

HORNBILL

DISCOVER THE LIVING WORLD

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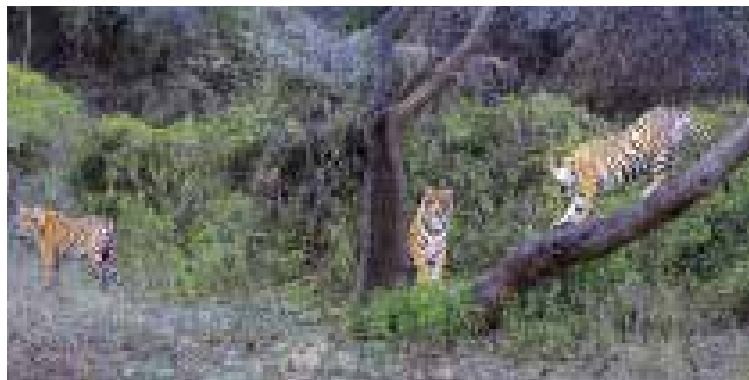
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Sariska Tiger Reserve: From Silence to Revival, and Hope

Once silent after losing every tiger, Sariska now resonates with hope. Sariska's remarkable journey is told by its Field Director – **Sangram Singh Katiyar** – reflects on the reserve's extraordinary revival, revealing how perseverance, science, and people together restored one of India's most inspiring conservation landscapes.



Magical Melghat

Kishor Rithe recounts Melghat's extraordinary journey from a remote tiger reserve to a conservation success. Blending personal experiences with five decades of history, he chronicles the reserve's remarkable evolution, revealing how dedicated people, sound science, and community support overcame daunting challenges to safeguard this iconic tiger landscape.

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Editorial



Hornbill is India's oldest magazine dedicated to wildlife and forests. Launched in 1976 as a quarterly publication, it has, over the past 50 years, taken on several perspectives, reflecting the evolving landscape of conservation and communication.

Today, we find ourselves in the era of Gen Z – a generation whose strength, vision, and commitment to conservation we at BNHS deeply recognize. Gen Z is redefining environmental protection by blending digital activism, sustainable consumer habits, and intersectional justice. They harness the power of social media to mobilize peers, advocate for climate-friendly policies, and build startups that challenge wasteful industries. Their approach is creative, urgent, and community-driven.

This is a pivotal moment. It is time that we embrace the unique ways in which Gen Z exchanges ideas and takes action, allowing them to shape conservation in their own voice and style. *Hornbill* continues to be a platform that celebrates this spirit, bridging generations while championing India's natural heritage.

Project Tiger was launched in 1973 and has now completed more than five decades. Our new series of articles on Tiger Reserves has received tremendous appreciation from our readers. Following the encouraging response to the feature on Corbett Tiger Reserve, this issue takes you to Maharashtra's "Magical and Mysterious" Melghat Tiger Reserve.

Most of us visit wildlife reserves only for a few days. In that sense, our forest officers and frontline staff are truly fortunate to spend extended periods in these forests and witness rare moments of wilderness that few others ever experience. During my visit to Sariska Tiger Reserve, I requested the Field Director, Mr Sangram Singh Katiyar, to share some of these untold stories with BNHS members and *Hornbill* readers. You will be fascinated to learn how the tireless efforts of forest officers and frontline staff helped restore the tiger population in Sariska.

The 'Book Reviews' section of *Hornbill* continues to connect readers with remarkable authors and their works. This issue introduces *WILD HABITATS IN NORTH EAST INDIA* by Anwaruddin Choudhury, reviewed by Dr Asad R. Rahmani. A review, by Romulus Whitaker, of *THE DRIFT – JUNGLE STORIES OF A BANKER* by A.K. Sahay, is sure to tempt you to add this engaging book to your collection.

For several decades, the 10-volume *HANDBOOK OF THE BIRDS OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN* by Dr Sálim Ali and Dr S. Dillon Ripley has been the definitive authority on our region's avifauna. Now, the Bombay Natural History Society is launching a monumental project: revising and expanding this classic into the *HANDBOOK OF THE BIRDS OF INDIA (AND SOUTH ASIA)* – in both print and continuous digital e-pages!

Participation is open to all current and prospective BNHS members and associate members across South Asia. Join our official Facebook Revision Group today at Handbook – BNHS Revision Project: to contribute your field observations to this landmark project.

In the 'Builders and Guardians' section, BNHS Honorary Secretary Dr Bharat Bhushan introduces Sir George Ambrose Lloyd, 1st Baron Lloyd (1879–1941), who served as the eighth President of the Bombay Natural History Society from 1918 to 1923 while also serving as the Governor of the Bombay Presidency in British India. The article also profiles Sir Leslie Orme Wilson (1876–1955), the ninth President of BNHS, who served as Governor of Bombay from 1923 to 1926 before becoming Governor of Queensland, Australia, from 1928 to 1946. You will surely feel proud that our Society was guided by such distinguished personalities.

It is with deep sadness that we mark the loss of one of India's finest nature artists, Mr Jamshed P. Irani. His work was admired even by Dr Sálím Ali, who recognized the brilliance of his bird illustrations. Many of his artworks grace the pages of BNHS publications, standing as timeless contributions to the study and celebration of India's wildlife. Visitors to Hornbill House continue to admire his remarkable paintings, created with his left hand, which inspire awe to this day. His artistry was not only a visual delight but also a powerful tool for conservation, bringing the beauty of nature closer to people's hearts.

For readers wishing to explore more of his legacy, BNHS published a special issue of the *Hornbill* in 2016, titled *Wildlife Artists Special*, highlighting his contributions and the role of art in environmental awareness. Mr Irani's work remains a lasting reminder of how creativity and conservation can walk hand in hand. The many tributes in this issue, written by those who knew him closely, will help you appreciate many more facets of his remarkable life.

In the Sentinel section, Devi Waigankar and Dr Unmesh Katwate highlight the efforts of a Bharat Mallav – Chairman of the Ambika Fisheries Cooperative Society, senior journalist with *Pudhari* Marathi – working locally to protect the fisheries and wetland ecosystem of Ujani Reservoir, whose habitat and fish resources are increasingly threatened by habitat degradation and growing human pressures.

In the 'Nature Watch' section, the article *Trogon Yatra* by Vijaya Bharat will inspire you to explore the forests of Kerala, West Bengal, the Himalaya, and the Northeastern states in search of the three Indian species of the genus *Harpactes*: the Malabar Trogon *Harpactes fasciatus*, Ward's Trogon *Harpactes wardi*, and the Red-headed Trogon *Harpactes erythrocephalus*.

Under the mounting pressure of infrastructure development, many biodiversity-rich landscapes of the Western Ghats are crying out for both legal and physical protection. Yet, four of the six states have strongly resisted bringing certain ecologically sensitive regions under Eco-Sensitive Area (ESA) status. Conservationists continue to advocate for this recognition, while state governments remain engaged in prolonged discussions with the Union Government over the designation of these critical landscapes.

The seventh draft of the gazette notification has now been issued, underscoring the complexity and persistence of this long-standing issue. The Conservation Notes article, *Challenging the Eco-Sensitivity of Sahyadri*, offers valuable insights into the ongoing debate over "Go" and "No-Go" zonation. The decisions taken today will determine the future of our priceless forests – ecosystems that safeguard not only India's ecological security but also its long-term economic well-being.

