

Report
of
Visit to Gir Jamvala National Park
(27/12/2019 to 29/12/2019)

Compiled by
Abhishek Nena and Akshita Patel
(M.Sc. Zoology, Semester-IV)

Report compiled with inputs and guidance from
Dr. Rupal Vasant and Prof. Ujjval Trivedi

Submitted to
P.G. Department of Biosciences
Sardar Patel University
Vallabh Vidyanagar

Every year the forest department of Gujarat organizes government as well as private camps at Batheshwar camp site, Jamvala near Talala gir in Junagadh. There are only a few NGO and school in Gujarat that gets permission to camp at this place. Native people of Gir believed that if Gir invites you, only then would you enter in Gir otherwise not. Group of 6 students- Darshan Sapariya, Mohit Patel, Jinal Patel, Akshita Patel, Khusbhu Patel and Abhishek Nena from B. R. Doshi School of Biosciences attended this private camp organized by LION FOUNDATION-Maliya (Hatina). This group started their journey 19 years before under the guidance of Hiten Kanabar, Jitu Purohit and Rajnikant Bhatt who initiated this work and established LION FOUNDATION.

Datardi River



Batheshwar campsite



River crossing



Jamvala railway station



Rickshaw ride



Heritage train

We started our journey from 26th Dec. 2019 and boarded our bus from Anand bus station at 9.45pm and reached Junagadh at 5:30 am. There after we had to catch up the heritage train from Junagadh railway station at 7:30 am. There were many buses to reach Jamvada, but we preferred the train because that train passes through the jungle and we wanted to enjoy the train passing through the jungle.

We reached Jamvala at 11 am and got the chakdo rickshaw to reach the Batheshwar camp site. The rickshaw was like a royal ride for the local people of gir and for us, it was the best feeling ever to ride on Rickshaw in the Gir forest. We were tired due to traveling but after seeing the camp site, the tiredness disappeared as we were into a very beautiful place. There are two rivers Shingodo and Datardi and Batheshwar camp site was located between two rivers.

Sunset



Pugmark of leopard



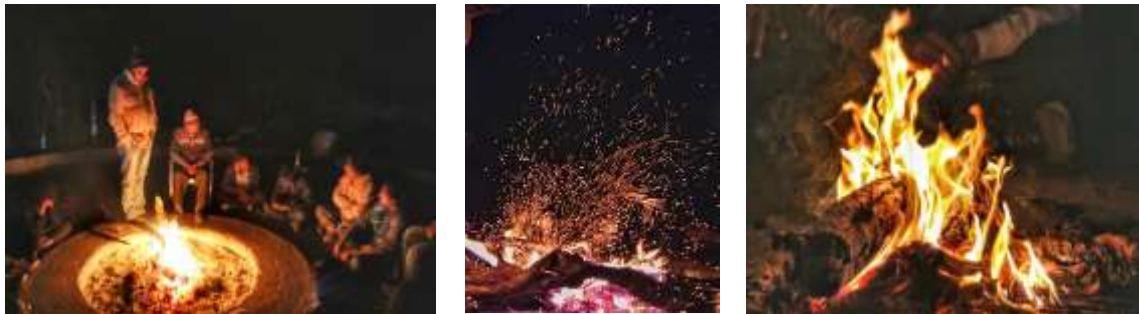
Crocodile



We had our lunch there and accommodation was provided in the tents separately for girls and boys. At 3.30 pm all the participants gathered for the introductory session wherein we all introduces ourselves including hobbies and the purpose to attend this camp. Including us there were 25 participants. 2 resource persons and 2 forest beat officers joined us and guided us for the next trek session. After this introductory session, we walked towards the sunset point where we observed pugmarks and crocodile at the Shingoda River area, the route of the sunset point then we all sat silently for few minutes and then started the discussion regarding basic flora and fauna, their importance, difference between different zones of forest and different types of forest and then Sagar kanabar(resource person) shared details about Gir : It was established in 1965, with a total area of 1,412Km² of which 258 km² is fully protected as National park and 1,153 km² as wildlife sanctuary. The Gir forests support a rich biodiversity comprising 32 species of mammals, 26 species of reptiles and thousands of insects. Around 300 species of birds are recorded both residents and migratory and great ornithologist Dr. Salim Ali said that if there were no lions here then Gir would be known as the best bird sanctuaries. After in depth details, we waited for sunset with our silent fellow companion spotted deer. The chirping of several birds, returning call of plum headed parakeets, alexandrine parakeets and monkeys making goofy voices made the sun set view more hypnotic. We returned thereafter to our campsite and had some conversations with new people followed by dinner.

The night got more progressive and younger by the campfire. Some of them who had already come prior to this shared their views about Gir and also telling their amusing experiences. Jitu sir sang few songs which he had written by themselves describing the conditions of Gir and their attachment towards that place. Also Darshan and Abhishek narrated traditional songs and shayaris which they had written. We sung several old songs of 60's and 70's. Modern songs were strictly prohibited. At 12 o'clock at night, most of the participants went to sleep but we few peoples were still there to enjoy night. The cricketers were chirping, the spotted owls were shouting and suddenly there was a roar and Deva aata said in his language that “આ તો અમારી ભુયરી સે, એના બચ્યાંને બોલાવે સે ને નદીનાં કાઠે પાણી પીવા આયવી લાગશ”. At first, we were unknown but later we realized that BHURI was the name of lioness. Deva aata was watchman during camping season also master in identification lion or lioness from roaring and pugmarks then tea was served at midnight by Deva Aata. We had this entertaining session till 2 o'clock at night and to our amaze in spite of the hectic day long tiredness, all of us were yet fresh to enjoy lot more in the laps of mother nature. Finally, we all directed towards their respective tents for rest.

Campfire and Reporting



Next day (28th December, 2019), all of had plenty of enthusiasm to begin our enlightening day. We had our tea and breakfast at 6.30 am. All were divided into 2 teams. One was led by Malay Barot and other by Sagar Kanabar. There were two treks – Singoda dam trek and Bakri wada trek. We were total 11 in a team. We went to bakri wada trek. Walking around trek of 6-7kms approx., crossing a small river, we took a break there and had some snacks. Jitu sir gave information about several trees and its importance. Also the lady forest beat officer shared her experiences regarding the location of leopards and lions after she joined the department. She told how courageously she would work tirelessly even in stress. On the way we noticed various birds such as chestnut bellied petronia, owlets,

plum headed parakeets, pygmy woodpecker, Tickell's blue flycatcher, paradise flycatcher, copper smith barbet, common iora, Asian koel, red breasted flycatcher and many more. Herds of deer were sighted. Several unidentified spider species were also sighted. We then returned back to the camp site and had our lunch followed by rest. By 4 pm we started our walking again subsequently ended by reaching the sunset view point. All of us were engrossed in the discussions regarding our checklists, the identification criteria for unknown animals and their habitat studies. Our student Akshita Patel from Zoology provided brief information about their discipline domain knowledge and Hina Nena from Botany briefed about her subject. While our talks were going on, we found 2 blue bull and spotted deer. We then came back to our camp site as the sun was slowly setting down and moon arose. After dinner, we all gathered again near camp fire and report was presented by representative member from each team. Along with playing the games, singing the songs, light refreshment and tea was served again to end the day in a jovial manner

Field tracking and discussion

We began our last day (29th December) with tea and breakfast at 6.30 am. Both the teams started onto their routes. One for Singhoda dam and one for bakri wada route. Singhoda dam was our today's route. Going through the lane, viewing the scenic view of river flowing nearby. Going through the forest, taking in the forest atmosphere, reducing stress,



increased energy level, deeper and clearer intuition and overall increase in sense of happiness was all that felt. We crossed a small river and enchanted 'aum' to lighten ourselves from a long walk. On the way apart from day 1 fauna, we saw evening brown butterfly, a tree covered with jezebel, greater tit, Asian brown flycatcher, and many flora species. After a long walk, we reached the singhoda dam, the huge reservoir of water. Number of swifts and heronry sighted. We had our snacks there. Took some rest and went back to reach the camp site. On the return track, baby spotted deer and trinket snake was sighted. We reached the campsite and had our delicious lunch. Lastly the report was given and DFO came for valedictory session. Certificates were distributed and each member

shared their experience of these 3 days. We boarded our bus and returned to Vallabh Vidyanagar.

Three beautifully spent days with great memories permanently embedded in the heart instead of photos.



And then we realized that field adventure is always the best way to learn

FAUNAL DIVERSITY:



Asian paradise flycatcher



Fan throated lizard



Spotted deer



Brown capped pygmy woodpecker



Evening brown butterfly



Common jezebel butterfly



Funnel spider web



Mugger crocodile

Submitted By:

Darshan Sapariya
Mohit Patel
Abhishek Nena
Jinal Patel
Khushbu Patel
Akshita Patel