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Tour Report
Nagarhole Photo Safari
19 – 28 April 2026

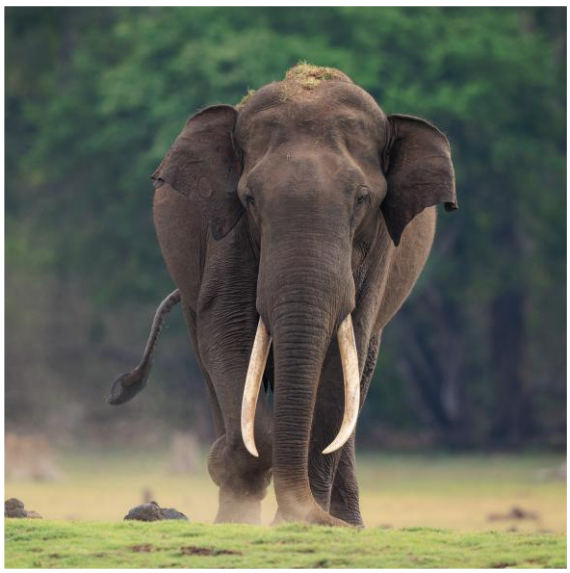
Tiger with sub-adult cub



Osprey



Asian elephant



Tigress



Compiled by Bret Charman

Sunday 19 April 2026

Day 1:
Depart London Heathrow; fly Bangalore

The group flight departed London at lunchtime, with an overnight flight to Bangalore.

Monday 20 April 2026

Day 2:
Bangalore to Kabini River Lodge; Nagarhole National Park

The group flight arrived on time at Bangalore. With some of the group arriving from other parts of India, they met up in arrivals with local guide Sneeha there to help. The last members of the group met up with everyone at breakfast at the Taj hotel in the city.

Once everyone had their fill at breakfast, it was time to climb back aboard the bus and start the four-hour drive to Kabini River Lodge. It was here that I met the group and ate at around midday. We soon had everybody checked in, transferred to their rooms and gave them the timings and details for lunch. After a long journey, this was the perfect chance for everyone to freshen up a little.

At lunch, Sneeha informed the group what time to meet at the vehicle for our first drive in Nagarhole National Park. We started off by heading into Zone B. This was because earlier this morning, our driver Sadiq had seen a tiger at a waterhole. This was to be our first stop, and we headed straight there. As we worked our way along the tracks, there was plenty of birdlife all around, with Indian roller, plum-headed parakeet, Indian cuckoo-shrike and Brahminy starling all seen. There was also a large male elephant near the park's second gate.

Having driven around the park's boundary, checking all the waterholes, the tigress was notably absent. We continued back around and came across a group of bonnet macaques, langurs and spotted deer. It was the macaques that were particularly entertaining and made for some great photography.



After enjoying this charming troop of macaques, we started to make our way down the track. Suddenly, one of the group called out, "Tiger!" There was a beautiful tigress wandering along the roadside. Unfortunately, she wasn't too keen on carrying on along the roadside, walking into the deep undergrowth and out of sight. Waiting on the road, slightly further along, we hoped she might reappear, but it was clear she wasn't coming out on the track. Instead of seeing the tiger again, we had to make do with a ruddy mongoose, quickly followed by a second individual.

With no further luck, it was soon time to head back to Kabini River Lodge for a cold drink and our first dinner together as a group.

Tuesday 21 April 2026

Day 3:
Nagarhole National Park

Waking early, there was a slight haze in the air as we made our way through the rural landscape on our approach to the park gate. We had been assigned Zone A this morning and found the regular langurs and spotted deer by the first small waterhole, while the eerie calls of a changeable hawk eagle rang through the trees. Our first stop was at the large waterhole known as Tiger Tank. It was here that we saw a couple of rollers, with one diving down to the floor and catching a large centipede, before taking it into the nesting hole to feed its chicks. With no tiger in sight, or any alarm calls, we carried on through the forest, keeping our eyes peeled for whatever might show itself. It was then that we stumbled upon a pair of stripe-necked mongooses. The two of them were engaged in some sort of mating behaviour, wrestling around and sticking to one another like glue. Winding our way back towards one of the waterholes, we came across a vehicle that had heard alarm calls. We parked up and waited to see what might appear. Suddenly, the vehicle behind us moved off, and there it was, a huge male tiger known as Cut Lip, wandering across the road and away into the trees beyond. We were a little too late to get the tiger walking toward us.



Sadiq and Sneeha thought that he might wander through the forest and appear on the other side. With that in mind, we drove around and positioned our vehicle in a spot where Sadiq thought he might appear once more. Unfortunately, Cut Lip never made another appearance and instead stayed hidden amongst the trees.

The sun was now rising higher in the sky and the heat of the day was starting to build. As such, the mammal activity was starting to dwindle, but the birdlife was busy, with green bee-eater coming to and fro a nesting hole, common kingfisher and hoopoe, while pond turtles emerged from the small waterhole now covered in red algae, where a male chital came down to drink. It was here we spotted yet another stripe-necked mongoose coming down to drink. Then it was time to head back to the lodge for breakfast.

After a welcome rest during the day, we met back up at the vehicle ready for our afternoon safari. We had been assigned Zone A once again. Driving straight to Tiger Tank, we hoped to find the resident female, but alas, she was nowhere to be seen. After waiting a little while, we carried on to the other waterholes, trying to see whether there might be a tiger somewhere else. Instead of a tiger, we found a particularly obliging, white-bellied woodpecker as it searched for food on a dead tree. These usually shy, large woodpeckers are absolutely stunning, and this was among the best views we were likely to enjoy.





Continuing, we drove down to the small flowing stream behind the old forest resthouse. All was quiet except for the magical sounds of the forest, and so we slowly worked our way back to the waterholes. Instead of finding a tiger, we came across a group of wild boar wallowing in the mud. Unfortunately, our presence startled them, and they retreated up the bank to use a tree to relieve an itch with a vigorous scratch.

Despite our best efforts of looking for and listening for any signs of a tiger, it was time to make our way to the park exit and freshen up before meeting in the bar. Having quenched our thirst, we headed down for a very well-deserved dinner.

Wednesday 22 April 2026

Day 4:
Nagarhole National Park

This morning we were heading into Zone B, and as Sadiq signed us in and got our GPS tracker, the resident pack of dhole made an appearance. Unfortunately, though, a pack of domestic dogs appeared and drove the wild dogs further into the park. Thankfully, the feral dogs didn't follow, and all of the wild dogs were safely distant with their pups in tow. At first, it looked as if the pack would disappear into the thick undergrowth of the forest understory, and so Sadiq moved us onto the old main road to try and get ahead of them.

After a short wait, with no sign of the dhole, we drove back to where we lost the dhole. Driving up a slight rise, there was the pack ahead of us. They were trotting along, with one of the pups reluctant to leave something behind. It turned out that it had a hold of a giant squirrel and it was determined to try and keep hold of its prize. In the end though, the instinct to keep with its family drove it to abandon its meal.

Not far in front of them, there was a herd of chital (spotted deer), and it looked as if they had begun to stalk them. Once again, we ensured we got ahead of the pack in case of any kill, maximising our chances to photograph the moment. On this occasion, the pack didn't seem overly keen on hunting and simply trotted along towards the junction of Zone B. Here we positioned the vehicle in the best place to photograph the dhole as they walked straight at us, before crossing the road right by our vehicle.





The pack carried on its way, heading into Zone A. There was no way for us to follow the dhole, and so we carried on into Zone B to see what else we could find and photograph. What a fantastic start to the day. Once we reached the bridge that looks over one of the waterholes, we paused to listen out for alarm calls. Instead of any alarms, we enjoyed the magnificent sound of birdsong which filled the forest air. There was one alarm call, but the forest was otherwise quiet, and so we moved on until we stumbled upon a crested serpent eagle which was particularly cooperative.



Carrying on the same stretch of road, there were some vehicles ahead who reported a tiger had been seen walking this way from Zone A. We paused and listened to the sounds of the forest once more. To our surprise, there was a recognisable growl from the thick scrub and then the chital in the trees started to run. There she was, a tigress moving through the tangle of branches along the roadside. She never fully emerged, but walked directly past our vehicle and offered us a tantalising view and minimal but striking photographic opportunities.



Unfortunately for us, the tigress kept off the road and then proceeded to move back into Zone A, where we couldn't follow. We could hear the alarms of chital ringing out as the tigress continued to amble along, making her way to wherever it was she was heading. Realising that we were unlikely to see her again this morning, we turned away from the area and found a large elephant drinking. Just as we were leaving the zone, there was a herd of elephants in the thick vegetation off to one side of the track. We were soon back at the lodge and helping ourselves to a hearty breakfast in the dining area.

After meeting up at the safari vehicle after lunch, we were soon on our way into the park and we had once again been assigned Zone A. Winding our way along the forest trails, we worked our way towards the Tiger Tank waterhole once again; here we found a family of elephants enjoying the water. The two adult females and the adolescent were thoroughly enjoying themselves, washing and rolling, as well as spraying themselves with mud. Once everyone had their fill, so to speak, we stopped by the tree to find the resident scops owl, while an oriental honey buzzard was drinking at one of the other waterholes.

At the smaller waterhole, just down the hill, we arrived to find a researcher's vehicle. They quickly informed us that a male tiger was hiding in the forest, just out of sight. They had seen the tiger walk in, and with spotted deer in almost every direction, it had clearly not moved again. Knowing there was a tiger so close, we decided it was probably best to play the waiting game and see what might unfold. It was then that we noticed what we thought was a juvenile changeable hawk eagle. However, it turns out, having looked closely at the bird, that it was in fact a pale morph oriental honey buzzard. We were able to capture some stunning images of this striking bird as it moved from tree to tree, with the standout moment being when it took flight

from a dead tree.



It was while we were sat here that the bonnet macaques descended into chaos. A brutal fight unfolded before us, with a couple of males attacking and bullying a female with a young baby. It wasn't really possible to capture any photos of this fierce attack, but what was to come was even more chaotic. A herd of spotted deer came down to the water to drink, and one of them must have caught sight of the tiger in the undergrowth. Suddenly, the herd of deer reacted with incredible speed – darting away from the water and creating a maelstrom of legs, spots and alarm calls. The macaques now joined in with the alarms. It all happened so quickly; the speed was remarkable. We stayed as long as we could, hoping the tiger might make an appearance, coming down to the water for a drink, but he never showed.

Luck hadn't been on our side this afternoon, but we enjoyed a brief sighting of a young male elephant (with surprisingly large tusks) on our way out of the park. Returning to the lodge, we had the chance to freshen up before meeting up in the bar, before wandering down for dinner.

Thursday 23 April 2026

Day 5:
Nagarhole National Park

As light fell across the landscape at dawn, there was no mist around the lodge or the surrounding farms. We rolled into Zone B and almost immediately stumbled upon fresh tracks of a sloth bear, with two sets of cub tracks accompanying them. We continued up the road, with the tracks having come all the way along, in the opposite direction. Driving along, we had brief views of sambar and spotted deer, wild boar and langur, when suddenly the mist that was absent so far was hanging in the air.

Sadiq and Sneeha had stopped the vehicle at a break in the forest where the power lines dissected the forest in two. It was then that I heard what sounded like the growl of a tiger. Sneeha then heard it too. Somewhere within the mist that surrounded us, a tiger was walking through the trees. The only issue, we couldn't see

her. We heard one more distant growl, but then the forest fell silent. It seemed as if the tiger was walking parallel to the road, but we never did see it. The forest remained quiet, except for a multitude of different species, until we stumbled upon a pack of dhole (a different pack). The dogs had obviously made a kill and they were busy devouring their morsels of food. It turned out that they had caught and quickly devoured a black-naped hare. The light was still soft and we were treated to some exceptional photography opportunities (primarily of the pups).



Within only a few minutes, the pack were finished with their meal and they disappeared off into the forest. Knowing we were unlikely to see them again, we worked our way slowly to the backwaters. The forest here is beautiful and it wasn't long before we were enjoying views of giant squirrel, bonnet macaque and a large family of wild boar. Photographic opportunities were very limited and so we simply enjoyed the ambience and the magnificent sounds. With the day starting to heat up, we were soon making our way back to the lodge for a bite to eat and a rest.

This afternoon we were to be leaving the safari vehicle behind and heading out on the water for a boat safari. We met back up after lunch, but this time at the jetty in front of the lodge. We climbed aboard our vessel and set sail towards the national park. The backwaters of the Kabini Dam are huge and provide a refuge for a whole host of water-loving species, while the shores are the perfect place for grass to grow. This forage attracts huge numbers of elephants and spotted deer, with some elephants travelling hundreds of miles to feast on the fresh grass growth. As the levels of the backwaters drop, so more shore is exposed, and the amount of grass available increases exponentially.

Moving away from the lodge, we had already seen several great cormorants, intermediate egret, spot-billed duck, woolly-necked stork and black-headed ibis. It was just after we spotted the storks and ibis that we caught sight of a smooth-coated otter walking on a sand bar. What a fantastic start to the boat trip. The otter was very relaxed and as it reached the middle of the sand bar, the otter started to roll around and rest on its back repeatedly. It was great to be able to capture an entire portfolio of imagery.





The number of birds around was quite exceptional, with river tern, Eurasian spoonbill, black-winged stilt, grey heron and Asian openbill. However, it was a second otter that stole the show. Just a little further along the backwaters, this otter was swimming when we first spotted it, before climbing out onto another sandbar. It spooked the openbills that were resting on the sand, before spraining and returning to the water again.

With plenty of water to cover, the skipper kept us moving and into the stretch of water with Nagarhole and Bandipur National Parks either side. It was here that we could see a large tusker on the Bandipur side of the water, while a lone dhole was trotting along the edge of the treeline.



Once the wild dog had moved on, the tusker became our primary focus. The skipper skilfully moved the boat into position, and we were able to photograph this impressive elephant as he skilfully and surprisingly elegantly excavated the fresh grass growth from the soil. As the elephant coordinated its trunk and foot movement, removing any excess soil from the grass' roots, the dust wafted through the air.

A little further along the water, there was an osprey perched up on a dead tree. The light was a little bright, but softening all the while. The osprey was obviously looking out for an easy meal, but for the time being it was perfectly positioned for some portraits. It wasn't long before we found another osprey, perched on a branch, but this one didn't hang about, quickly taking flight and moving away from us.



Other mammals included numerous wild boar, hundreds of chital and a pair of huge male gaur wandering out of the forest and across the open grass closer to the water's edge. With the light starting to fade, we were heading back towards the lodge when the skipper spotted a herd of elephants just back from an inlet. He manoeuvred the boat through a narrow channel and positioned us along the shore so the group could photograph the herd of elephants. It was while we sat with the boat parallel to the shore that a lovely black-winged stilt was feeding along the water's edge and provided some wonderful photographic opportunities. There were also a number of other birds around the inlet, including little egret, wood sandpiper, little ringed plover and red-naped ibis. We couldn't stick around too long as we had to be out of the park at 6 pm. The skipper moved us back into the main channel, and in the distance we could see a herd of elephants as they came down to the water to drink.



It was around now that we had a little difficulty with the engine. It wasn't running too smoothly, and after a little TLC the skipper got us back underway, albeit with a little less haste. We arrived safely back at the lodge's jetty and wandered up the slope to our rooms. Following our usual routine, we met up in the bar at 7 pm, before heading down to dinner around 7.30 pm.

Friday 24 April 2026

Day 6:
Nagarhole National Park

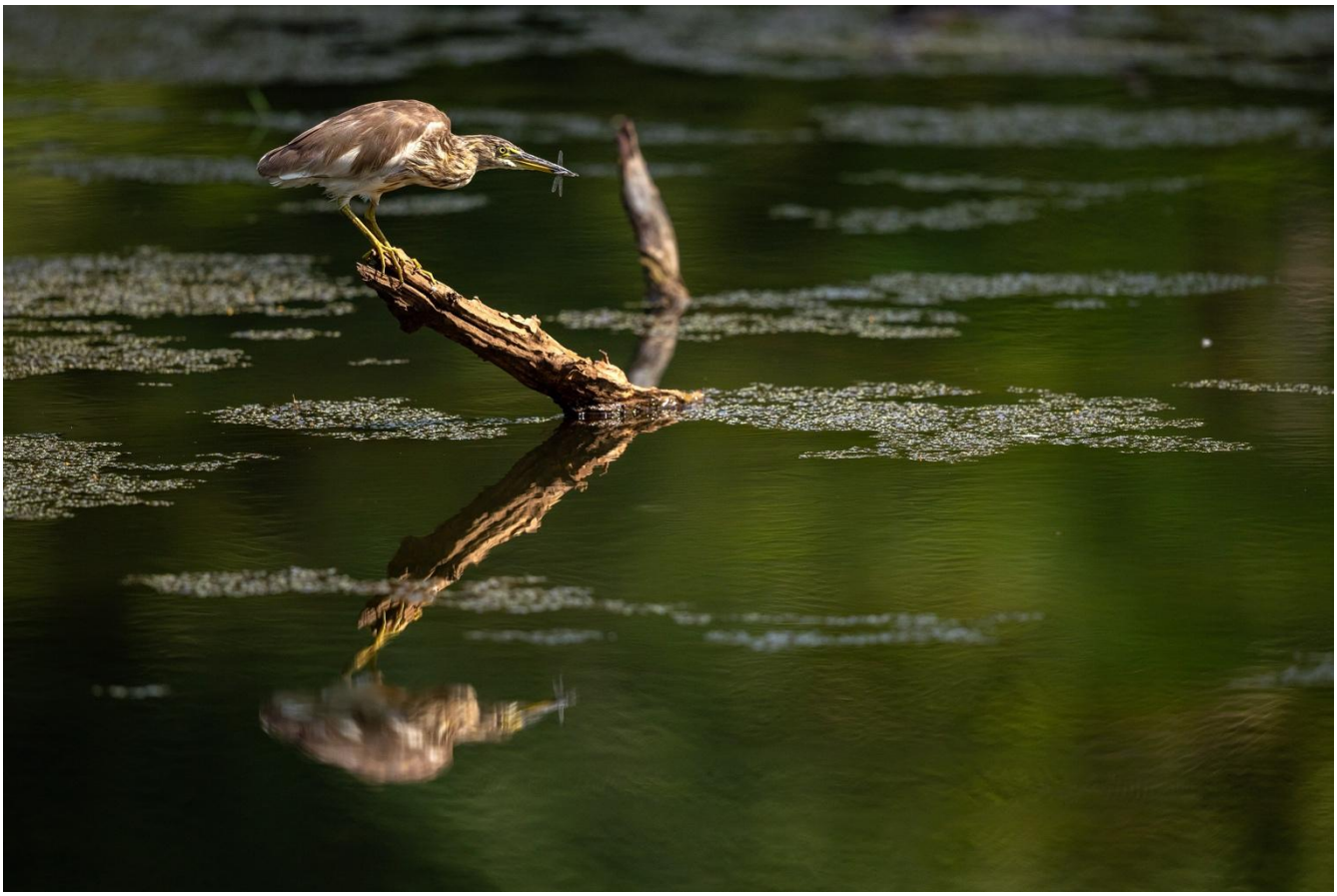
Waking today, there was a thick mist hanging across the Kabini landscape. Driving through the park gates, we were assigned Zone A this morning. We soon came across the familiar sight of langur, chital and a wild boar – delighting one member of the group who had a soft spot for these impressive mammals. The scops owl was sitting in its usual spot, while white-throated kingfisher, red-wattled lapwing, black-rumped flameback and streak-throated woodpecker were among a few of the bird species we encountered. Somehow, through a tangle of branches, Sneeha spotted a jungle owlet, but it was almost impossible to photograph. Our first photographic stop was for a crested serpent eagle which had chosen a lovely spot to perch. With such thick mist, it made capturing a clear image seriously challenging.

The forest was eerily quiet this morning. Meandering along the winding tracks, we arrived down by the big lake and saw our first grey mongoose of the trip, while a trio of elephants were feeding on the edge of the forest. One individual was reaching high into a tree and ripping down branches. It was amazing to see this behaviour in wild Asian elephants – a rare sight in much of India. This is one of the things that makes Nagarhole National Park very special. Such a large number of Asian elephants in a relatively small area is something to behold in the 21st Century. As we watched them go about their business, they scratched themselves, threw dust all over their backs and generally went about their own personal care routines. Further along the road, down by the beautiful rock river, Sneeha spotted a brown fish owl perched high in a tree. These huge birds always look particularly grumpy, but make for excellent subjects.



This individual was moving around, from branch to branch, but it was when it paused in one particular spot that we had the best chances to capture some images. The fish owls are even seen in pairs and it was only when they flew from the tree, crossing the river to the trees on the other side that we saw both birds.

It was just after this that chital alarm calls erupted from down by an old, destroyed dam. Some of the deer ran up the hill on the other side of the river, with the alarms continuing. Despite the alarms, there was no sign of any predator, and our patience was not rewarded on this occasion. The mist was now clearing, with the warmth of the sun filtering through the forest canopy. Unsuccessful in finding a big cat, Sadiq moved us back towards the park gate, pausing at a beautiful waterhole in a small valley. Here there was an Indian pond heron and a little cormorant perched up on some sticks. Surrounded by water, with a shaft of light illuminating the pond heron and its reflection.



As we watched and photographed the heron, a dragonfly periodically landed on the small branch, with the heron trying to catch it. It was the third time lucky for the heron, and not so lucky for the dragonfly, but the photographic rewards were great (if only the other branch hadn't been in the background). Sadiq highlighted that we were running out of time and so we moved on and returned to the lodge for breakfast.

After lunch, having climbed aboard the safari vehicle, we were soon in the park once more. Having been assigned Zone A, we rolled by troops of langur and bonnet macaque, while the ever-present chital were accompanied by a family of wild boar. At the small waterhole near the entrance, a lesser adjutant stork flew up, away from us, and up to a branch. As we neared the Tiger Tank waterhole, we stumbled across a stripe-necked mongoose down by a smaller waterhole, while a Brahminy kite was perched in a tree and two common kingfishers perched by the water's edge. We disturbed a wild boar which was wallowing, only seeing it once we were a little too close. However, it was our first water monitor, which was a particular highlight as it searched for a meal in the drying, cracked soil.

Moving on down to Tiger Tank, we had a couple of sambar deer drinking. With the sound of chital alarm calls, we decided our best bet was to wait by the scops owl tree, watching the antics of langurs as they

played. As well as the alarm calls, claps of thunder could be heard and felt. It was a particularly quiet afternoon with some brief views of a family herd of elephants providing a little intrigue before we headed for the park exit. Some light rain fell as we made our way out of the park and returned to the lodge for another lovely meal.

Saturday 25 April 2026

Day 7:
Nagarhole National Park

The group were well in the swing of things by now and we left the lodge as the soft light of dawn fell across the Kabini backwaters. It was yet another misty morning as Sadiq expertly drove us along the bumpy old road in Zone B. Sneeha and Sadiq soon spotted some very fresh tiger pug marks, clearly heading in the direction of a waterhole on the park's boundary. We headed straight there, hoping to hear alarms or see the tiger coming down to drink. The tiger, though, had other ideas. There was silence. No alarm calls rang out, and no tiger appeared.

Moving back along the main road, stopping periodically and listening for alarms, we instead found a black-naped hare. A tigress had been reported moving from Zone A to B, and we stopped on the roadside waiting to see if she might appear. This morning, we were in luck. Behind us, a vehicle flashed its lights to gain our attention. Sadiq quickly turned the vehicle around, and we pulled up with Magge, the tigress, standing in front of us.



The soft morning light made for some stunning photography. She stood still, staring past us and looking across the road. She soon crossed in front of us, before pausing again on the other side. It was at this point that we realised she was stalking a small herd of chital. Once she had crossed the road, she quickly ducked into cover. We could see her for a little while, but she was soon out of sight. Having had to move our vehicle, we could no longer see where she was. Our best bet was to wait and see what happened. The chital moved

ever closer to where we last saw her, before they too disappeared. We waited with bated breath to see what might unfold. Bizarrely, everything stayed silent. It seemed as if the deer had moved on and maybe the tigress was still trying to follow them. Despite our best efforts, we didn't see her again. Instead, we carried on to the bridge that overlooks the waterhole below.

On our way, we came across a black-naped hare and grey mongoose, while a family of wild boar were enjoying the cooling effects of the muddy edge of the waterhole, wallowing away without a care in the world. It was nearly time for us to leave the park, but we had a large male gaur canter across the road ahead of us before we reached the main road. We made good time, arriving back at the lodge, and there we headed straight to breakfast.

Everyone was able to catch up with a couple of hours' rest before we reconvened at lunch and then headed out on our afternoon drive. Slowly working our way through Zone A, we had a tip-off that the Tiger Tank female had been seen in the vicinity of the waterhole in the morning, but when we had a look, all was quiet. Sneeha suggested we go for a drive, check some other spots before coming back and seeing whether she might appear. We drove up past the old forest resthouse and down to the stream on the other side, but all was quiet. That was, until we bumped into an extremely relaxed and handsome stripe-necked mongoose.



At first the mongoose was busy marking its territory, but it then moved up the track and started to turn over the soil on either side of the track. It was having an absolute feast, but we couldn't quite work out what it was eating to begin with. Sneeha then realised it was digging up and devouring small frogs which had buried themselves underground. This intense feeding session went on for close to 10 minutes, providing us all with some fabulous views and some good photographic opportunities. It was so engrossed by its food that it didn't have a care in the world for our presence.

Sadiq was anxious that we might be missing out on a potential tiger sighting. The mongoose had seemingly had its fill, and with that we took our cue to move on. Arriving at the Tiger Tank waterhole, we realised the tigress was drinking down on the sandy shore of the waterhole. Within 50 yards of where she sat, a herd of

elephants were busy feeding on the bank. What an incredible scene. The group took great delight in photographing her as she lapped at the water, her reflection clearly visible in the rippled water. Although distant, it was still a wonderful sight, and this combined with the elephants made it an extra special sighting.



As the elephants carried on going about their business, to our astonishment, the tiger decided to turn around and reverse into the water. She would look around from time to time, keeping an ear and an eye out in case the elephants decided to get any closer. Suddenly she had had enough and darting out of the water, she moved out of sight into the thick vegetation. It seemed as if her movement had piqued one of the elephants' interest and it decided to follow the tigress. The herd slowly followed suit, moving around the waterhole and feeding on bamboo to one side of the water.





Knowing there was a tiger nearby, and now with the elephants moving away from the water, we had hoped that we might get lucky and have the tiger come down to the water once more. No luck! With no sign of the tiger, we drove up to an area of forest where a leopard had been spotted earlier in the day, but that had seemingly moved on. And so, it was time to head towards the park exit. It was here that we found the pack

of dhole. Enjoying the relatively cool air of the evening, the dogs were a lovely bonus sighting. Time had run out, and we had to make our way back to the lodge so we could freshen up before dinner.

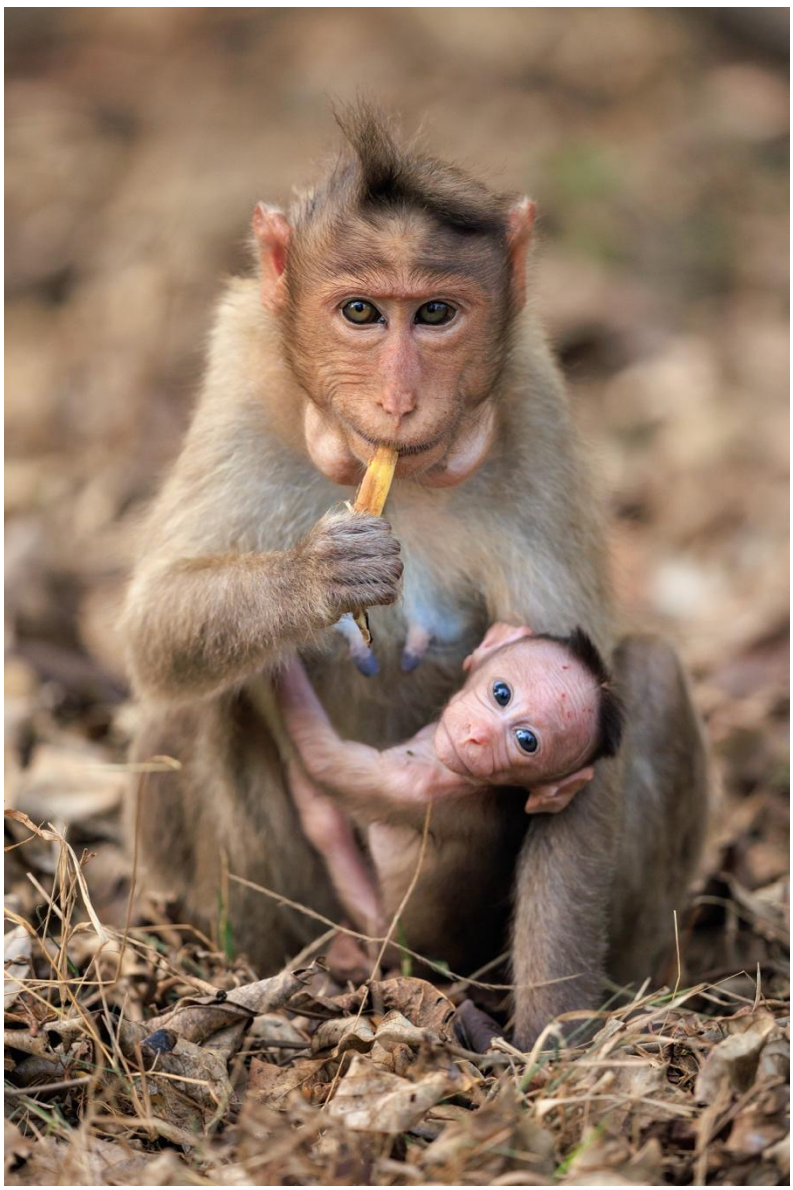
Sunday 26 April 2026

Day 8:
Nagarhole National Park

Today was our final full day in and around Kabini. This morning we had been assigned Zone B once again; we set off along the old main road. Maybe today we would find the oh-so-elusive sloth bear, or perhaps a big cat might make another appearance. We kept our fingers crossed.

There was a big old tusker at a waterhole by the park's boundary, while we could hear distant chital alarm calls. Having heard the calls, Sneeha and Sadiq suggested we move back to the old main road and see if we could find the cause of the calls. Unfortunately, there was no sign of a predator, but we did have a ruddy mongoose make an appearance. This was before two stripe-necked mongooses wandered along by the bridge, before crossing the road behind our vehicle.

This side of Zone B seemed particularly quiet this morning, so we turned our attention to the forest along the backwaters. Before we entered the forest though, we passed a huge troop of bonnet macaques that we would spend time focusing on later in the morning. We were hoping to find a leopard, and this area provided us with our best chance (due to lower tiger activity here). The forest was alive with the sound of birdsong, while we enjoyed views of woolly-necked stork, wood sandpiper, common kingfisher and a distant brown fish owl. A charming family of wild boar provided us with some light entertainment down on the open grassland, while a sambar was drinking from a waterhole in the forest.



It was then we got news that a leopard had been seen on a branch just off the road. By the time we got to the spot, the leopards had gone, seemingly spooked by one of the forest vehicles arriving at the spot. It looked like lady luck wasn't with us this morning and so we moved off in case it had moved across into Zone A. Instead of finding a leopard, we found the troop of macaques again, but this time they had somehow got hold of a large bunch of bananas.

A large male macaque was dominating this valuable supply and wouldn't let any other individual near it. His throat pouches were bulging as he forced more and more bananas into his mouth. This male, alongside others attached any individual that dared to try and take a share of the prize. In the end, though,

enough females tried to steal bananas that the males were so distracted that the others swooped in. Finally, some of the females with tiny young were rewarded for their patience.

Sneeha thought it was worth checking the area where the leopard had been spotted one last time. In fact, it had emerged that there were two leopards spotted, but they had both descended down the tree and disappeared into the forest. Working our way along the tracks in the area, there was no sign of any leopards, and no alarm calls could be heard. With that missed opportunity, it was time to make our way toward the exit and head back to Kabini River Lodge.

Our final afternoon in the park, and we were back in the beautiful forests of Zone A. Sadiq whisked us along the main tarred road, hoping we might find the leopards we missed earlier crossing from one zone to the next, but to no avail. Entering the zone on a different track, we continued to check the most frequented waterholes. We had no sign of any tigers until we stumbled on several vehicles with their safari goers looking into a patch of thick scrub. Someone had seen a tiger, and they were adamant they could still see it.

Despite our best efforts, no black stipe of splash of orange could be seen by our vehicle, and we, instead, moved around the waterhole. The tiger was well and truly out of sight, but a changeable hawk eagle was quenching its thirst at the water.

Having already enjoyed some standout tiger sightings, we decided to leave the area and see if we could find some wildlife to enjoy on our own. Where we had seen the monitor lizard before, it was still there searching the cracked earth for food. It was a crested serpent eagle though, that caught our eye. This handsome bird was down on the ground, and we were able to position the vehicle to get an incredible reflection as the bird drank from the still water.



It provided us with some fabulous photography as the water dripped from its beak, while lifting its head to swallow. Occasionally, in order to keep its balance, the eagle would also open its wings and reveal the stunning patterned plumage usually hidden beneath. Once the eagle had its fill, it took flight and

disappeared into the trees behind. We continued up the hill, and Sadiq spotted some large tiger tracks in the sand. Carrying on up the hill, following the tracks, we tried to work out where it might have moved to. We explored all the areas it might visit and kept an ear out for any alarm calls, but the forest was quiet. The scops owl was in its usual spot though and its charming face always brings out a smile. It was an overcast evening and the light was fading fast. We exited the park and drove the short distance back to the lodge.

Monday 27 April 2026

Day 9:
Nagarhole National Park; drive to Bangalore

We had one final drive this morning, enjoying the wild delights of Nagarhole. There was only a slight mist this morning, noticeably less than the preceding mornings. A ruddy mongoose made an appearance just after we had passed through the gates, while sambar deer were at one of the small waterholes. The sun was a magical golden orb through the mist, while langurs played in the soft morning light.

Passing through the forest area around the ancient temples, we emerged at the scrubby forest on the far side. It was here we heard about a tiger that had been seen not too far away. We got there to see a tiger dragging a carcass into the forest. Then we noticed another tiger. Then a third. This was the tigress Magge with her two sub-adult cubs. What a remarkable encounter on our final drive.



The morning sun was filtering through the trees, casting rich golden hues upon the tigress, which had now moved to the edge of the trees. The intense colours of the eyes illuminated in this magical soft light. We spent a prolonged period of time watching as the tigers kept moving, changing their position. Despite the tangle of tree trunks and branches, it was amazing seeing these stunning cats in their habitat. They fed, rested and groomed, with all three visible at times.

We couldn't stay with them the whole time, so as they moved further into the trees, we decided it was time

to go for a little drive before coming back to see what they were up to. As we moved off, we came across a huge herd of spotted deer. It was incredible to see so much life in such a short space of time. But, with the heat of the day starting to build up, it was time to see what was going on with the trio of tigers.



Our timing couldn't have been any better. Just as we pulled around the bend, we could see the three tigers had emerged from the forest and were now in a small patch of shade to one side of the road. We kept our distance, ensuring they had plenty of space to cross. One of the sub-adults approached the mother, and they startled to nuzzle one another, with the mother opening her mouth and showing her teeth.





Not long after this wonderful piece of interaction, the three of them were on their feet and moving through the trees ahead of us. All three of them crossed the road, with the cubs much more nervous of us than their mother. Magge walked with an elegance and confidence only a full-grown tiger can in these forests, while the cubs were much more alert and kept looking around to make sure that we weren't following them. It doesn't matter how many times you see these cats; they enthral and delight with every step.



Sadiq quickly moved the vehicle, predicting where they might reappear from the forest they had moved into. There, on the edge of a slight rise, the movement of the tigers was just visible through the trees. Suddenly the forest erupted with langur, macaque and spotted deer all alarming with a notable ferocity. The tigers all moved in unison. In silence they traversed their forest realm, likely heading to the nearby waterhole. Our time in the park was nearly up though, and it was time for us to say our goodbyes. What a fabulous last morning we had enjoyed.

As we made our way along the dusty tracks, we had a lovely female elephant and her calf by the roadside and for one particular member of the group, two last wild boar to send us on our way. Arriving back at the lodge, we enjoyed our final breakfast before having enough time to shower before our journey to Bangalore.

Once everyone had their luggage ready, we made our way up to reception. Settling our bills, we were soon aboard the minibus and driving the roads to Mysore. Stopping briefly, the group were able to see the impressive Mysore Palace, before we continued with a smooth journey to Bangalore. Our driver expertly navigated his way through the Bangalore traffic, pulling into the Taj hotel. Sneeha soon had us all checked in, and we arranged to meet back for dinner once the restaurant had opened.

Those on the group flight (including myself) had a very early start, so once dinner was done, we said goodbye to the others making their own journeys and headed off to bed.

Tuesday 28 April 2026

Day 10:
Fly UK

Waking up extremely early, those of us on the group flight met up in the hotel lobby. Our luggage was soon loaded into the bus, and we were whisked off to the airport. It was here we said goodbye to Sneeha – what

a star she had been throughout. After checking in, we proceeded through security and waited for our British Airways flight back to London Heathrow. The flight was smooth, and we landed at Heathrow early. The only issue was that there was no stand available when we arrived and so we had to wait for one to become available. Once we had disembarked the aircraft, the group were soon through passport control, and our luggage all arrived. We said our goodbyes and wished each other well for our respective journeys home.

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Checklist for Nagarhole Photo Safari

	Common Name	*Scientific Name*	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9
	BIRDS									
1	Grey francolin	*Ortygornis pondicerianus*				✓				
2	Grey jungle fowl	*Gallus sonneratii*		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	Indian peafowl	*Pavo cristatus*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	Indian spot-billed duck	*Anas poecilorhyncha*				✓			✓	✓
5	Painted stork	*Mycteria leucocephala*				✓				
6	Asian openbill	*Anastomus oscitans*				✓				
7	Woolly-necked stork	*Ciconia episcopus*				✓	✓		✓	
8	Lesser adjutant	*Leptoptilos javanicus*					✓			
9	Black-headed ibis	*Threskiornis melanocephalus*				✓				
10	Red-naped ibis	*Pseudibis papillosa*				✓				
11	Eurasian spoonbill	*Platalea leucorodia*				✓				
12	Indian pond heron	*Ardeola grayii*	✓			✓	✓			
13	Grey heron	*Ardea cinerea*				✓				
14	Purple heron	*Ardea purpurea*	✓			✓				
15	Cattle egret	*Bubulcus ibis*				✓				
16	Great egret	*Ardea alba*				✓			✓	
17	Intermediate egret	*Ardea intermedia*				✓				
18	Little egret	*Egretta garzetta*				✓			✓	
19	Oriental darter	*Anhinga melanogaster*				✓				
20	Little cormorant	*Microcarbo niger*	✓		✓	✓				
21	Great cormorant	*Phalacrocorax carbo*				✓				
22	Brahminy kite	*Haliastur indus*	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		
23	Oriental honey buzzard	*Pernis ptilorhynchus*			✓					
24	Indian vulture	*Gyps indicus*				✓				
25	Red-headed vulture	*Sarcogyps calvus*				✓			✓	
26	Crested serpent eagle	*Spilornis cheela*		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	

Find out more about our Nagarhole Photo Safari trip or contact us

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27	Shikra	*Accipiter badius*		✓						✓
28	Changeable hawk eagle	*Nisaetus cirrhatus*			✓		✓		✓	
29	White-breasted waterhen	*Amaurornis phoenicurus*							✓	
30	Red-wattled lapwing	*Vanellus indicus*	✓							
31	Little-ringed plover	*Charadrius dubius*				✓				
32	Common greenshank	*Tringa nebularia*				✓				
33	Wood sandpiper	*Tringa glareola*				✓			✓	
34	River tern	*Sterna aurantia*				✓				
35	Green imperial pigeon	*Ducula aenea*		✓	✓			✓		
36	Spotted dove	*Spilopelia chinensis*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
37	Yellow-footed green pigeon	*Treron phonyceptaurus*		✓	✓	✓			✓	
38	Plum-headed parakeet	*Psittacula cyanocephala*	✓		✓					
39	Malabar parakeet	*Psittacula columboides*			✓	✓			✓	
40	Common hawk cuckoo	*Hierococcyx varius*					✓			
41	Southern coucal	*Centropus sinensis*							✓	
42	Indian scops owl	*Otus bakkamoena*			✓		✓	✓	✓	
43	Oriental scops owl	*Otus sunia*								
44	Jungle owlet	*Glaucidium radiatum*				✓	✓			
45	Brown fish owl	*Ketupa zeylonensis*					✓		✓	
46	Little swift	*Apus affinis*				✓				
47	Common hoopoe	*Upupa epops*		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
48	Indian roller	*Coracias benghalensis*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
49	White-throated kingfisher	*Halcyon smyrnensis*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
50	Common kingfisher	*Alcedo atthis*		✓	✓			✓	✓	
51	Pied kingfisher	*Ceryle rudis*				✓				
52	Green bee-eater	*Merops orientalis*		✓						✓
53	Malabar grey hornbill	*Ocyceros griseus*				✓			✓	
54	Rufous woodpecker	*Micropternus brachyurus*							✓	
55	White-bellied woodpecker	*Dryocopus javensis*		✓	✓					
56	Streak-throated woodpecker	*Picus xanthopygaeus*				✓	✓			
57	Common goldenback	*Dinopium javanense*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
58	Large cuckooshrike	*Coracina macei*	✓							
59	Greater racket-tailed drongo	*Dicrurus paradiseus*		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
60	Black drongo	*Dicrurus macrocercus*	✓						✓	

61	White-bellied drongo	*Dicrurus caerulescens*		✓						
62	Indian golden oriole	*Oriolus kundoo*		✓						
63	Rufous treepie	*Dendrocitta vagabunda*	✓	✓		✓			✓	
64	Indian jungle crow	*Corvus culminatus*		✓		✓				
65	Great tit	*Parus major*					✓			
66	Ashy wood swallow	*Artamus fuscus*						✓		
67	Red-whiskered bulbul	*Pycnonotus jocosus*							✓	
68	Red-vented bulbul	*Pycnonotus cafer*	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	
69	Ashy prinia	*Prinia socialis*			✓					
70	Green warbler	*Phylloscopus nitidus*						✓		
71	Jungle babbler	*Turdoides striata*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
72	Indian nuthatch	*Sitta castanea*							✓	
73	Lesser hill myna	*Gracula indica*	✓							
74	Jungle myna	*Acridotheres fuscus*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
75	Common myna	*Acridotheres tristis*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
76	Brahminy starling	*Sturnia pagodarum*	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
77	Orange-headed thrush	*Geokichla citrina*				✓			✓	
78	Indian blackbird	*Turdus simillimus*					✓			
79	Tickell's blue flycatcher	*Cyornis tickelliae*				✓	✓			
	MAMMALS									
1	Royal Bengal tiger	*Panthera tigris tigris*	✓		✓			✓		✓
2	Asiatic wild dogs	*Cuon alpinus*			✓	✓		✓		
3	Spotted deer	*Axis axis*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	Sambar deer	*Rusa unicolor*		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓
5	Gaur	*Bos gaurus*				✓		✓		
6	Indian muntjac	*Muntiacus muntjak*			✓					
7	Asian elephant	*Elephas maximus*		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8	Wild boar	*Sus scrofa*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9	Malabar giant squirrel	*Ratufa indica*		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
10	Three striped palm squirrel	*Funambulus palmarum*		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
11	Indian Hare / Black naped hare	*Lepus nigricollis*						✓		
12	Indian grey mongoose	*Herpestes edwardsii*					✓	✓		
13	Ruddy mongoose	*Urva smithii*	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓

14	Stripe-necked mongoose	*Herpestes vitticollis*		✓			✓	✓	✓	
15	Smooth coated otter	*Lutrogale perspicillata*				✓				
16	Northern plains gray langur	*Semnopithecus entellus*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
17	Bonnet macaque	*Macaca radiata*	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	