



BANABANDHU BENGAL SAFARI NEWSLETTER

LAST QUARTER / JULY - SEPTEMBER / 2025

VOLUME 10 | ISSUE 02

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



NORTH BENGAL WILD ANIMALS PARK, SILIGURI

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01. FromThe Director's Desk

Greetings from the NBWAP family!

We're pleased to share this quarter's Banabandhu newsletter, highlighting our successful District Level Ban Mahotsav celebration. Steady progress in research and zoo publications, along with new animal births and acquisitions, mark notable achievements. Our ongoing educational programs, enrichment activities, and public outreach reflect our commitment to conservation and community engagement.

With appreciation for our team's dedication and our supporters' partnership, we look forward to continued strides in wildlife conservation. Warm regards to all our stakeholders and visitors for being part of our journey.

**E. Vijayakumar, IFS,
Director,
North Bengal Wild Animals Park .**



02. Celebration of District Level Ban Mahotsav on 14th July 2025

Organized by the Directorate of Forests, Government of West Bengal “**Sobuj Bachao, Sobuj Dekhao, Sobujer Majhe Bibek Jagao**”, the District Level Ban Mahotsav 2025 was celebrated at Bengal Safari, Siliguri, highlighting the importance of tree plantation and forest conservation.

The event began with the inauguration of the “Bonyoprani Khadya Udyan” (Wildlife Fodder Park) by Shri Goutam Deb, Hon’ble Mayor of Siliguri, in the gracious presence of Shri Arun Ghosh, Sabhadhipati, Siliguri Mahakuma Parishad; Shri Dilip Dugar, Chairman, Siliguri Jalpaiguri Development Authority; Shri Ranjan Sarkar, Deputy Mayor, Siliguri Municipal Corporation; Shri Protul Chakraborty, Chairman, Siliguri Municipal Corporation; Dr. Kana Talukder, IFS, PCCF, Research Monitoring & Development, Directorate of Forests, Government of West Bengal; Shri Rajesh Kumar, IFS, PCCF, North Bengal; Shri C. Sudhakar, IPS, Commissioner of Police, Siliguri Police Commissionerate; Shri Manas Ranjan Bhatta, IFS, Addl. PCCF & Chief Conservator of Forests (Research); Shri P. Kamalakanth, IFS, Addl. PCCF & CCF, Special Development Projects; Wing Commander Priyanka Pandey, Commanding Officer, Indian Air Force Police HQ, Assam-Bengal-Sikkim Sector; Shri Bhaskar J. V., IFS, CCF, Wildlife (North Circle); Shri Samir Gajmer, IFS, CCF, Hill Circle; Dr. Basavaraj S. Holeyachi, IFS, Director, Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park, Darjeeling; Shri Priya Ratna Pradhan, IFS, CCF, North-West Circle; Shri T. T. Bhutia, IFS, CCF, Soil Conservation; Shri Arun Kumar Mukherjee, IFS, Director, Zoological Garden, Alipore & CF, Development Circle; Shri Kumar Vimal, IFS, General Manager (North), West Bengal Forest Development Corporation; Smt. Archana Pandharinath Wankhade, IAS, Chief Executive Officer, SJDA; Shri Avadh Singhal, IAS, Sub-Divisional Officer, Siliguri; Shri Vishwanath Pratap N., IFS, Divisional Forest Officer, Darjeeling Wildlife Division; Shri E. Vijayakumar, IFS, Director, North Bengal Wild Animals Park, Siliguri; Shri Raja M., IFS, Divisional Forest Officer, Baikunthapur Division; Smt. Mousumi Patra, WBCS (Exe.), Project Director, DRDC, Siliguri Mahakuma Parishad; Smt. Nabaneeta Chakraborty, WBA&AS, DFA & EO, Deputy Secretary, Forest Department; Smt. Dawa Sangmu Sherpa, WBFS, Director, West Bengal Forest School; Smt. Angela Penjum Bhutia, WBFS, Divisional Forest Officer, Kurseong Soil Conservation Division; Smt. Bidisha Basak, WBFS, Divisional Forest Officer, Siliguri Social Forestry Division; Shri Ajay Pradhan, WBFS, Divisional Manager, Jalpaiguri Forest Corporation Division; Smt. Manjula Tirkey, WBFS, Divisional Forest Officer, Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP) Division along with other respected senior forest officials.

A specially designed eco-awareness tableau was flagged off after the inauguration, which will travel across the district spreading the message of forest conservation and distributing free saplings to the public to encourage mass participation in tree planting.

The celebration saw vibrant participation from students, educators, forest officials, and citizens through plantation drives, awareness sessions, and cultural performances dedicated to nature.



Escorting the respected dignitaries through a traditional dance procession .





Inauguration of the Wildlife Fodder Park.



Eco-awareness tableau flagged off, spreading the message of conservation.



Welcoming of the guest and lighting of the traditional lamp.



Commencement of the programme through the State Song.



Speech was delivered by various dignetaries.



Cycle Distribution to the selected students of various JFMC members.





Cultural dance performances showcasing the vibrant traditions of the Rai, Rabha, and Adivasi communities, followed by a captivating storytelling performance by the Mime Group.





Stalls set up by NBWAP along with various Forest Directorate Divisions



Vote of thanks delivered by Shri Bhaskar J. V., IFS, CCF, Wildlife (North)



Shri Janardhan Chowdhury, Assistant Security Supervisor, NBWAP conveying a poem on wildlife and environment to the audience.



Refreshments

03. Educational Outreach Programme on International Tiger Day Celebrated on 29th July 2025.



On the occasion of International Tiger Day 2025, Bengal Safari organized an engaging educational outreach programme at Ektiasal Tileswari Adhikari High School to raise awareness about tiger conservation and underscore the importance of protecting our national animal.

Aligning with this year’s theme, “Securing the Future of Tigers with Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities at the Heart,” the event highlighted the crucial role that local communities play in safeguarding wild tigers and their habitats.

The programme commenced with a vibrant Tiger Mask Parade, setting an enthusiastic tone for the day. This was followed by welcome addresses and inspiring speeches delivered by the Assistant Director of Bengal Safari and the Headmaster of the host school, who both emphasized the importance of education and community involvement in wildlife protection.

The cultural segment included:

- Poetic recitations by students and Bengal Safari staff
- Storytelling sessions reflecting human-wildlife coexistence
- A powerful dance drama titled “Saving Our Stripes,” which conveyed conservation messages through performing arts

আন্তর্জাতিক ব্যাঘ্র দিবস

“শুধু ব্যাঘ্রও, নয় ব্যাঘ্রও, পৃথিবী বাঁচবে।”
সংরক্ষণে ব্যাঘ্রের গুরুত্ব।
সংরক্ষণে অসুস্থ্যতা করা।

২৯শে জুলাই

আয়োজন: নব বঙ্গের প্রথম জাতিকোষ পার (বেঙ্গল সাফারি), শিলিগুরি।

বঙ্গের ব্যাঘ্রের সংখ্যা	১৯৭২	১৯৮২
১৯৭২	১,০৬২	
১৯৮২		২,৩০৭
২০১৮		২,২২০
২০১০		২,৭০০
২০০৬		১,৪১১

• বিশ্বের মোট ব্যাঘ্রের ৭৪%—এদের বেঁচে রাখতে কাজে
• দেশে রয়েছে ৫৩টি ব্যাঘ্র সংরক্ষণ কেন্দ্র (Tiger Reserve)

মজার তথ্য!

- ব্যাঘ্রের গড়ম ১ মিঃমিঃ লম্বা লম্বা হলে।
- ব্যাঘ্র এক শাফে গড়ে ৩০ ফুট দূরত্বে সোঁতে পারে।
- প্রতিটি ব্যাঘ্র গায়ে হাজারোটা দাগ এক-৩ মিঃমিঃ—একটি ব্যাঘ্রের দাগ হাজারটা সন্কে খন্দে। যেদা না, কেবলবে মনুষ্যের নিদারুণতাই মারা।
- ব্যাঘ্র সীংরে ব্যাঘ্রের কালোচোরা—এরা মুগ্ধ সীংক।

আমাদের করণীয় কি?

- ব্যাঘ্রের একা-সংরক্ষণ সংরক্ষণে সংরক্ষণে জড়িত।
- ব্যাঘ্রের প্রতিরক্ষণের বিকল্পে অস্বাভাবিক খুব।
- পরিবেশের ও ব্যাঘ্রের মধ্যে সংরক্ষণে জড়িত।
- পরিবেশের ব্যাঘ্র উদ্ভাবনের সহযোগে ব্যাঘ্র সংরক্ষণে অংশগ্রহণ করা।

অনুপ্রেরণার গল্প: বানী বহলি

বন্য জীব সংরক্ষণের জন্যেই ব্যাঘ্রের উদ্ভাবন করা হয়। গড়ে ১০ বছর বয়স পর্যন্ত বেঁচে থাকা ব্যাঘ্রের গড় আয়ুষ্কাল ১০-১৫ বছর। ব্যাঘ্রের উদ্ভাবন করা হয়। গড়ে ১০ বছর বয়স পর্যন্ত বেঁচে থাকা ব্যাঘ্রের গড় আয়ুষ্কাল ১০-১৫ বছর।

North Bengal Wild Animals Park

Students also had the opportunity to watch the Bengal Safari Theme Video and a special screening of the documentary “The Life of a Tiger.”

An interactive Zoo Keeper’s Talk was conducted, offering first-hand insights into the husbandry, behavioral care, and health management of tigers in captivity, fostering curiosity and empathy among the students.

The event concluded with a felicitation ceremony honoring participating students, followed by a wildlife pledge and a group photograph at the dedicated selfie zone, capturing the spirit of collective commitment to conservation.





Tiger mask parade by the students of Ektiasal Tileswari Adhikari High School, Siliguri.



Welcoming address and speech on tiger conservation by the Assistant Director of Bengal Safari and the Headmaster of Ektiasal Tileswari Adhikari High School, Siliguri.



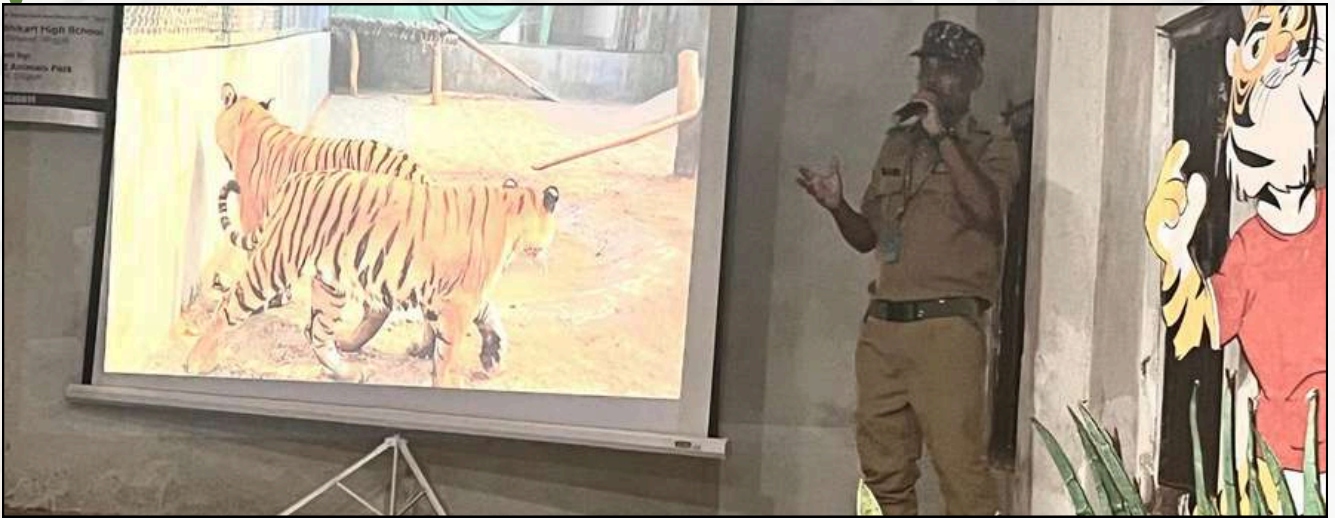


Poetic recitations, Storytelling sessions reflecting human-wildlife coexistence and Dance drama titled "Saving Our Stripes, performed by the students of Ektiasal Tileswari Adhikari High School, Siliguri.



Students and audience watching the Tiger Videos presented by the NBWAP team .





Keepers Talk: Presented by Mr Dipu Urow (Animal Attendant) representing the Tiger Night Shelter, NBWAP.



Poem on Tigers presented by Shri Janardhan Chowdhury, Assistant Security Supervisor, NBWAP.



Art work based on Tiger Day Displayed at the School's Hall.



Felicitating the participating students.



Students taking the Wildlife Pledge, reaffirming their commitment to protect and preserve nature and its wild inhabitants.



Vote of thanks by the Zoobiologist, NBWAP



04. Celebration of 79th Independence Day on 15th August 2025



Flag hosting by the Director, NBWAP

NBWAP commemorated 79th Independence Day with great enthusiasm as all staff assembled for the flag-hoisting ceremony. The Director and Assistant Director delivered brief and inspiring speeches highlighting the importance of national pride and dedication to duty. The programme concluded with light refreshments and a warm sense of togetherness among all staff members

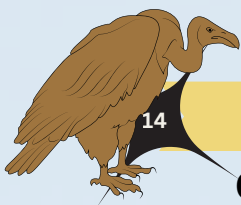


Few words by the Director and Assistant Director, NBWAP



Distribution of refreshments to the staff





05. Celebration of International Vulture Awareness Day On 6th September 2025

Bengal Safari observed International Vulture Awareness Day 2025 on September 6th, 2025 with great enthusiasm on the part of students and teachers of Ektiasal Tileswari Adhikari High School and the Gadadhar Abhyudaya Prakalp of Ramakrishna Ashram, Siliguri. The activities included guided safari tour, vulture enclosure visit, brochure distribution, interactive sessions, certificate distribution, and snacks. The event sought to raise awareness on the environmental role of vultures and to motivate students to relate better to nature and conservation, emphasizing that vultures are nature's clean-up crew and its conservation is our shared responsibility.



Guided safari tour and visit to the Vulture enclosure for the students of Ektiasal Tileswari Adhikari High School.



Certificate & brochure distribution by the Assistant Director, refreshments distribution and vote of thanks by the Zoo Biologist, NBWAP.



06. Observation of Forest Martyrs Day On 11th September, 2025

Forest Martyrs Day was observed on 11th September 2025 at NBWAP with due solemnity. The Assistant Security Supervisor addressed the gathering, recalling the sacrifices of frontline forest staff. Flowers were then offered by the Assistant Director and staff, incense was lit, and two minutes of silence were observed in their memory.



07. Celebration of World Rhino Day on 22nd September, 2025

On World Rhino Day, the Bengal Safari team comprising the Assistant Director, Shri Abhishek Chowdhury, WBFS, Range Officer, Shri Dwaipayan Rano, FR, and the Research & Education Section of the park conducted a programme at Cosmos Global Preschool, Salugara, to sensitise preschoolers about rhino conservation. The event began with the distribution of Rhino themed batch, an awareness workshop on rhinos conservation by the Education Assistant, followed by an engaging dance-action song focusing on rhino conservation. The children enthusiastically participated in mask colouring, enjoyed the selfie booth, and happily received rhino-themed stickers. Afterward, refreshments were served. This was followed by a group photo session, certificate distribution, and a vote of thanks by the Zoo Biologist. As a gesture of appreciation, the Range Officer of the park presented souvenirs to the teachers of Cosmos Global Preschool.

The celebration provided an exciting yet informative platform for preschoolers to understand the importance of wildlife conservation, with rhinos as the focal species.



Distribution of Rhino themed batch.





Presentation on Rhino Conservation by the Education Assistant and colouring of Rhino themed mask by the students.



Students of Cosmos Global Preschool enjoying the Rhino themed action song and selfie booth.

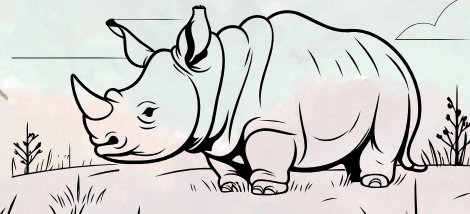




Vote of Thanks by the Zoo Biologist, followed by the distribution of souvenirs to the teachers of Cosmos School by the Range Officer, FR, and distribution of refreshments.



Group Photo



08. Update on Research Projects in This Quarter

Project 1: Study on Dung/Scat Analysis of Herbivore Animals To Analyse The Presence of Gut Parasites: Report has been submitted to WBZA, Kolkata.

Project 2: Captive Breeding & Management of Bengal Tiger: Report has been submitted to WBZA, Kolkata.

Project 3: The Study of Haematological and Biochemical values of Captive Asiatic Elephant: Report writing is in progress.

Project 4: Behavioural Study for the Captive Management of Asiatic Black Bear (*Ursus thibetanus*) at North Bengal Wild Animals Park. Behaviour observation of recently acquired black bears is in progress along with data analysis and report writing.

Project 5: Study on Hair Histology of some wild mammalian species in captivity at North Bengal Wild Animals Park: Hair samples has been collected from Darjeeling zoo this quarter. The preparation of photographic catalogue of hair cellular structure continues. Report writing is in progress simultaneously.

Project 6: A Comprehensive Waste Management Strategies for Zoological Parks at North Bengal Wild Animals Park, Siliguri: All lab reports of the vermicompost batches has been complied. Data analysis and report writing is in progress.

09. Publications In This Quarter

Scientific Journal

Pariyar, P., Amin, R., Vijayakumar, E., Rai, U., Chowdhury, A. and Doley, N*. 2025. Baseline Haematological Values in Captive Leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*) and Jungle Cats (*Felis chaus*) Housed at North Bengal Wild Animals Park, Siliguri, India. **Acta Scientific Veterinary Sciences**. 7(10): 14-17.

Popular Magazines and News Letters.

Sarkar, S., Doley, N., Chowdhury, A. and Vijayakumar, E. 2025. Enrichment of environment and assessment of its impact on six captive species of primates at North Bengal Wild Animals Park (Bengal Safari), Siliguri, West Bengal, India. **Bhanabithi**. Issue July 2025: pg 42-47.



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Case Report

Baseline Haematological Values in Captive Leopard Cats (*Prionailurus bengalensis*) and Jungle Cats (*Felis chaus*) Housed at North Bengal Wild Animals Park, Siliguri, India

Prishka Pariyar, Ruhul Amin, E Vijayakumar, Upashna Rai, Abhishek Chowdhury and Nick Doley*

North Bengal Wild Animals Park, Siliguri, West Bengal, India

*Corresponding Author: Nick Doley, North Bengal Wild Animals Park, Siliguri, West Bengal, India.

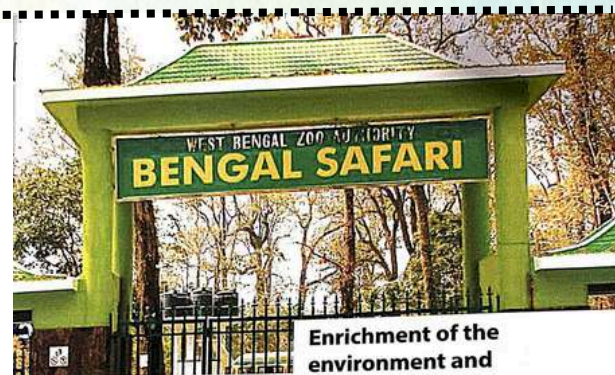
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Abstract

Considering the significance of haematological analysis in ex-situ facilities like zoological parks, the present study compiles major haematological parameters in captive Leopard cats (*Prionailurus bengalensis*) and Jungle cats (*Felis chaus*) housed at North Bengal Wild Animals Park, Siliguri. Blood samples from clinically healthy individuals were collected between September 2024 and August 2025 and analysed for red cell, white cell and thrombocyte profiles. The reports were compiled, and the results showed a notable interspecific trend in the mean values of red cell indices, such as Mean Corpuscular Volume, and individual variations in differential counts in both species of animals. Sufficient thrombocytes were recorded in all the studied individuals. While the low sample size in this study limits the establishment of reference intervals, the baseline data documented may be helpful to healthcare professionals while managing these species in captivity.



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North Bengal Wild Animals Park (Bengal Safari),
Siliguri, West Bengal, Pin-734008
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Enrichment of the environment and assessment of its impact on six captive species of primates at North Bengal Wild Animals Park (Bengal Safari), Siliguri, West Bengal, India

The concept of environment enrichment is relatively new. For primate species, captivity presents significant challenges. Captive animals might display behavior patterns that correspond to their wild behaviours when

10. Natality Recorded in This Quarter (Jul-Sep 2025)

S. No	Species	Sex	DOB
01	African Grey Parrot	U	02/07/2025
02	African Grey Parrot	U	03/07/2025
03	Royal Bengal Tiger (R1 2025)	U	07/07/2025
04	Royal Bengal Tiger (R2 2025)	U	
05	Royal Bengal Tiger (R3 2025)	U	
06	Royal Bengal Tiger (R4 2025)	U	
07	Royal Bengal Tiger (R5 2025)	U	
08	Indian Crested Porcupine	U	31/07/2025
09	Indian Crested Porcupine	U	31/07/2025
10	Black Buck	U	28/09/2025

11. Mortality Recorded In this Quarter (Jul-Sep 2025)

S. No	Species	Sex	DOD	Remarks
01	Spotted Deer	Male	04/07/2025	Mycotoxins.
02	Royal Bengal Tiger R1	U	07/07/2025	Stillbirth
03	Royal Bengal Tiger R3	U	27/07/2025	22 nd day old. Cardio-respiratory failure due to abdominal colic.
04	Royal Bengal Tiger cub R4	U	01/08/2025	26 days of age. Cardio-respiratory failure due to hypovolemic shock.
05	Indian-crested porcupine	U	06/08/2025	Identified as female in PM. Asphyxia.
06	Royal Bengal Tiger cub R2	U	24/08/2025	Cardiorespiratory failure. Identified as male in PM.
07	Royal Bengal Tiger cub R5	U	26/08/2025	Abdominal colic.
08	Brow antlered deer	M	09/09/2025	Cardiac arrest as a result of traumatic injury.

12. Animal Disposal in This Quarter (Jul-Sep 2025)

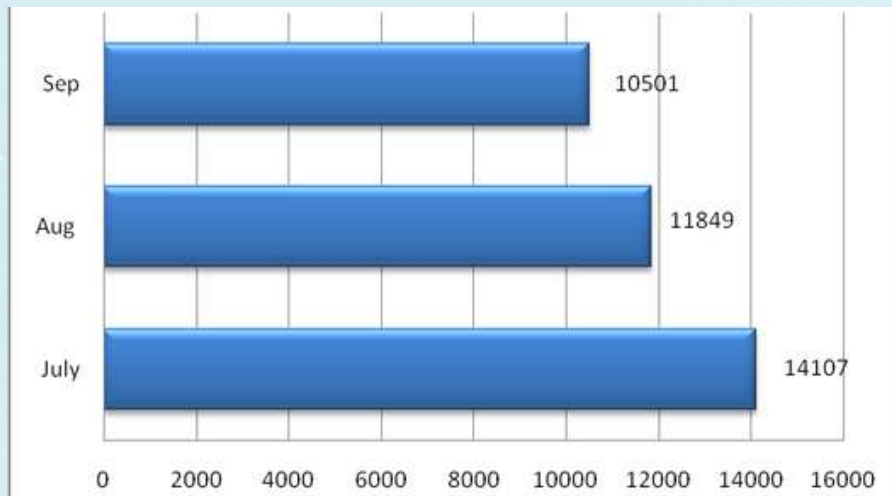
S. No	Species	Sex	Date	Disposed to
01	Leopard Cat- Falguni	M	10/09/2025	Junglemahal Zoological Park
02	Leopard Cat- LC4	M	10/09/2025	Junglemahal Zoological Park
03	Grey Parrot	1:1	10/09/2025	Junglemahal Zoological Park



13. Animal Acquisition in This Quarter (Jul-Sep 2025)

S. No	Species	Sex	Date	Acquired from
01	Fishing Cat	1:1:0	Reached NBWAP on 02/07/2025	Garchumuk Zoo
02	Asiatic Black Bear	1:1:0	Reached NBWAP on 02/07/2025	Alipore Zoo, Kolkata.
03	Painted Stork	2:2:0	Reached NBWAP on 02/07/2025	Alipore Zoo
04	Eurasian Spoon Bill	1:1:0	Reached NBWAP on 02/07/2025	Alipore Zoo
05	Gharial	0:2:0	Reached NBWAP on 02/07/2025	Garchumuk Zoo.
06	Green Iguana	0:0:6	Reached NBWAP on 02/07/2025	Alipore Zoo
07	Wild Dog	2:0:0	Reached NBWAP on 02/07/2025	Alipore Zoo
08	Indian Grey Wolf	1:1:0	12/09/2025	Junglemahal Zoological Park
09	Golden Jackal	1:0:0	12/09/2025	Junglemahal Zoological Park
10	Common leopard (Sweety)	F	02/09/2025	Rescued from Ghospukur Range, Kurseong Division on 22.11.2023; included in Park Inventory on 02.09.2025 with approval of PCCF(WL) & CWLW vide office memo no 2911/WL/2W-716/2022 dated 02/09/2025.
11	Common leopard (RLC-1)	F	02/09/2025	Rescued from Bamonpukun Range, Kurseong Division on 29/03/2024. included in Park Inventory on 02.09.2025 with approval of PCCF(WL) & CWLW vide office memo no 2911/WL/2W-716/2022 dated 02/09/2025.
12	Common leopard (RLC-2)	F	02/09/2025	From PHNZP on 06/04/2024. included in Park Inventory on 02.09.2025 with approval of PCCF(WL) & CWLW vide office memo no 2911/WL/2W-716/2022 dated 02/09/2025.
13	Common leopard (Bharat)	M	02/09/2025	Rescued from Siliguri junction, Baikunthapur Division on 30/01/2023. included in Park Inventory on 02.09.2025 with approval of PCCF(WL) & CWLW vide office memo no 2911/WL/2W-716/2022 dated 02/09/2025.

14. Visitor's Footfall in This Quarter (Jul-Sep 2025)



15. Training Programmes Attended by the NBWAP Staff This Quarter

- One day State Level Training Workshop on Avian Care & Captive Breeding at Zoological Garden Alipore, Kolkata held on 7th July, 2025.

Attended by: Mr. Biswajeet Sarkar (Veterinary Assistant) and Mr Prasenjit Barman (Animal Attendant).

- Three days Training Course on "Introduction to Conservation Medicine for Veterinarian working with Zoos in India from 18th to 20th August 2025 at Greens Zoological, Rescue & Rehabilitation Center, Jamnagar, Gujarat.

Attended by: Dr Nick Doley (Veterinary Officer)

- Regional Zoo Keeper Training Programme for Zoo Keepers of East Region at Tata Steel Zoological Park, Jamshedpur, Jhargram for the Year 2025-26 from 25th - 28th August, 2025.

Attended by: Mr. Dibakar Sharma (Animal Attendant).



16. Dignitaries' Visits at NBWAP In This Quarter

Amazing experience and excellent sighting. Congratulations to all.

Shri. Debashis Bhattacharya
Chief Commissioner
(Monitoring and Supervision)
Food, & Supply, Government of WB.
07.09.2025

Amazing to see the Safari after a decade. It has developed very nicely and can be stated as North Bengal Forest in a nutshell. All the best!

Dr Anupama, IFS
APCCF
North Bengal.
13.08.2025

Very Good maintenance

Shri. Giasuddin Molla , MLA, West Bengal.
24.07.2025

Very pleased to see around the area of the zoo. Well maintained and preserved the Endangered species. Hope more animals will be included under the parks care in the future. Mr. Dwaipayan Rano, FR took us around the park. He was well disciplined and made prompt arrangements for our safari tour. The safari was excellent.

Justice Smita Das De
Culcatta High Court
21.09.2025

17. School Visits at NBWAP In This Quarter

S. No	School/University/Institutions	Date of visit	Students	Staff	Incentive given
01	NIF Global, Ganpati Para, Sevoke Road, Siliguri	4.07.2025	23	-	Educational tour
02	Archarya Prafulla Chandra Roy College, Himachal Bihar, Matigara, Siliguri.	11.07.2025	22	2	Educational tour
03	Bahadur Munna's Happy Home High School (HS), Pangasahebbari, Dist Jalpaiguri.	13.08.2025	50		Educational tour
04	Tulsighata Jagatbandhu Institution, Tulshighata, Baishata, South 24 Parganas	29.08.2025	36		Educational tour
05	Ektiasal Tileswari Adhikari High School, Siliguri	06.09.2025	46	6	Educational tour
06	Terai Tea Garden Workers & Labour Welfare Society.	09.09.2025	26	5	Educational tour
07	Salesian College, Siliguri	19.09.2025	46	2	Educational tour
08	St. Captitiano Girl's Primary School, Champaguri.	20.09.2025	119	12	Educational tour
09	Don Bosco School, Oodlabari, Dist Jalpaiguri.	19.09.2025	45	5	Educational tour
10	Howrah South Point Social Welfare & Community Development Centre; Students of Homes (NGO)	02.09.2025 09.09.2025 16.09.2025 17.09.2025	53 58 29 55		Educational tour



18. Article Corner.

PUDDLING ON A MOIST WALL

Nabanita Paul,
Project Research Scholar

Butterflies are admired for their delicate wings and graceful flight, but their feeding behaviour tells an equally fascinating story. While larvae (caterpillars) feed on host plants, adult butterflies rely on nectar for energy. Nectar provides carbohydrates but lacks essential micronutrients needed for survival and reproduction.

To bridge this gap, butterflies engage in puddling, gathering on mineral-rich substrates such as mud, damp soil, animal droppings, carrion, or even walls with mineral deposits. These sources supply salts, amino acids, and trace elements absent in nectar. Sodium supports nerve and muscle function, while nitrogen aids growth and reproduction.

Males often transfer these nutrients to females during mating, boosting egg development and reproductive fitness. Like other puddling behaviour, wall puddling is most common in tropical regions but can also occur in temperate zones, highlighting butterflies' remarkable adaptability in meeting their nutritional needs.

During the rainy season in North Bengal (August–September), around midday, I observed an unusual sight of puddling on a moist wall surface. Several family members of Nymphalidae (the Brush-footed butterflies), under the subfamily Danainae (commonly called the Crows and Tigers): **Common Crow *Euploea core*, Oriental Magpie Crow *Euploea radamanthus*, Glassy Tiger *Parantica aglea*, and Striped Blue Crow *Euploea mulciber*** were recorded puddling together.



Photos by Nabanita Paul, at the Asiatic Black Bear shelter

Instead of gathering on mud or natural substrates, these butterflies were actively absorbing nutrients from the wall's moisture while pausing to rest. This observation highlights their remarkable adaptability in exploiting even human-modified habitats to meet physiological needs.

Key highlights of this behavior:

- **Nutrient Acquisition:** Provides essential minerals (sodium, nitrogen, amino acids, and trace elements) that are absent in nectar.
- **Physiological Benefits:** Supports nervous system function, muscle activity, and overall metabolic health.
- **Reproductive Fitness:** Enhances egg development and reproductive success; males transfer nutrients to females during mating.
- **Species Interactions:** Group puddling encourages social contact and may aid in mate location.
- **Habitat Adaptability:** Butterflies exploit a wide range of substrates, from mud and dung to even moist walls in human-modified environments.
- **Geographical Distribution:** Most common in tropical regions, but also observed in temperate zones, though less frequently.

EVEN IN BUILT ENVIRONMENTS, BUTTERFLIES CONTINUE TO SURPRISE US WITH THEIR REMARKABLE ADAPTABILITY AND

SURVIVAL STRATEGIES

1. Lamie, E., Morton, E. R., & Parzer, H. F. (2025). Puddling in butterflies: current knowledge and new directions. *Annals of the Entomological Society of America*, 118(2), 110-118.
2. Significance of puddling in life history of butterfly by Kunal Ankola

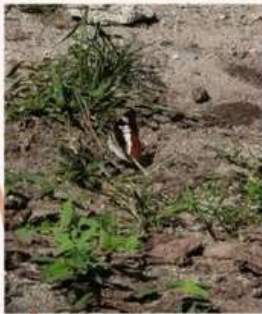
BUTTERFLIES' HIDDEN FEAST: DUNG PUDDLING AT NORTH BENGAL WILD ANIMALS PARK

NABANITA PAUL
Project Research Scholar

In the heart of North Bengal Wild Animals Park, a fascinating spectacle unfolds, one that often goes unnoticed but plays a crucial role in the lives of butterflies. On the moist dung of Asiatic Black Bears, three butterfly species: *Moduza procris* (Commander), *Papilio clytia* (Oriental Common Mime), and *Charaxes bernardus* (Tawny Rajah), gather in a behavior known as dung puddling.

What Is Dung Puddling?

Dung puddling is a behavior where adult butterflies feed on nutrient-rich substances like animal droppings. While nectar provides energy, it lacks essential minerals. Dung, however, is rich in salts, amino acids, and nitrogen compounds, which are vital for butterflies' physiological functions and reproductive success.



Commander
Moduza procris

Why Do Butterflies Engage in Dung Puddling?

Butterflies, especially males, seek out these nutrient sources to supplement their diet. The minerals obtained enhance their flight capabilities, support nervous system function, and improve reproductive fitness. Interestingly, males transfer these nutrients to females during mating, aiding in egg development and increasing offspring viability.



Tawny Rajah
Charaxes bernardus



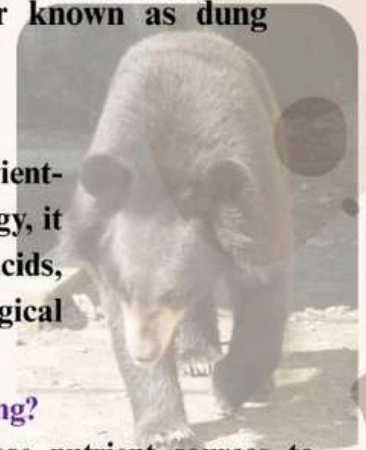
Oriental Common Mime
Papilio clytia

When and Where to Observe

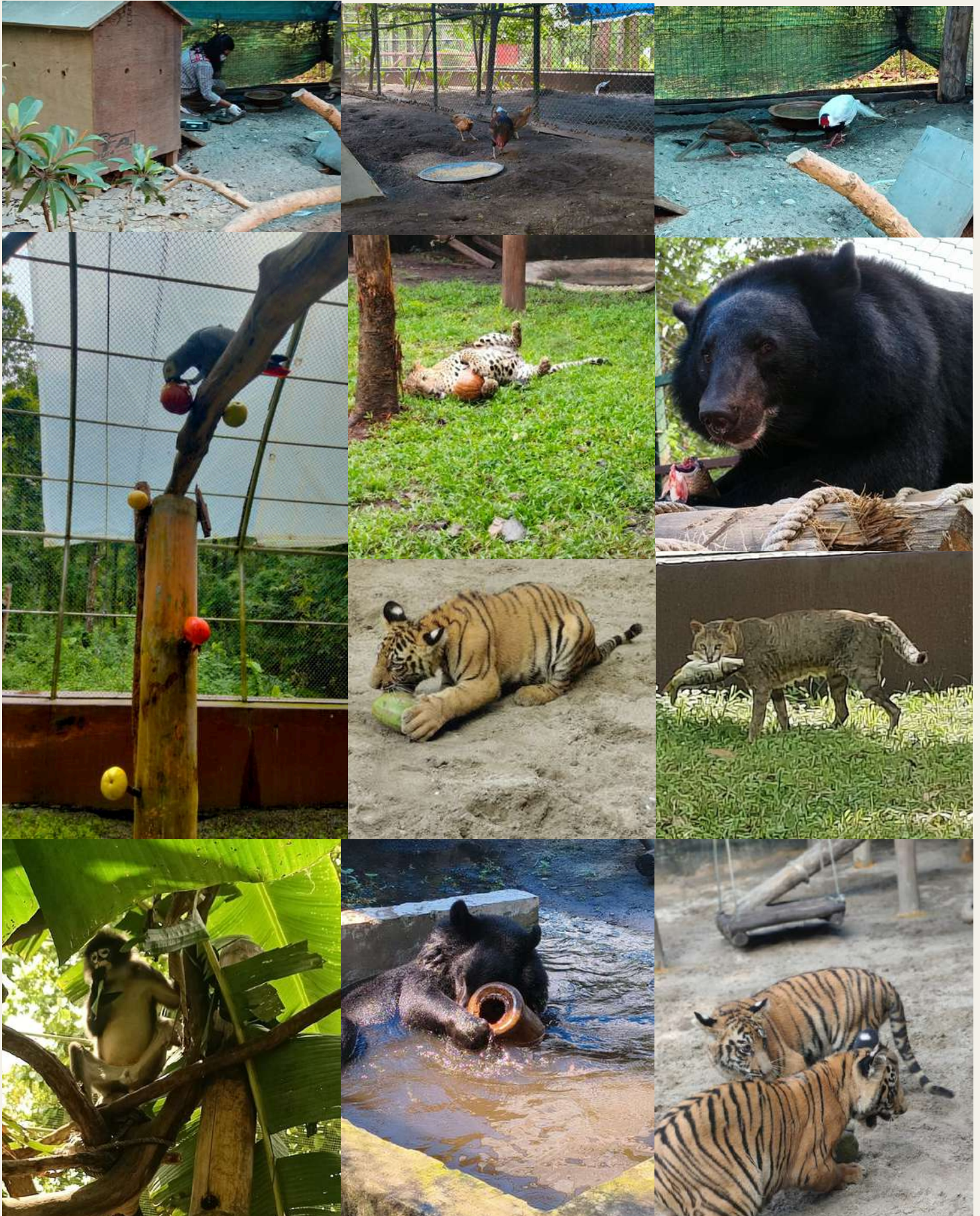
These butterflies are most active during the post-monsoon months, typically from October to December, when the bear dung is moist and rich in nutrients. Observing them requires patience and a keen eye, as they often feed in shaded areas to avoid predators.

Ecological Significance

Dung puddling is more than just a feeding behavior, it's a vital ecological interaction. By feeding on dung, butterflies help in nutrient cycling within the ecosystem. Their presence indicates a healthy, biodiverse environment, making their observation a rewarding experience for nature enthusiasts.



19. Enrichments Done in This Quarter



20. Developmental Work in This Quarter



Construction of Guard room at BLD 1



Compound gate repairing at R.O. quarter



Electrical fencing at the residential area and along the lion enclosure.

21. Animal Adoption In This Quarter

Adopt an animal
"Be a part of conservation"

Aman Kumar Kataria
Kaushambi, Gaziabad, Uttar Pradesh
has proudly adopted two
Indian Black Turtle
for the period of one year
from 21.06.2025 to 20.06.2026

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"Be a part of conservation"

SBI
STATE BANK OF INDIA
Adopted
ASIATIC LION & ROYAL BENGAL TIGER
for the period of one year, 22.09.2025 to 21.09.2026
AT BENGAL SAFARI, SILIGURI, WEST BENGAL, INDIA

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