

**PENCH TIGER RESERVE, MAHARASHTRA  
DECEMBER 2018**

**Team:** Abhijit Dutta – *Assistant Director (Conservation)*  
Bandu Uikey – *Conservation Officer*  
Dilip Lanjewar, Balkrishna Bagmare – *Field assistants*

**Highlights**

- ⇒ *Two community foot patrols*
- ⇒ *One waterhole prepared*
- ⇒ *One shramdhaan for cleaning area around well*
- ⇒ *Four surveys on solar power and community meetings on renewable energy*
- ⇒ *One meeting on Village Eco-Development Committee (VEDC) formation*
- ⇒ *One meeting with nature guides on improvement of eco-tourism*
- ⇒ *One nature trail for students; 24 students participated*
- ⇒ *Three celebrations to mark important days in the ‘eco-calendar’*
- ⇒ *25 villages visited for conducting field surveys for verification of lantana removal work under CSS (DBT Scheme of NTCA)*
- ⇒ *14 school education programs conducted; 319 students participated*
- ⇒ *13 residential nature camps jointly with Forest Department for buffer zone students; 40 students participated in each of these camps*
- ⇒ *One mushroom cultivation workshop conducted at Khudsapar*
- ⇒ *One personality development workshop conducted at Kolutmara for guides*
- ⇒ *One livelihood meeting with women’s self-help group (SHG)*
- ⇒ *Six free medical camps, 187 patients treated*
- ⇒ *One research project on snakes underway*

**Conservation Action and Awareness**

<b>Sr.no.</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Village / Place</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Participants</b>
1.	Dec 23	Suwardhara Beat	Community Patrol	3
2.	Dec 25	Shiladevi Beat	--do--	3
3.	Dec 9	Ghoti	Waterhole Construction	6
4.	Dec 30	Awaleghat	Cleaning of area around well	5
5.	Dec 8	Shiladevi	Survey on solar power and meeting with villagers to discuss renewable energy options	6
6.	Dec 8	Saleghat	--do--	6
7.	Dec 9	Ghatkukda	--do--	14
8.	Dec 9	Kolutmara	--do--	7
9.	Dec 14	Garra	Village Eco-Development Committee formation meeting	12

10.	Dec 14	Kolitmara	Meeting with nature guides on eco-tourism improvement	12
11.	Dec 15	Ghatpendari	Nature trail	24
12.	Dec 2	Sillari	National Pollution Prevention Day celebration	20
13.	Dec 5	Chorbahuli	World Soil Day celebration	20
14.	Dec 14	Kolitmara	World Energy Conservation Day celebration	40
15.	Dec 4	Tuyepar	Field survey for verification of lantana removal work under CSS (DBT Scheme of NTCA)	6
16.	Dec 4	Sillari	--do--	4
17.	Dec 4	Pipariya	--do--	2
18.	Dec 4	Khapa	--do--	4
19.	Dec 4	Salai	--do--	2
20.	Dec 4	Sawara	--do--	2
21.	Dec 5	Dahoda	--do--	5
22.	Dec 5	Pauni	--do--	6
23.	Dec 5	Banjar	--do--	1
24.	Dec 5	Dahodatola	--do--	3
25.	Dec 5	Hiwara	--do--	2
26.	Dec 5	Katta	--do--	4
27.	Dec 26	Awaleghat	--do--	8
28.	Dec 26	Tekadi	--do--	7
29.	Dec 26	Pendhari	--do--	9
30.	Dec 26	Hetikheda	--do--	4
31.	Dec 27	Surewani	--do--	12
32.	Dec 27	Nagalwadi	--do--	16
33.	Dec 27	Shiladevi	--do--	6
34.	Dec 28	Ghatpendari	--do--	11
35.	Dec 28	Salai-Ghatpendari	--do--	10
36.	Dec 28	Ghatkukda	--do--	13
37.	Dec 29	Ambazari	--do--	7
38.	Dec 29	Banera	--do--	9
39.	Dec 29	Salai Tekadi	--do--	4
<b>Total Participants</b>				<b>335</b>

On December 9, Dilip and a team of 6 villagers constructed a waterhole near Ghoti village. Wild animals traverse large distances for water after the monsoon season due to water scarcity. The construction of such waterholes ensures water is available at the spot throughout the year for the animals.

On December 30, Balkrishna motivated villagers to volunteer for a programme to clean the area around a well in Awaleghat. Such cleanliness drives ensure that the cattle or

villagers don't suffer from any illness due to water stagnation. It also helps prevent contraction and possible spreading of any disease from livestock to wildlife.



*Ghoti- Dilip and villagers dig waterhole (left)  
Awaleghat- Balkrishna with villagers after cleaning area near a well (right)*

On December 25, Balkrishna led a team of three Village Eco-development Committee (VEDC) members from Shiladevi village on a foot patrol in the forest area near their village. The VEDC members checked for signs of illegal tree felling or poaching during the patrol. No signs of illegal activities were detected. These community-based patrols are supplemental to the regular patrols being done by the Forest Department.

Balkrishna joined Forest Department staff on a foot patrol in the Suwardhara beat on December 23.

On December 5, World Soil Day was celebrated in Chorbahuli. During a nature trail, Abhijit and Forest Guard Dinesh Itwale explained to the students about the importance of soil and soil formation procedure. The students were encouraged to take up soil conservation activities back in their village.



*Shiladevi- Balkrishna during a community patrol (left)  
Chorbahuli- Forest Guard explains the importance of soil to students on World Soil Day (right)*

On December 14, Dilip organized a meeting in Garra to make the villagers aware about the formation process and benefits of village eco-development committee (VEDC). Dilip read out the Government Resolution (GR) and explained how VEDC formation in some villages has helped in village development and in reduction of conflict through funds utilized from Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Jan-Van Yojna.

On December 8, Balkrishna organized a survey on solar power and a villagers' meeting on renewable energy in Saleghat Village. Balkrishna and Shreyas from Gramoorja, an organisation which works on renewable energy options, surveyed the village for possible solar-powered interventions related to livelihood, education, water, agriculture, etc. They interacted with the villagers and explained the benefits of renewable energy.

Similar surveys were carried out in Shiladevi, Ghatkukda and Kolutmara on December 8 and December 9.



*Saleghat- Shreyas (Gramoorja) & Balkrishna during solar power survey*

On December 14, Abhijit organized a meeting with nature guides to discuss improvements in the existing eco-tourism model and to stress the importance of ecotourism in conservation. All nature guides from the Kolutmara gate attended the meeting.

The guides made suggestions for improving the ecotourism at the gate. They also asked us to organise a workshop on personality development. They were of the view that a nature trail or a bird-watching trail should be developed as Kolutmara's unique selling point is bird sightings.

All these points were conveyed to the Deputy Director of Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR) by Satpuda Foundation.



*Kolitmara- Abhijit & Balkrishna interact with nature guides and explain about role of ecotourism in conservation (left)*

Balkrishna conducted a nature trail program for school children of Ghatpendari on December 15. He explained about the importance of conserving local flora and fauna and their role in wildlife conservation. He explained to the students about spiders, their dwelling, types of spiders and how spiders are useful to humans.



*Ghatpendari- Balkrishna explaining about spiders during a nature trail (left);  
Ghatpendari- Balkrishna with students after the nature trail (right)*

In December, the PTR administration entrusted Satpuda Foundation with the responsibility of verifying the lantana removal work in the area. The task was to carry out evaluation of lantana removal work under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme or the Direct Benefit Transfer Scheme of the NTCA. Abhijit, Dilip and Balkrishna visited 25 villages and interacted with the villagers, vanmajurs and Forest Guards to verify the work done.



*Pendhri- Dilip during evaluation of lantana removal work (left)  
Surewani- Dilip interacts with villagers while inspecting lantana removal work (right)*

### **Environment Education**

In December, a total of 14 school education programs were conducted by Balkrishna in which students were given lectures on man-animal conflict, biodiversity conservation, climate change and other issues related to nature conservation.

A total of 319 students attended these programs.

*School Education Programs*

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Village</b>	<b>Number of students</b>
1.	Dec 5	ZP School	Awaleghat	30
2.	Dec 6	ZP School	Chargaon	17
3.	Dec 7	ZP School	Suwardhara	25
4.	Dec 8	ZP School	Khapa	17
5.	Dec 10	ZP School	Ghatpendari	23
6.	Dec 17	ZP School	Shiladevi	14
7.	Dec 20	ZP School	Narhar	18
8.	Dec 21	ZP School	Dhawlapur	35
9.	Dec 21	ZP School	Kadbikheda	35
10.	Dec 22	ZP School	Ambazari	15
11.	Dec 24	ZP School	Khudsapar	8
12.	Dec 27	ZP School	Kirangi Sarra	10
13.	Dec 29	ZP School	Ghoti	50
14.	Dec 31	ZP School	Sawara	22
<b>Total Participants</b>				<b>319</b>

Satpuda Foundation (SF) was asked by the Pench Tiger Reserve Conservation Foundation (PTCF) to conduct 15 residential nature camps for 600 students from schools in villages in the buffer zone of Pench Tiger Reserve. We acted as the resource persons and took students on jungle safaris, organised nature trails, nature games, lectures and presentations, etc, to sensitize the children about nature and wildlife.

The inaugural program, on November 28, was attended by Ms. Neenu Somraj, Deputy Director of Pench Tiger Reserve. The concluding program was conducted on December 20, and was attended by Dr. Ravikiran Govekar, Chief Conservator of Forests and Field Director of Pench Tiger Reserve.

Two programs were conducted in November and 13 were conducted in December.

*Residential Nature Education Camps (PTCF-SF Nisarganubhav Shibir 2018)*

<b>SN</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Students</b>
1.	Dec 3-4	Dahoda Ashram School & Pathrai Navjivan School	Sillari	40
2.	Dec 3-4	Mahatma Gandhi School, Sironji	Nagalwadi	40
3.	Dec 4-5	Punyashlok Vidyaniketan, Khumari	Chorbahuli	40
4.	Dec 5-6	Punyashlok Vidyaniketan, Khumari	Chorbahuli	40
5.	Dec 7-8	ZP School, Chhatrapur	Chorbahuli	40
6.	Dec 10-11	Gurukul School Nimtola	Sillari	40
7.	Dec 11-12	ZP School Bothia-Palora	Sillari	40
8.	Dec 11-12	Govt. Ashram School Kolutmara	Kolutmara	40
9.	Dec 12-13	ZP Schools- Ghoti, Sawara & Zinzeriya	Sillari	40
10	Dec 12-13	Rashtriya Aadarsh Vidyalaya Khairi	Kolutmara	40
11.	Dec 18-19	Lal Bahadur Shastri School, Baburwada	Saleghat	40

12.	Dec 18-19	Gurukul School Nimtola & ZP School Bothia-Palora	Sillari	40
13.	Dec 19-20	Jaishiva Ashram School Pauni	Sillari	40
<b>Total Participants</b>				<b>520</b>



*Sillari- PTR Deputy Director interacts with students at a nature camp, with Abhijit Dutta (left); Sillari- PTR Field Director interacts with students at a nature camp, with Mukund Dhurve (right)*



*Sillari- Students on a jungle safari (left)  
Sillari- Mukund Dhurve with students on a nature trail (right)*



*Chorbahuli- A student on a nature trail refers to our publication on birds (left)*

*Kolitmara- Students, teachers, RFO and SF staff pose for a group photo after a camp (right)*



*Chorbahuli- Abhijit conducts a nature game for students during a nature camp (left)  
Chorbahuli- Abhijit explains about threats to wildlife (right)*

## **Employment Cell**

*Nature Guide Personality Development Training for Nature Guides at Kolitmara:*  
Satpuda Foundation conducted a one-day “Nature Guide Personality Development Training” for nature guides of Kolitmara, Khubala and Nagalwadi gates of Pench Tiger Reserve on December 24. Around 25 guides from the three gates participated in this workshop. The resource person for this training was Kunal Sharma from Chennai, Technical Expert, GIZ India, and ex-ecotourism consultant.

The aim of this program was to induce behavioral change in nature guides, which will enable the guides to interact with tourists in a professional way and will encourage them to educate the tourists through story-telling.



*Kolitmara- Nature Guide personality development training by Kunal Sharma (left);  
Kolitmara- RFO West Pench during Guide personality development training (right)*

The module for the training workshop included the following:

*Ice Breaking & Preliminary Evaluation (with cross introduction)*



<i>Ownership Building</i>
<i>Basics of human interaction and Mannerisms</i>
<i>Understanding Guest-Host relationship (with Role play)</i>
<i>Best practices in guest handling, including story-telling (with Role play)</i>
<i>Communication Rules (with Role play)</i>
<i>Activity – Transaction Analysis and Ego States</i>
<i>Hospitality and ego-management</i>
<i>Setting Outcomes and Expectations</i>

The guides expressed their satisfaction after completion of this workshop and thanked Satpuda Foundation for organizing such a workshop just before the start of the New Year. Certificates were distributed to the participants by the Range Forest Officer (West Pench), Ms. Ankita Telang at the end of the workshop.

*Mushroom cultivation Training for villagers at Khudsapar:*

On December 25, a training programme on cultivation of mushrooms was conducted at Khudsapar by Satpuda Foundation and VEDC Khudsapar. Villagers from Khudsapar, Bandra, Garra and Thuyepani attended this workshop.

The trainer, Abhimanyu Rao, from Sky Mushrooms, Nagpur gave theoretical and practical inputs on mushroom cultivation and marketing. Range Forest Officer (Deolapar), Mr. Praveen Sathawane was present during the workshop to encourage the villagers.



*Khursapar- Abhimanyu (Sky mushrooms) and Dilip with RFO, Deolapar during mushroom cultivation training for villagers (left)*

*Khudsapar - Live demonstration of mushroom cultivation (right)*

On December 16, Balkrishna conducted a meeting with SHG members in Ghatpendari. He discussed cloth bag and paper bag making initiatives with the SHG members.

*Livelihood activities & meetings:*

Sr.no.	Date	Village / Place	Livelihood Activity	Participants
1.	Dec 16	Ghatpendari	SHG Meeting	5
2.	Dec 24	Kolitmara	Guide Personality Development Training	28
3.	Dec 25	Khudsapar	Mushroom Cultivation Training	29
<b>Total Participants</b>				<b>62</b>

### Mobile Health Service (MHS)

Six free medical camps held in December in which 187 patients were treated.

S.no.	Date	Village	No. of Patients
1.	Dec 15	Khudsapar	36
2.		Usripar	48
3.	Dec 16	Tuyepar	17
4.		Kirangi Sarra	22
5.	Dec 17	Khapa	27
6.		Kadbikheda	37
<b>Total Patients Treated</b>			<b>187</b>



*Kirangi Sarra- Dr. Zanzal treats patients in the presence of Round Officer and Forest Guard (left)*

*Kirangi Sarra- Patients check their weight (right)*



*Tuyapar- Suresh distributing medicines to patients*

### **Research**

A field survey on recording snakes, incidence of sighting them and incidence of snake bites in buffer zone villages is currently underway. This study will help us in preparing a checklist of snakes for Pench Tiger Reserve, Maharashtra and will also help in noting the snake species that are more prone to come into contact with humans. The study will conclude in January 2019.