts and excellent accommodation nearby to suit all budgets, but many are not eco-friendly, so do check on your online booking portal/or with your



Roller takes flight next to the park HQ

tour operator. If you want to stay the night inside the Park then only camping is available, but you can rent tents (book a floor mattress, and ask to sleep indoors if there is heavy rain). NB: In the dry season it is essential to book your accommodation well in advance. Opening hours vary, so do check before planning your trip. There are three main campsite locations on the main road in the park, and when trying to reach the final campsite traffic is scheduled one way between certain hours. From Bangkok it takes 3-4 hours, depending on traffic. Take a taxi, or hire a car (make sure you get a 4x4 if you want to get to the last campsite), or there is an hourly minivan services that operates from Old Southern Bus Station (Pin Klao),.





Queen Saovabha Memorial Institute has a snake farm (part of the Thai Red Cross Institute), located in the centre of Bangkok, where they cultivate venomous snakes and extract the venom. The facilities are excellent, with many, many snakes on display, including the twice daily educational “snake shows”. (Times vary, so check before you go). http://saovabha.com/en/snakefarm_service.asp



Bangkok Zoo. Small cages and enclosures compared to more modern zoos, and a bit run down. Very mixed reviews on trip advisor. We will have a full feature on the highly contentious issue of captive wildlife in a future issue.

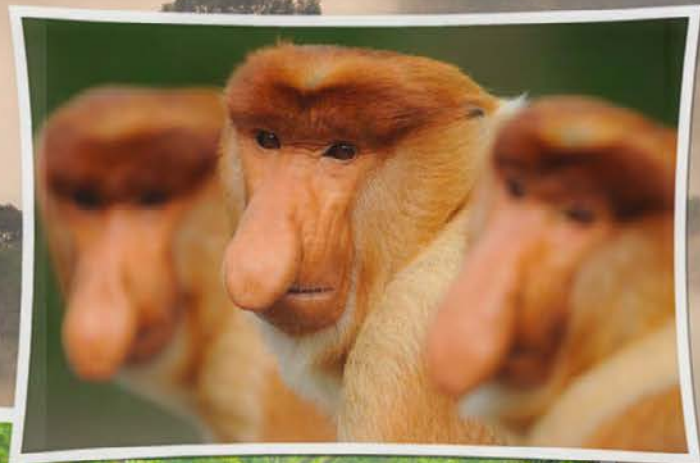


The Wildlife rescue center and elephant refuge. 1/2 and full day programmes, about 1/2 hour from Hua Hin/Cha Am, and not far from Kaeng Krachan. Well worth a visit if you are in the area as their tours do an excellent job of education and entertainment for all the family. <http://www.thaielephantrefuge.org/>



Wild About Sabah...

NORTH BORNEO SAFARI MALAYSIA



NORTH BORNEO SAFARI SDN. BHD

Co. No. 609750-A / KPL/LN 4890

Phone/ Fax : + 60 89 237525

Email : inquiry@northborneosafari.com

www.northborneosafari.com

Why Animal Welfare Matters : Want to ride an elephant, cuddle a tiger cub or photograph a slow loris? Think again. Tourism can have a devastating impact on wild or captive-bred animals, and tourist dollars frequently end up supporting an industry that thrives on cruelty. By Ben Davies.

It is one of the great quandaries facing tourists. You are on holiday in Thailand and want to experience the thrill of riding an elephant. Should you ignore those niggling concerns about animal welfare and take the once in a lifetime opportunity?

For many visitors, the lure of elephant trekking is simply too much to bear.

Yet Sangduen “Lek” Chailert, who runs a sanctuary for elephants near Chiang Mai, has one bit of advice. Don’t do it. Over the past 30 years, Lek, a well known campaigner, has seen elephants hideously deformed as a result of the trekking and logging industries. Worse still, she has documented how baby elephants are frequently taken from their mothers and subjected to heart-breaking abuse to ensure they follow commands. “Is it natural for elephants to carry tourists on their back or to play football or to paint pictures with their trunks,” Lek asks, visibly upset by what visitors so often fail to understand.

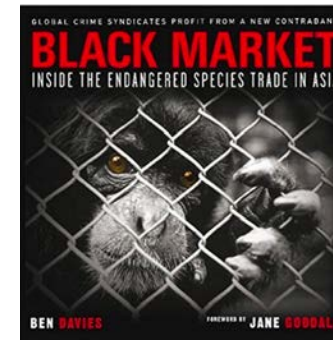
But the issue of what is responsible or ethical in wildlife tourism goes far beyond elephant rides.

As recently as May 2016, hundreds of visitors a day would pay to have their photographs taken cuddling tiger cubs in Thailand’s

notorious tiger temple. The shocking exploitation only came to an end when police raided the temple and discovered 40 dead tiger cubs in a freezer. Whilst the tiger temple is now closed, plenty of other so-called ‘zoos’ offer similar entertainment experiences, with animal lovers unwittingly funding an industry that thrives on cruelty.

Edwin Wiek, a prominent animal rights campaigner who runs a wildlife rescue centre in Southern Thailand, bristles at the thought of tourists taking selfies with gibbons and slow lorises. “If it is illegal in your own country, avoid it here,” he says. “Most gibbons, lorises and langurs are seized from the wild, where poachers usually have to first kill the mother.”

Fortunately, there are ethical options. Like much of Southeast Asia, Thailand has national parks where animals can be seen in the wild. It has sanctuaries where elephant rides are not permitted but where visitors can feed or bathe these majestic creatures (See <http://www.earsasia.org>). These days, tourists can even volunteer to work in a wildlife rescue centre. “Everyone can make a difference by making the right choice when they travel,” says World Animal Protection wildlife expert Dr Jan Schmidt-Burbach.



Ben Davies is a writer and photographer based in Thailand. Recently published works include *Black Market: Inside the Endangered Species Trade in Asia*. *Black Market* is an unforgettable journey inside the grisly Endangered Species Trade and which chillingly exposes the unsettling truth about the cruel exploitation and bureaucratic indifference surrounding the multibillion-dollar underground industry that drives wildlife exploitation. Order your copy here (<https://www.amazon.com/Black-Market-Inside-Endangered-Species/dp/1932771220>)

DISCOVER QUEENSLAND'S HIGH COUNTRY

The Scenic Rim Trail is a unique multi-day hiking experience exploring the natural beauty and diverse landscapes of the Scenic Rim region, located only one hour from Brisbane CBD.

Over the four days, discover a stunning collection of vast mountain ranges, forests, and ancient volcanic plateaus, complete with an abundance of local flora and fauna. Our guides will lead you through the winding trails, much of which are located on private property and previously only touched by early pioneers, giving you a unique and exclusive look into the region.

Whilst the terrain is rugged and remote, luxurious accommodation, fine food and wine and attentive service await you each evening.

Scenic Rim Trail is an all-inclusive experience, with all meals, beverages, accommodation, transfers and luggage portage included.

To find out more contact us today on 13 77 42 or visit scenicrimtrail.com

**SCENIC RIM TRAIL**

MEMBER
**GREAT
WALKS**
of Australia



Why should people back stopping the illegal trade in wildlife around the globe, or protecting Rhinos or Pangolins on the verge of extinction? Because Kate Hudson or Angelababy, however well-intentioned, give it their blessing, or because these are crying injustices that scar our world and degrade our own humanity?

Every wildlife charity – however big or small – needs to have a clear and convincing message about what it’s trying to achieve. But the support of an impassioned celebrity for that cause can help reach new audiences with their message, plus they can rally support and actively lobby for change.



Film actress turned conservationist Sharon Kwok, who runs her own NGO, Aqua Meridian describes her role as “educating to help and protect biodiversity”. She saw first hand the tragedy of these gentle, shy scaly mammals when a friend invited her to a large seizure of smuggled Pangolins in Indonesia, and realised these “gentle creatures” were being wiped out though illegal trade.



The pangolin pit. Paul Hilton has done tremendous work in covering animals and their plight. This image won him the prestigious BBC Wildlife Photographer of the year in 2016, in the Journalism category. He was with Sharon in Medan Indonesia when they found the horror of over 4,000 defrosting pangolins, along with 77kg of scales, and 97 live pangolins in crates. ‘Wildlife crime is big business,’ says Paul. ‘It will stop only when the demand stops.’

The Pangolin. The Pangolin has the dubious claim to fame of being the most trafficked animal in the world, with Hong Kong acting as a transshipment hub for many of the estimated 100,000 of these creatures killed every year. We are losing these wonderful creatures due to “bad cultural habits”, as its scales, tongue, skin, and foetus are all believed to have benefits and unproven beneficial properties in traditional medicine. Even though the pangolin's brown scales are made of nothing more than keratin – the same substance as fingernails – it's scales can now fetch up to US\$3,500 per kilo, allegedly helping women lactate, and curing health ailments ranging from cancer to asthma. The meat is also prized at VIP dinners, where animals are killed in front of diners, and the blood poured into their wine.



Demand reduction. “Pangolins are literally being eaten to extinction,” says Jonathan Baillie, co-chair of the IUCN's Pangolin Specialist Group, but as a pangolin activist points out “one of the main issues is that so many people don't know what a pangolin is... the more Sharon talks about pangolins publicly, the more people will become aware”.

Sharon began using her celebrity status as a popular actress to help get the word out about this animal in the press, giving interviews and writing articles, working with other NGO partners, co-organising events like the high profile “elephant walks”, giving talks in schools and lobbying the Hong Kong government.



Victory at CITES conference banning trade. In late 2016 Sharon joined a delegation lobbying at CITES (The UN Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) which remains one of the world's most powerful tools for biodiversity conservation through the regulation of trade in wild fauna and flora. Sharon – using all her skills from her fine-arts background – designed, created and subsidised the large mascot and small plush toy give-away Pangolins that raised awareness and Pangolin popularity – seen left and below. With only China and Indonesia voting against, and the team lobbying tirelessly to the smaller Countries to vote, the motion was carried, and all Pangolins are now listed on CITES I. Sharon concludes “A real victory, as now any and all trade in Pangolins is banned”.



“The impact of an attacking tiger can be compared to that of a piano falling on you from a second story window. But unlike the piano, the tiger is designed to do this, and the impact is only the beginning.” – John Vaillant

The Bengal tiger (*Panthera tigris tigris*). Maya: First Kill. Naturalist and guide Himanshu's experience led him late afternoon to where a tigress and her cubs often took refuge from the 45degree heat in a watering hole. Today, only Maya, a tigress barely 18 months old, was alone as a mature wild boar approached; the outcome was not certain.

She lodged a frontal attack and then struggled for almost 3 hours as the boar used his brute strength to try to save himself, whereas the adolescent tigress was unsure how to make the final kill. This was to

be survival of the fittest, where a new generation of carnivore was ready to stamp their authority. Today, this young tigress cub is able to hunt on her own. Photos: Himanshu Badge. Take a trip to Tadoba-Andhari Tiger reserve to watch these big cats in action.

Himanshu took away a great reminder and lesson from this encounter: “We must never interfere in nature's balance as nature is capable of balancing things on its own. The flora and fauna has the first right of habitation here and we should visit them only as guests”.

Photos and story: Himanshu Badge.
Take a trip to Tadoba-Andhari Tiger reserve to watch these big cats in action. Contact Himanshu here ([link to linked-in Profile](#)).





The black eared kite (*Milvus migrans*) also known as a black kite, is widespread throughout Asia. In Hong Kong where they are a common sight the winter population keeps to around 2-3,000 birds, but in the summer only a few hundred may choose to stay. The main roosting areas are on the forested slopes of Hong Kong Island's famous Peak, where you can see them sometimes in their hundreds catching thermals late afternoon. Kites have a varied diet, and many can be found diving for fishy scraps in the scenic setting of Sai Kung fishing port at the Sunday fish market next to the pier. Despite living off a diet heavy in mercury, it is thought that they accumulate

the toxins in their feathers, which they then moult.

Hong Kong is a great place for birding. Over 470 species have been recorded, 300 of which regularly reside there. This accounts for a third of the recorded species across the whole of China, and an amazing one-twentieth of the total global number. Don't miss our next issue's special feature on the birds of Asia, and how to best photograph them.

For bird watching tours in Hong Kong, contact David Diskin at dadiskin@netvigator.com

Painted Bronzeback (*Dendrelaphis pictus*). This common SE Asian and Indian species is fully diurnal, and can often be found as it has adapted well to man-made habitats. Waiting patiently by a small pond within the grounds of Singapore zoo paid off when this small,

thin and pretty snake surfaced with his catch of the day. Knowing the habitat of a snake and returning to where they have been seen previously is a good way to find them again. At right, this snake was often seen in the pond outside our hotel in northern Malaysia.



SNAKES IN THE WILD. Unarguably the hardest, but perhaps the most rewarding pictures of snakes are taken in the wild, whilst watching their behaviour. With patience snakes can be found basking, swimming, or often eating, as they are least likely to move away. Many snakes shoot off when disturbed, but some remain still, even feigning death, or more likely getting into a defensive posture. Most snakes are nocturnal, so night is a great time to “hunt” them. To locate them, wear a head torch so that the angle of the beam of light is directly parallel with your line of sight. You will see eye-shine as the torchlight reflects in the animal’s eyes (you will also find frogs, spiders and moths this way). Next issue has a special feature on Herping in Asia.

For herping in Malaysia please contact Orion Herp Adventure
HERE: <http://www.orionherpadventure.com/plan-a-trip.html>



Polypedates megacephalus, has many aliases, known as the Hong Kong whipping frog, spot-legged treefrog, white-lipped treefrog, and hour-glass-marked treefrog.

This pretty little frog is widespread across Asia, and although mainly found in secondary forest, scrub and grassland, it has adapted well to urban environments. Its long limbs, with markedly expanded disks on its finger and toes, allow it to jump great distances and then hang from the thinnest of stems and grasses. The best time to find them is during the breeding season, from April to June you can hear the males loud croaking starting typically at dawn or dusk, around still water, including ponds and ditches. The much larger female is in great demand, as our picture above shows, with many “suitors” all at once, climbing all over each other for a chance at fatherhood. It is a typical “foam nest” builder, and you can find these strange brownish balls of foam suspended on tree branches, or attached to the side of tanks and wells above water level. Around 300 small white eggs can be seen inside these nests, and the emergent tadpoles drop into the water below about a week later, and can be identified by a small cream spot on their snout.

Found across the Asian tropics the Lantern bug (pyrops candelaria) is a weird and wonderful insect: it has a head that is produced into a hollow structure resembling a rhino horn often nearly as large as its body, six legs, extremely varied and brilliant contrasting coloration, the mouth of a mosquito, and often stays for generations on the same tree.

Its strange appearance is matched by the erroneous myth that the head structure was luminous at night. Carl Linnaeus coined both common and latin names to illustrate the supposed fact, adopting the statement without question from a lady entomologist in 1690. By the time the error was discovered, both names had stuck.

Its eating habits are equally interesting, as it uses

its sharp rostrum to puncture trees, fruit, and plants in order to get a juicy meal of sticky sap. Since sap is high in sugar and low in the other nutrients needed for insect development, it needs to eat a lot. But then the large amount of sugar causes a problem for the lantern bug; it solves this by allowing the excess sap to drip from its body as honeydew. So you can sometimes find moths or even geckos licking the behinds of these strange beasts. This bug goes through an incomplete metamorphosis. From egg to nymph, which simply grows into a larger version as the adult. Find them: Often found - sometimes in great numbers - on lychee and longan trees. Above, a mating pair in Hong Kong.

For a real jungle adventure see Paul Hilton's ad on page XX



The hawksbill sea turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) is a critically endangered sea turtle, whose population had declined by 80% in the three most recent generations up to 1996.

One of the best places to still see this wonderful creature is in the Philippines, which hosts several nesting sites, including the Island of Boracay and Punta Dumalag in Davao City. They are also frequent visitors off the Western coast of Cebu Island, and you can often count double digit turtles swimming beneath and around you, oaring the water with their winglike, leathery front flippers,

whilst snorkelling and diving near MoalBoal.

The hawksbill sea turtle are omnivorous, with sea sponges being their principal food, and it is the only reptile to be recorded as biofluorescent, probably derived from the turtle's diet, which includes hard coral.

Males generally have more intense pigmentation than females. The newly emergent hatchling (below 2nd from right) shows the typical dark-colored, heart-shaped carapace.



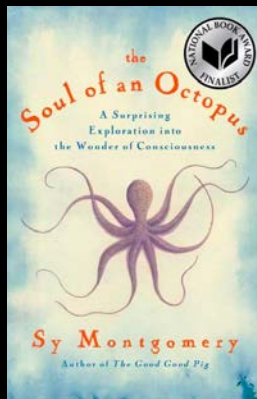
A dramatic underwater photograph of a cave interior. Two divers are visible in the distance, illuminated by a bright blue light source, possibly a flashlight or a large opening. The water is dark, and the cave walls are rugged and rocky. The overall atmosphere is mysterious and adventurous.

DPG *Expeditions*

Underwater Photography Trips to
Exotic Destinations



The Soul of an Octopus is an astonishingly beautiful read. After our introduction to the author, and her local aquarium, the book takes a deep dive questioning scientific, universal and religious truths and the chapters flow forward at once scientifically illuminating, whilst also remaining deeply poetic. “While stroking an octopus, it is easy to fall into reverie. To share such a moment of deep tranquility with another being, especially one as different from us as the octopus, is a humbling privilege. It’s a shared sweetness, a gentle miracle, an uplink to universal consciousness”. She writes: “The ocean, for me, is what LSD was to Timothy Leary. He claimed the hallucinogen is to reality what a microscope is to biology, affording a perception of reality that was not before

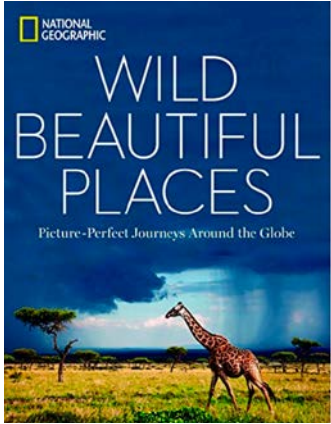


accessible. Shamans and seekers eat mushrooms, drink potions, lick toads, inhale smoke, and snort snuff to transport their minds to realms they cannot normally experience....In my scuba-induced altered state, I’m not in the grip of a drug; I am lucid in my immersion, voluntarily becoming part of what feels like the ocean’s own dream”.

The book’s greatest reward isn’t the fascinating science — although that is riveting and ablaze with rigor — but Montgomery’s mesmerising prose, pouring from the soul of a literary naturalist who paints the marvels of the ocean’s depths, like Attenborough narrates Life on Earth with a unique voice of enthusiasm, knowledge and pleasure.

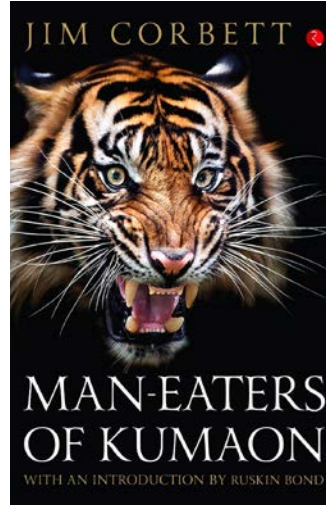


North Pacific Giant Octopus by photographer Mark Laita



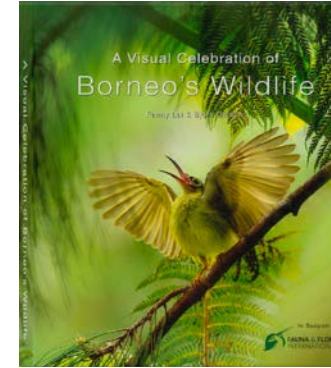
Embark on an extraordinary adventure with Wild Beautiful Places, a collection of 50 far-flung and picture perfect travel destinations.

» [Click here for more information](#)



Man-Eaters of Kumaon. Jim Corbett. A wonderful insight into India in the early 1900's, and a captivating “must-read” before you head off to the Indian parks. Corbett was a British hunter, turned conservationist. Packed with 10 tales, sure to set your heart racing at his courage and skill, such as how he hunted the Champawat Man-eater” who reportedly killed over 435 people. The conflict between man and beast is captured vividly by Corbett. His knowledge of the habits of wild animals is matched by his sympathy for the simple hillfolk that find themselves at the mercy of the larger predator.

» [Click here for more information](#)



This Borneo wildlife pictorial offers an unparalleled introduction to this mysterious treasure island. Illustrated with more than 350 images, taken by Bjorn Olesen and other wildlife photographers, A Visual Celebration of Borneo's Wildlife is a photographic tribute to the most spectacular wildlife species on the second-largest tropical island on Earth. It displays nature's beauty, revealing many private moments of the astonishing biodiversity of Borneo

» [Click here for more information](#)

SP 150-600mm

F/5-6.3 Di VC USD

Capture the power and beauty of wildlife with this high-performance long-range zoom

TAMRON

www.odexchina.cn



海洋节
影像 | 书籍 | 音乐 | 美术 | 科学
OCEAN17 FESTIVAL
Film/Image/Book/Music/Art & Science

ADEX SHENZHEN 2017

IMAGE FESTIVAL 影像节
SHEKOU IFACORY, SHENZHEN, GUANGDONG
蛇口价值工厂, 深圳, 广东
SEPTEMBER 8-10
九月八至十日

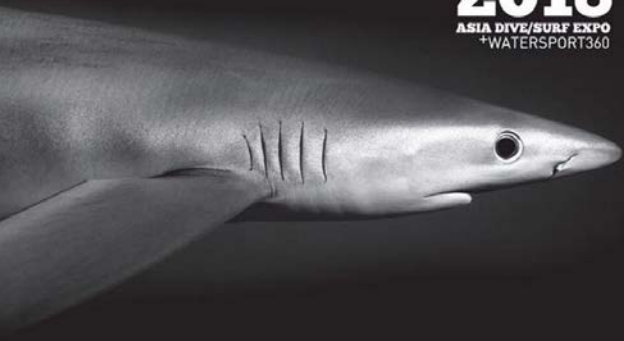
underwater 360
Presented by
Organized by
Sponsored by

HEUNG KONG Alan Lo
Alan Lo从事专业广告摄影20余年,在香港拥有自己的摄影工作室。在Alan的摄影作品中大家可以看到Alan运用了多种摄影技巧与角度去创意化、艺术化地去演绎对人、生活、和大自然的观察,从中感受到他那份对摄影的热爱和执着。正因为这一份热爱Alan开始他的摄影教学作品分享。
Alan is a commercial photographer based in Hong Kong and a scuba diving aficionado. He expresses his passion for the underwater world through his multifaceted approach to photography, which is grounded in his innovative and artistic interpretation of life, people and Nature.

APRIL 6-8
SUNTEC SINGAPORE
www.adex.asia

DEDICATED TO SHARKS

ADEX 2018
ASIA DIVE/SURF EXPO
+WATERSPORT360



ENTERTAIN · EDUCATE · ENGAGE

In 2018, ADEX turns 23. We plan to make this the biggest and most comprehensive show thus far, with almost 10,000 square meters of floor space and additional exhibitors and speakers. 2018 will continue with the theme of climate change, but with an added focus on sharks – the first marine creature ADEX was dedicated to in 2009. There will be presentations on this magnificent animal and how divers can contribute to shark conservation, as well as hands-on educational activities for children of all ages. ADEX 2018 will be the place for a well-rounded diving adventure, and with so much on offer, there will be something for everyone! From deals to education, ADEX will be the one-stop for all divers and divers-to-be.

SINGAPORE OCEAN WEEK OCEAN18 FESTIVAL
FILM/IMAGE/BOOK/MUSIC/ART & SCIENCE

underwater 360
Presented by
Organized by
Sponsored by



BEIJING OCEAN WEEK
北京国际海洋文化周

IMAGE FESTIVAL 影像节
CHAOYANG MUSEUM OF URBAN PLANNING
朝阳规划艺术馆
AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 3 (4 DAYS)
八月三十一日至九月三日

亚洲潜水展北京 ADEX BEIJING 2017

TAIWAN Ace Wu 吴永森
吴永森热爱海中摄影,擅长微距潜水拍摄及广角拍摄。因为好奇心开始自学水下摄影,从完全不会使用相机到十万快门。他利用浅显易懂的方法解释水摄,使新手也能很快出片。他希望透过自己的作品让大家感受水下摄影的魅力。
Ace specialises in wide angle underwater photography, casting his subjects against inky black backgrounds for dramatic effect. He is a self-taught photographer, who first picked up a camera to satisfy his curiosity in the underwater world. Today, he translates his work and technical expertise into workshops for beginner photographers, with the aim of encouraging passion for and an interest in the beauty of our liquid planet.

underwater 360
Organized by
Presented by
Sponsored by

- Have you ever wanted to embark on an adventure that makes you feel alive in the same way that the earliest explorers and adventurers of our history also experienced?

- Have you ever wondered what it is like to feel a connection with nature that is at the essence of who we are as humans?

- Have you ever wanted to test and challenge your own instincts in the ultimate proving grounds that the world has to offer?

If any of the above questions have piqued your curiosity, then trekking through the wild, untamed jungle of the Leuser Ecosystem on the Indonesian island of Sumatra might be for you.

The Leuser Ecosystem is one of the few remaining jungles on Earth, teeming with diverse and abundant wildlife, insect and plant species that exist only in this remote and hostile environment. Very few people will ever experience waking up under the canopy of an ancient forest whilst tracking wild Elephants through their native habitat and even fewer people can take you on that journey.

With us you will conquer difficult terrain, river crossings and face many other challenges, whilst experiencing the adventure of a lifetime, deep in pristine jungle, with the wildest of animals.....we guarantee adrenaline pumping adventure, whilst experiencing the raw connection to nature that makes us feel really alive.

If that sounds a bit hard core for you, then maybe its best if you just wait for the documentary! Interested? Please drop us an email to @paulhiltonphoto@gmail.com



MATCH MURPHY is an expert in the field of Optimal Human Performance, through years of personal experimentation and also coaching. Match is passionate about helping people from all walks of life achieve optimal performance, he says "Spending time with nature and taking ourselves out of our comfort zones is one of the best ways to grow and develop new habits."



PAUL is a Hong Kong-based photojournalist and wildlife trade consultant who focuses on global environmental and conservation issues. Paul has received numerous awards for his conservation photography: including a World Press Photo award for his body of work on the Shark Fin issue, and was also awarded Wildlife Photographer of the Year in 2012, 2014 and 2016. He is currently working on the palm oil issue: documenting deforestation, land clearing, and the wildlife trade in Sumatra's Leuser Eco-system, Indonesia, in collaboration with Rainforest Action Network (RAN), Wildlife Asia and Forest Nature and Environment Aceh (HAKA).

Understanding ISO will help you make smart decisions that will lead to better wildlife pictures.

There are three pillars of photography exposure: shutter speed, aperture and lastly sensitivity, expressed as ISO. I recently shot a crystal sharp image at ISO 1000, and was asked “but doesn’t that make the image pixilated”? Knowing your camera, its functions and following the steps in this article, you can achieve images with no noticeable noise, even at high ISOs.

ISO EXPLAINED: ISO determines the amount of light needed for a good exposure. The lower the number, the more light required and the more light required, the more likely a slow shutter speed will have to be used. Low ISOs, like 100, are most often used in bright situations (sunlight), when your subject is not moving fast, and the camera is mounted on a tripod. If you don’t have a lot of light, or need a fast shutter speed, you then raise the ISO. Each time you double the ISO (for example, from 200 to 400), the camera needs only half as much light for the same exposure. So if you had a shutter speed of 1/250 at 200 ISO, going to 400 ISO would let you get the same exposure at 1/500 second (providing the aperture remains unchanged). This is why high ISOs are so often used indoors, at sporting events, or for fast moving, flying, or jumping wildlife that need 1/500-1,000s as a minimum; or even 1/4000 to freeze a dragonfly’s wings.

Below is a rough default guide for settings for various light conditions, to be used as a starting point. I am not advocating that you are constantly re-setting your ISO as you photograph, but to try not to allow your camera to use Auto ISO. Choosing the ISO is a critical decision you should be able to take given the general light conditions, and that choice dramatically affects your

other important settings of shutter speed and aperture.

ARE SLRS BETTER AT HIGHER ISOs? A major factor affecting the amount of digital noise in an image is the size of the pixels used on the sensor. Large pixels result in less noise than small ones. That’s why digital SLRs perform much better at high ISOs than compact cameras, or mobile devices. The SLRs have larger sensors and larger pixels, and in general, full frame sensors have better image quality across the board, but they really shine when it comes to high ISO performance.

WHAT ISO SHOULD I CHOOSE? Most sports, action, wildlife

ISO SETTING

100	Full sun, no shade
200	Mainly sunny, or bright overcast
400	Shade on a sunny day
700	Early/late daytime, or indoors near a window
800+ Noise warning	Some noise discernible in shadows and dark areas, and if image underexposed. Can be reduced by following steps on the next page
640-800	sun starting to set
850-1000	Inside, away from a window. Light bulbs only source
1600	Indoors, darkened room, like a theatre/school production
1600+ Noise warning	Noticeable noise above this level, which will need post production to diminish
2000+	Sports photography indoors

The above are for standard wildlife shots. For fast moving subjects, the above may need to be doubled. We will look at fast action photography - birds in flight - in the next issue

and even macro photographers regularly push their ISO to 800-1600 or above, because they have to: Firstly, it is the only way to freeze fast motion. Secondly, you will need a high shutter speed if you are handholding a telephoto or macro lens.

WHAT’S THE TRADE OFF? Raising the ISO means a similar decrease in quality, with an increase in what’s called “noise” in the image. In digital cameras, It gives a grainy look to the image, and since most people dislike this visible grain, we photographers work to avoid it. So it becomes a balancing act, where you want a low ISO for image quality, but fast enough shutter speeds. If you are undecided, remember that a (slightly) noisy shot is always better than a blurred shot!

PHOTOGRAPHY TECH TALK: ISO

Understanding ISO will help you make smart decisions that will lead to better wildlife pictures.

1. Shoot in RAW format. The RAW processor can apply a first instance of noise-reduction with results that are not as destructive as a noise reduction applied to a JPEG. Shooting in RAW you have considerably more options to amend the amount of noise in post production including fixing the exposure when “exposing to the right” - see step 5 below.

2. Limit NR (Noise reduction) two ways.

i) In camera: After the image has been shot, the camera will analyse the image and “fix” any pixels that are incorrectly rendered. From late 2015 most DSLRs offer adjustable settings for the degree of in-camera, high ISO noise reduction applied to images. For help, see the canon site example/link: http://www.learn.usa.canon.com/resources/articles/2011/high_iso_noise_reduction_article.shtml

ii) Work in post production. Most image processing software has noise reduction now. An excellent, cheap and simple option is Adobe Lightroom, available online at c.US\$10 a month with free tutorials to get you started. First zoom in on the preview image to at least 100% to see the noise reduction previewed. The Noise Reduction tab controls ways to reduce image noise, which includes luminance (grayscale) noise, which makes an image look grainy, and chroma (colour) noise, which is visible as coloured artefacts in the image. Play with the sliders till you achieve the image you want, balancing noise reduction against lost detail, and sharpness, and remember, some loss of detail is inevitable. There are separate editing programs that focus only on noise reduction. Some people swear by programs such as Noise Ninja and others. I have not used these programs and so I cannot comment on how well they work.

3. Shoot full frame. Be aware that the more you crop your image, the more noticeable any noise will become.

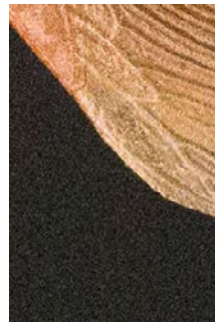


Heavily cropped Images of a beetle wing show ISO noise level increase, particularly in the dark area. After post production work there is significantly less noise, with a slight decrease in detail.

ISO 400



ISO 4000



ISO 4000 after NR applied



4. The darker the image, the more noise. Digital noise tends to be most noticeable in plain, solid areas of a subject, especially if they're mid-tone or dark areas. A photographer shooting birds on a snowy pond, for instance, may see much less overall noise in his or her files than a photographer taking available-light pictures in a dense forest.

5. At high ISOs “expose to the right”: ie tweak your histogram balance to the right, by deliberately “overexposing” the shot by 1/2-1 stop. This maximises the signal that the camera gets, and improves the signal to noise ratio.

6. Images with lots of small details can handle some noise without looking too noticeable, and remember post production NR usually destroys the details.

7. High ISOs grain is most noticeable on large prints, much less so on computers, and even less on mobile devices. So if you are shooting for Instagram, then no-one will probably even notice.

This dragonfly was shot at ISO 1250 (1/4000s f7.1) using this guide, and shows little noise, even with a large crop.



PHOTOGRAPHY ASSIGNMENT FOR LEARNING ISO CONTROL.

44

Assignment 1. Take a picture of a vase of flowers at home, at various ISOs: 100, 400, 800, 1,600, 3,200 as high as you can go. You may not see much difference on your camera screen, so make sure you look at the difference full screen on your computer and enlarge your picture to 1:1 ratio or 100%. Then ask yourself, Where would you consider an acceptable “trade off”? And how is this affected by any image processing software you are using? In the end, it's really up to the individual to determine what's acceptable. If you don't like the image, that's all that matters.

Assignment 2. Go shoot some animals in low light conditions, handhold your camera, and again, vary your ISO for the same shots. A local reptile house in a zoo is ideal. Facilities are generally dark, so

you will certainly need to push your ISO. The good news is, they will not move too fast! Once you have your images, follow the same steps as above, and decide - after post production - what ISO you can use in the future, and think about how this applies for faster moving animals. Make sure you get our next issue: photographing birds in flight.

Zoos and vivariums present their own challenges, as most snakes will be in glass enclosures, and finding one in a good pose is a question of luck. One problem is glass reflection. To eliminate this, move your position, press the hood of the lens right up against the glass so that the focus is past the dirt/glare, and reduce your depth of field. You may be able cut out this glare altogether, with a Polariser filter

(link). [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polarizing_filter_\(photography\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polarizing_filter_(photography)). When shooting snakes in vivariums you must also consider exposure compensation, where the subject may have strong highlights due to heat or other lamps, thus increasing the risk of blowing out details. Expose for the balance between the two, or slightly overexpose to avoid more noise. Lastly, remember to set your White Balance for strip/tungsten or other lighting used, and where reptiles are kept under red heat lamps you will need to adjust this hue in post processing.

All of the below pictures were taken through glass, into vivariums in the Queen Saovabha Memorial Institute, Bangkok Thailand. Canon 70-200mm lens, with a polariser filter at 800 ISO.



Kevin Caldwell, a keen amateur photographer and Herper has some excellent wildlife and snake shots on his Flickr stream: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/kkchome> Here he tells us why he is using a wide angle lens for close up of reptiles: "I'm finding wide angle macro to be big challenge. Composition and getting the exposure right across the entire frame is difficult. That being said, I am determined to stick with it. I'm getting kind of bored with the compressed perspective of shooting everything at roommm. I also want to get more habitat in the shot, which gives a bit of context to the pose of the animal."

His critique on his own photo:- The body of the snake closest to the lens is out of focus. I should have used a smaller aperture for more depth of field. Even at this aperture, I think that setting the focus point nearer to the body's closest distance to the lens would have resulted in more of the animal being in focus. This is a mistake I do over and over again with macro photography, especially with frogs. I often end up with the eyes in focus, but the tip of the nose blurred. I kind of drift into human portrait mode where one is at a distance where focusing on the eye results in every other part of the face being in focus. I really need to whip out a depth of field calculator and plan things out better.

- The bokeh on this lens a bit harsh, I should have used a smaller aperture, even if I needed to push the ISO.
- The shot should have been composed so the waterfall was further to the right or left and without the grass directly behind the subject's head. The yellow/green moss on the blurred rock behind the animal's head is also a huge distraction. Would have been better to have the wet, black rocks directly behind the head.
- There are a lot of blown highlights. I should have exposed more for the highlights and then brightened the shadows in Lightroom. The lighting was very harsh and variable that afternoon
- A kiss of fill-flash would have helped things quite a bit. Shadows and highlights can also be balanced in lightroom/prostproduction.
- Certainly, a tripod would have been ideal.



Canon EOS 5D, MKIII. ISO 800. 24mm.
1/100s f8. Mountain Pit Viper - Hong Kong



The forests of Madhya Pradesh
hold more than an animated wildlife.
They hold within them, stories that
peer through bushes in the form of
gharial, barasingha, bison, peacock, sloth bear.

With the Jungle Book,
Rudyard Kipling discovered his story.
Maybe it's time you came
looking for yours.

A Green like no other



The heart of
Incredible India

BHOPAL Tel: +91 755-2774340/42, 4027100, AHMEDABAD - Tel: +91 79-26462977, BENGALURU - Tel: +91 80-25502288, HYDERABAD - Tel: +91 40-40034319, KOLKATA - Tel: +91 33-22833526, LUCKNOW - Tel: +91 522-4021413, MUMBAI - Tel: +91 22-22187603, NAGPUR - Tel: +91 712-2442378, NEW DELHI - Tel: +91 11-23366528, 23341185/86/87, NOIDA - Tel: +91 120-4330070, PUNE - Tel: +91 20-25536616, RAIPUR - Tel: +91 771-4048810, RAJKOT - Tel: +91 281-2927966, SURAT - Tel: +91 261-2918688, VARANASI - Contact: +91 9235402180, For online booking, log on to www.mptourism.com, Tourist Helpline: 1800 233 7777, E-mail: info@mptourism.com

DIRECTORY OF SERVICES.

The practical side of where to go, and who to contact. If you love adventure, magical destinations, amazing wildlife, and top guides, then you will love these tours and operators. Please mention WildCreatures when you connect them.

INDIA

Date	Sectors	Km/Hours	Programme
November		(approx)	
2nd	Arrive Dehli from Hong Kong	Flight in	Arrival New Delhi Airport: Received by representative of Nature Safari, who will take you to hotel, and give briefing. Overnight New Delhi.
3rd	Dehli-Jabalpur-Bandhavgarh	Flight + 200km/4hrs	Morning transfer to airport and fly to Jabalpur at 07.50hrs, arrive 09.35hrs. Meet at Jabalpur airport and drive to Bandhavgarh National Park, 4 hours drive. Lunch at resort and afternoon game drive. Dinner and overnight at Resort.
4th	Bandhavgarh		Morning and afternoon game drives, meals and overnight in resort.
5th	Bandhavgarh		
6th	Bandhavgarh		
7th	Bandhavgarh-Kanha	280km/6hrs	Morning game drive, then depart for Kanha, 6 yours drive in private car, take packed lunch. Dinner and overnight at resort.
8th	Kanha		Morning and afternoon game drives, meals and overnight in resort.
9th	Kanha		Morning game drive. Afternoon closed: local tribal village and bird watching in buffer zone. Meals and overnight in resort.
10th	Kanha-Tadoba	380km/8hrs	Morning game drive, then depart for Tadoba, 8 yours drive in private car, take packed lunch. Dinner and overnight at resort at Tiger Trails Lodge.
11th	Tadoba		Morning and afternoon game drives, meals and overnight in resort.
12th	Tadoba		Morning and afternoon game drives, meals and overnight in resort.
13th	Tadoba-Nagpur-NewDehli	100km/3 hrs + flight	Morning game drive, lunch at resort, then drive to Nagpur airport 3 hours to take flight to New Delhi leaving at 18.10 arrives 19.40, met on arrival and overnight in New Delhi.
14th	Fly to Hong Kong	Fly to HK	Morning free for cultural activities, with private car, then transfer to international airport 18.00h

Nature Safari India were the ground agents for our India trip. They organise itineraries (like ours on the left) and take care of all the details, including hotels/lodges, naturalists and guides. They are specialists in Tiger Safaris, Snow Leopard Expeditions, Bird Watching Tours, and other wildlife safaris in India. The cost of our safari - not including int'l flights - was c.US\$2,500 per person (2 people) all inclusive. This included first rate accommodation, as many game drives as we could fit in, private Jeeps, and excellent guides and naturalists. Using a ground agent gives you peace of mind, as Nature Safari India jumped in when flights changed unexpectedly, and helped when the currency was withdrawn. We also had the use of a private car in Delhi, and a Wifi Dongle, to help keep in touch.Shared Vats - the owner - is a vastly experienced operator (see his tiger picture on page 10); look out for his short itinerary recommendations form the main Indian cities in the next issue.

DIRECTORY OF SERVICES.

The practical side of where to go, and who to contact. If you love adventure, magical destinations, amazing wildlife, and top guides, then you will love these tours and operators. Please mention WildCreatures when you connect them.

INDIA

Other recommended agents & destinations

ORYX - Worldwide Photographic Expeditions www.oryxphotography.com/“ORYX – Worldwide Photographic Expeditions is a professional photographic safari company specializing in exceptional wildlife, landscape and cultural photographic tours to some of the Earth’s wildest and most scenic destinations, passionately prepared by photographers for photographers.”

Wild India Eco Tours.

[http://www.wild-india.in/Wildlife photography tours across the Indian Sub-continent.](http://www.wild-india.in/Wildlife%20photography%20tours%20across%20the%20Indian%20Sub-continent)

Himanshu Bagde

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/himanshu-bagde-6a38b5102/>“A Wildlife Safari Professional who would change your perceptions about Mother Nature”.

I work in central India wildlife parks mainly Tadoba, Pench and Kanha National Park. I organise and offer end to end wildlife tours solutions.

Nature’s Nest - Goa

<http://canopygoa.com/>Great local food and excellent hospitality in the Western Ghats.

The Gerry Martin Project

www.thegerrymartinproject.co.ukThrough responsibly managed initiatives TGMP offers you a range of experiences which put you at the heart of social and ecological conservation.

TOFTigers Bike4Tigers Challenge

Biking through the land of the Jungle Book, whilst helping to secure the future of the tiger in the wild.<http://toftigers.org/blog/Laura-Downer/#>

TOFTigers

<http://toftigers.org/>See page XX. Members include the best Int’l & local travel agents and ground agents. Excellent guide includes Parks & lodges. Download their excellent FREE guide.

DIRECTORY OF SERVICES.

Check back next issue for more comprehensive listings, agents and guide reviews.

THAILAND

TONTAN TRAVEL

www.tontantravel.com

This great company can organise jungle hiking and safari drives, and private tours can be tailor-made. Speciality wildlife tours in Khao Yai National Park.

QUEEN SAOBAGHA MEMORIAL INSTITUTE

<http://www.saovabha.com/en/>

A Snake Farm right in the middle of Bangkok.

THAILAND SNAKES

thailandsnakes.com

This website has a wealth of information, not limited to Thailand. Free e-books and other useful items to purchase.

WILDLIFE FRIENDS FOUNDATION ELEPHANT REFUGE

<http://www.thaielephantrefuge.org/>

“Giving Life, Land and Love back to Elephants” The WFFT Rescue Center is now organising 1/2 day and day tours for visitors, in the region of Hua Hin and Cha Am.

THAI NATIONAL PARKS

<https://www.thainationalparks.com/>

Excellent website with detailed information on the 5 largest and best National Parks in Thailand. Covers Animals to see, and guided tours. Promotes the fact that Thailand is the best bird-watching destination in mainland Asia

Get your company listed or reviewed: contact us at info@wildcreatures.org

The listings and reviews section will grow considerably over the next issues, with more destination and agent recommendations, so make sure you sign up online at www.wildcreatures.org for more updates and bookmark the site for expanded listings.

Please contact us for any questions, or tour information and we will direct your inquiries to the best possible source. If you would like help planning a trip or tour then please send us an email to info@wildcreatures.org answering the following:

- Name.
- Contact details (e-mail/phone).
- Country of residence.
- Number in party/ages.
- Area/Country to visit: Estimated timing (season/months) and number of days.
- Special interests (eg photography), special requirements, or specific wildlife you wish to see: Budget.
- What category of hotels/resorts would you prefer: Elite/Luxury, 3-4 star, or homestay.
- Do you need a naturalist/guide.
- Do you want a private experience for only you/your party.
- We will forward your request to the best possible agents to help you.

“The question of questions for mankind - the problem which underlies all others, and is more deeply interesting than any other- is the ascertainment of the place which Man occupies in nature and of his relations to the universe of things.”

- From *Man's Place in Nature* (1863), Thomas H. Huxley.



Image credit with permission: Kevin Kal Kallaugh, The Economist, kaltoons.com

“If we’ve learned any lessons during the past few decades, perhaps the most important is that preservation of our environment is not a partisan challenge; it’s common sense. Our physical health, our social happiness, and our economic well-being will be sustained only by all of us working in partnership as thoughtful, effective stewards of our natural resources.”

- Ronald Reagan

SIMPLY E-MAIL US INFO@WILDCREATURES.ORG FOR THE FOLLOWING:

Got a question, want to contact us or give us feedback?

Recommend tours and guides.

Photographers, showcase your work.

Let us know about your tour or service.

COME WORK WITH US! Volunteer and learn professional media skills. Editors, web and social media workers needed.

ADVERTISE TO OUR GROWING AUDIENCE.

Contact us for rates and data.

info@wildcreatures.org

All EXIF image (camera setting) data can be found on Flickr ([link](#)) with images in page order.

FACEBOOK ([link](#)) Ask questions/post great photos/recommend tours and and tell us about your adventures. Daily image uploads for your viewing pleasure.

INSTAGRAM Coming soon. We do not Pin or Tweet yet, either, sorry.

IMAGE USE AND COPYRIGHT. Remember, using others' images on the web without their permission is at least bad manners, or worse copyright infringement and theft. We are happy for you to share images and information but please ALWAYS name the source and provide a link back to the article or image....thanks

“It seems to me that the natural world is the greatest source of excitement; the greatest source of visual beauty; the greatest source of intellectual interest. It is the greatest source of so much in life that makes life worth living”.

- David Attenborough

NEXT ISSUE:

New: **PORTFOLIO.** We will feature the work of a top wildlife photographer.

New: **CELEBRITY.** We turn a spotlight on someone making a difference.

INDIA'S AMAZING CENTRAL PARKS. Bandhavgarh, Kahna, Tadoba.

SNAKES OF ASIA. The skinny on how best to find and photograph them.

BIRDS. Birding hotspots, and how to photograph them in flight.

THAILAND PARKS. Khao Yai and Kui Buri

Don't miss it... sign up now to get notified when it comes out...[click here](#)

All copyright by WILD  CREATURES