



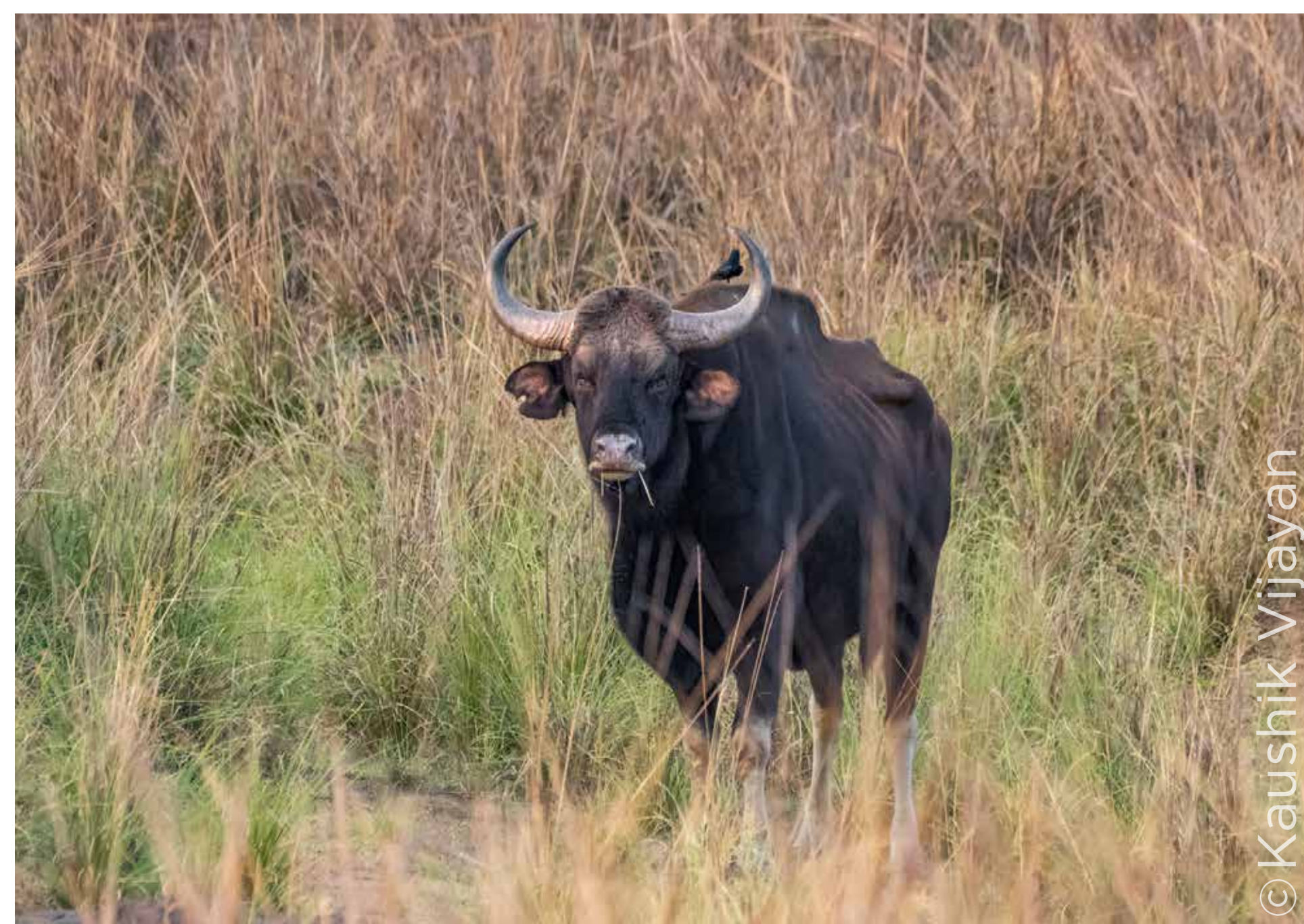
INTO THE WILD
WITH HERMIS
HARIDAS

THE MAN IN THE FOREST
BY ANIL T PRABHAKAR

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© Jivitesh Singh



© Kaushik Vijayan

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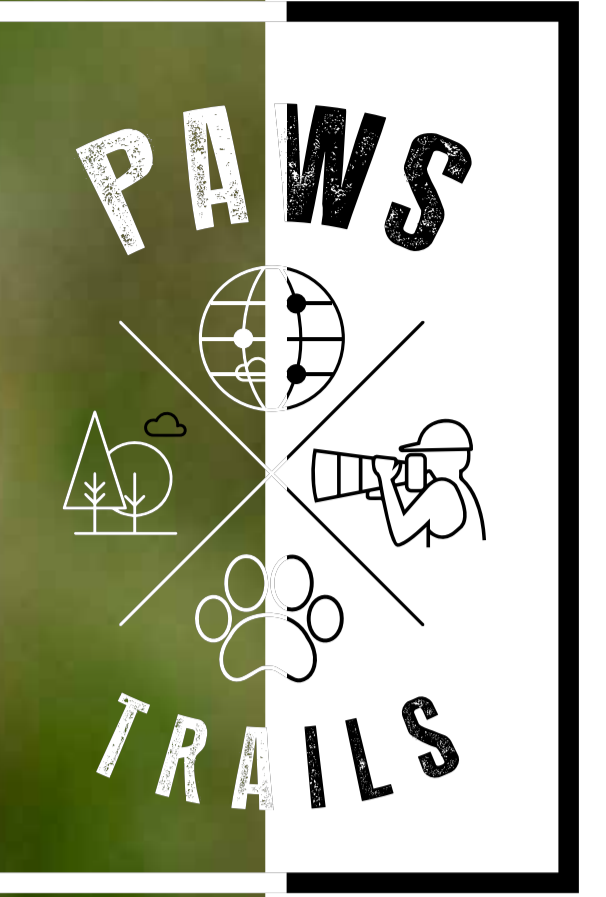
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Cover Story
Hermis Haridas



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Hank Tyler
Editor

We bring you stories from around the world in each of PT Explorer's volumes. We invite you to contribute articles and share your experience with our readers as you explore special natural areas and national parks with your camera.

Hermis Haridas is featured in our cover story. He is a globe trotter, with his camera capturing outstanding images of nature in the wild. Hermis also is the cofounder of PawsTrails.

Anil Prabhakar tells of his experiences exploring the island of Borneo in search of wild orangutans and tells the sad story of their decline due primarily to habitat destruction caused by deforestation for timber and palm oil plantations.

Leon Kluge, a botanist from South Africa, tells us about the fynbos plant community that is unique in the world. About 6,000 endemic plant species abound in this very special floristic region.

Cub's Corner features Jivitesh Singh of India, an award winning nature photographer.

In Her View, Ana Maria Casas-Cordero, presents stunning landscape photos of Chile's magnificent natural areas.

Kaushik Vijayan in our Through the Lens section, tells us of his travels to India's Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve where he captured magnificent photos of tigers.

Lindsay Scott tells her story as a wildlife artist and explains in detail her techniques for creating her marvelous artwork noted for its action and detail. Lindsay explains her beginning to artwork with pencils for which she is well known.

Your Gallery features amazing photos contributed by wildlife photographers from around the world. We invite you to contribute your best wildlife photo to be considered for inclusion in Your Gallery.



PHOTOGRAPHY DIRECTOR'S CHOICE

Shahul Valasy
Wolf Spider
(Lycosidae)

Valanchery Vattappara, Kerala, India



EDITOR'S DEN

FOUNDERS' NOTE

COP26 – sounds like an obscure element in the periodic table? Actually, it is the blockbuster environmental event of the year which concluded in Glasgow this November.

The UN Climate change Conference brings together the countries of the world to chart the course in our fight against climate change.

The journey ahead of us is hard and long. Undoing decades worth of damage, changing set mindsets, revamping infrastructure, retooling economies – it's a long list.

There was a lot of focus on coal post the conference this year. Coal is considered the most polluting of all fossil fuels and is the mainstay of most developing countries for power generation and there was push back in the conference from developing countries on commitments to phase out coal.

All in all, some progress made, some commitments obtained and a long way yet to go.

We sincerely request the global PawsTrails community to work with your community leaders to chart a course towards a greener future. We have to rain in emissions and work towards sustainable energy sources. Global warming and climate change are real and visible problems of our times. To save the planet, we need to side with our conscience and make the necessary compromises today to ensure that we have a place to live tomorrow.

Let us take the pledge for a greener future!

Hermis Haridas & Nisha Purushothaman

Founders - PT Explorers





COVER STORY

Into the Wild

with Hermis Haridas



A self-confessed nature lover and travel enthusiast, he got deeply involved in nature and wildlife photography and found himself traveling around, hunting for and trying to capture moments hitherto uncaptured. His trips to Russia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Nepal, India, and the African continents gave him the opportunity to understand the nuances of wildlife photography.

Hermis believes in the adage that “practice makes perfect” and there isn’t a day in his life without peeping at the world through his “third eye”.

Hermis is the founder of Paws Trails, an organization he co-founded with Nisha Purushothaman, that focuses on nature conservation through the medium of photography. Paws Trails organizes events to build awareness of how important it is to preserve this beautiful planet. He was also a Brand Ambassador of Sony Middle East and Africa for 3 years.

hermis.me/about-me
instagram.com/hermis.haridas/
pawstrails.com/
maratrails.com/





Tell us a little about yourself and why you like photographing wildlife?

I discovered photography while I was I am born in a village called Chemmarathur in north Kerala, India. After my graduation in Computer Science from Bangalore University I moved to Dubai to work for a Digital Agency. I started my photography as a hobby during the weekends.

Living in UAE, I used to drive to different places in search of the beauty of nature and then I started photographing those places and moments I witnessed specially birds.

I was always fascinated with the beauty of nature and the birds and animals that live on this earth. I love to capture the moments with them. That is what got me interested in wildlife photography.

what do you believe make your images successful?

I try to capture the emotion of the species that I photograph. I feel that is what connects the viewer with my images and that makes an image successful.

Is there one animal you'll happily photograph again and again?

I love to photograph lions. I can sit with them for hours especially when there are cubs around. It is so amazing to view the bond between each member of the lion pride and to watch them caring and protecting each other.



Great Hornbill (*Buceros bicornis*)

Was there ever a moment you thought you were too close to the action?

I had many experience while photographing cubs. Cubs are so playful and if you spend some time with them they come closer to you in such a way that they even cross your lens' minimum focal length. Then you stop photographing and just sit and watch them. Whatever said you have to be in a safe place and safe distance from them, otherwise the mothers will create trouble.

What fascinated you about bird photography?

One of the main reason I love photographing birds is that birds can be found and enjoyed throughout the year no matter where you live. I feel photographing birds are the best way to learn the art of patience. The life of migratory birds is something that I always wonder at. Some birds travel thousands of miles and you wait for them to reach your location during their migration time and then you photograph them, all these moments gives me so much of happiness. One more thing to add is that we will start promoting habitat conservation once we start watching their behavior and life pattern. You will be more involved in conserving them once you know about their needs and challenges they face.

Is there one specific destination you could suggest photographers visit?

Masai Mara National Reserve is the place I suggest to any wildlife lover or wildlife photographer. You see a lot of animals there. If you spend more time you end up with some beautiful moments that might happen once in a lifetime. You will also



© Hermis Haridas





witness how the villagers live in harmony with the animals.

How do you think your style has evolved over the years?

My style was always capturing the emotions of any species that I photograph. I maintain that style till date. One thing I found that has improved is the quality of images that we can photograph with the evolution of new technologies introduced in the latest cameras. That certainly is a huge benefit for any photographer who would like to showcase their best works to the world.

What is your most memorable sighting?

I had a chance to photograph three new born Leopard cubs in Masai Mara and so far that is the best moment and sighting I ever had. I was fortunate enough to spend four days with them and on the third day they started coming close to me. Even the mother used to leave the cubs with us and go away. That is when I felt a real connection with them.

What are the main challenges that you face as a wildlife photographer?

The main challenges include accessibility to some destinations, high cost of park fees and permits. Another challenge is the investment in high end equipment. It is easy to say we don't need high-end gears for photographing wildlife, but ultimately if you are a professional wildlife photographer then you do not want to compromise on the quality of your pictures. The last thing I would point out is that it is not easy to make a living out of wildlife photography. The main reason



for this is that wildlife photographers are not in high demand. And you have to work hard for years to hone your craft to get some kind of recognition and then be approached by big companies.

What do you love most about your work as a wildlife photographer?

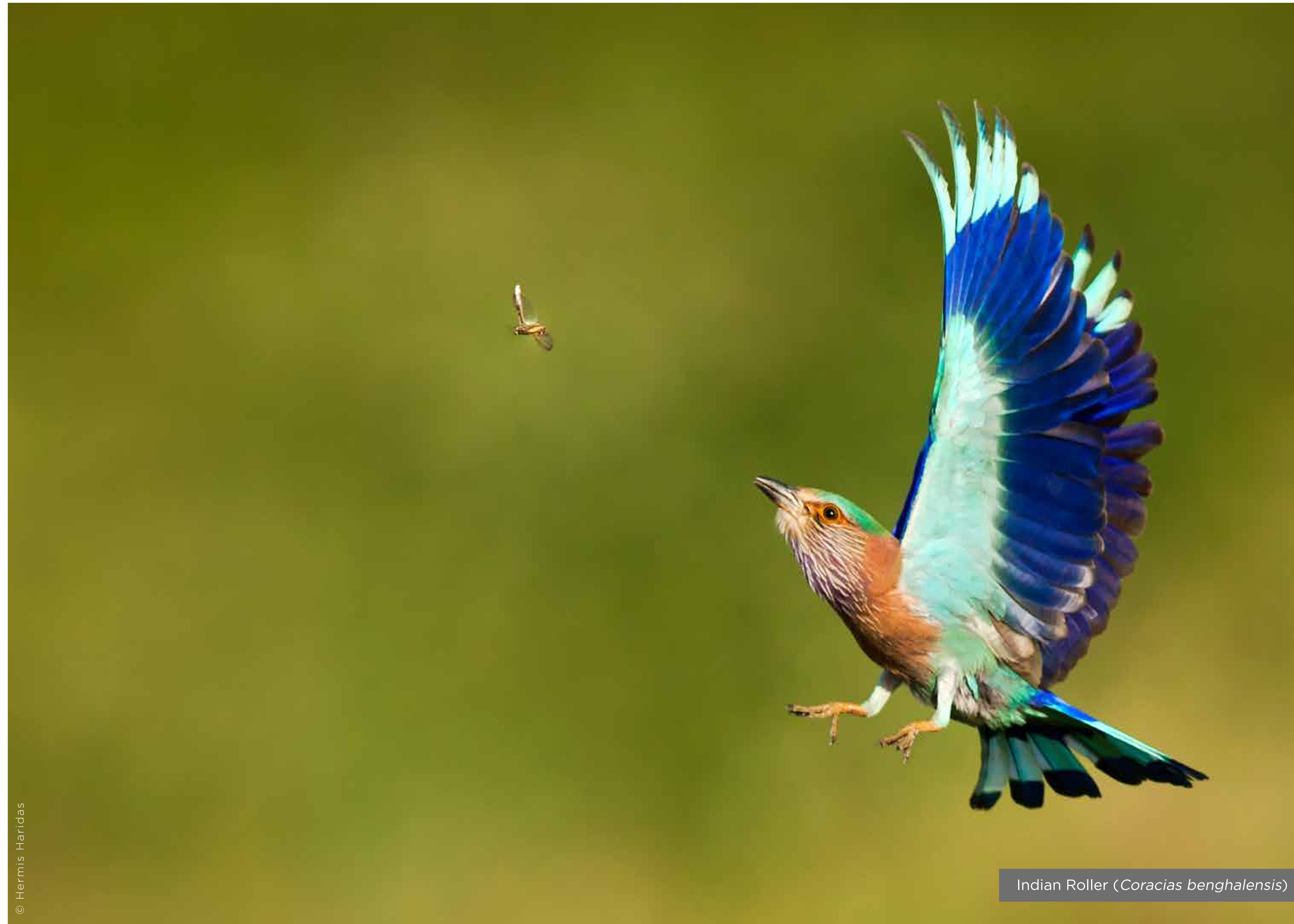
The tremendous opportunity to witness nature's beauty, up close is what I love and enjoy the most in wildlife photography. The amount of time I am able to spend with these magnificent animals and birds is the happiest moment in my life. The satisfaction I get showing those mesmerising moments spent with these species through my photographs to the world outside is beyond words, and so is portraying how beautiful they are and how important it is to protect them.

Do you have anything exciting on the horizon that you can tell us about?

We have started an eco camp inside the Masai Mara National Reserve called Mara Trails Camp. The main mission is to support the local communities living around the national park. We are proud that we dedicate 50% of the Mara Trails Camp profits specifically to help the Maasai people live in harmony with wildlife. I am so thrilled on starting this project

Do you constantly change your angle as you shoot to see what looks good when you get it into your computer, or do you decide ahead of time?

Yes trying different angles and different perspectives are something that I always look into while creating a frame. Sometime you get the chances to set the frame and then wait for the animal to

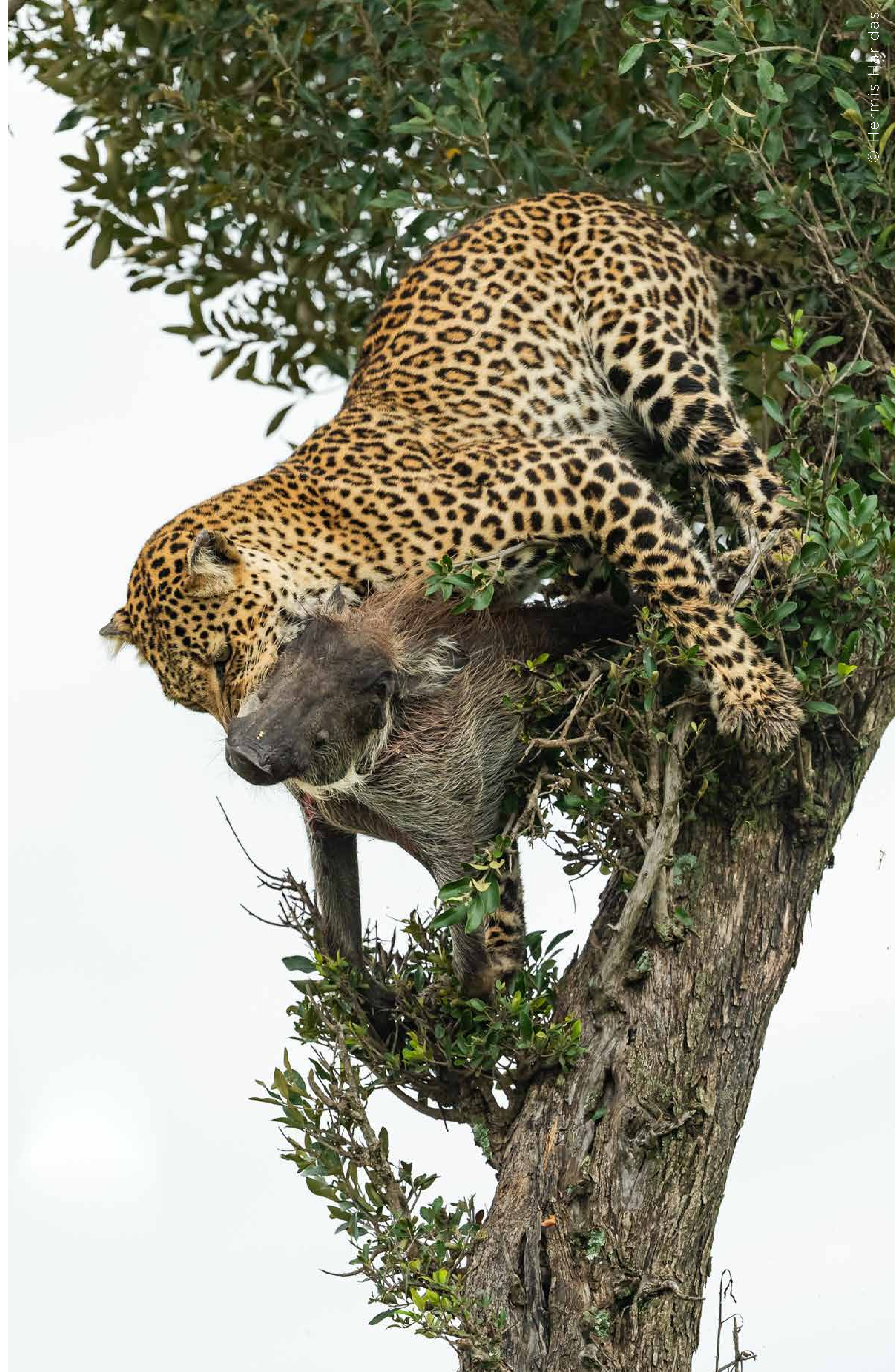


© Hermis Haridas

Indian Roller (*Coracias benghalensis*)







© Hermis Haridas

come at that exact point. That's where you need experience and the ability to visualize the scene before a moment happens.

How do you approach a new location that you haven't shot at before? Do you spend time scouting before shooting, etc.?

Internet is a good source of knowledge for almost everything in this world. I refer to the internet regarding the locations I want to visit. I learn about the best time of the year to visit, permissions required, try to find a local guide.

Do you have a wish-list of shots you still want to get, maybe an animal that has eluded you or an animal doing something?

I am fascinated by a small cat species called Caracal. That is one thing in my wish list that I want to spend time with and photograph.

Would you be able to share your favourite image with our readers?

There is a famous leopard in Masai Mara called Luluka, and while on a workshop with my guests I was fortunate enough to see her hunting a steenbok in the open grassland. Leopard hunts are rare to sight and that too in the open it becomes more rarer. I was placed in the right position to capture the whole action with all the intensity.

what are the most important skills for a wildlife photographer?

The mantra that I am following is Practice makes perfect. Practice photography

everytime possible and try to improve your skills. Patience is the next skill that you need to develop. You need to spend a lot of time with a species to learn its behavior, and thus it would be easy to predict their next move and you will be able to capture some beautiful moments. With practice, you build a lot of great instincts and following your instincts to get the shot makes a wildlife photographer great. Apart from this, you also have to be thorough on how to use your camera in different situations.

Tell us a bit about the power of wildlife photography. What influence does it have upon how people view nature and the world? Can seeing the beauty of our planet make a positive change to our collective environmental consciousness?

I believe photography has the power to transport people to places they cannot go, and to see things they would otherwise never see. They say a picture is worth a thousand words and I believe that deeply because I use photography as a tool to bring humans closer to nature. Photos that we take are sometimes a graphic evidence of our devastating impact of habitats. For example the photo of seabird eating plastic bags and turtles trapped in the plastic rings were helpful to drive a global campaign against single-use plastics. These will help atleast a few to change the way they lived, which is a positive change.

Can you share a couple of tips you believe are crucial to capturing a sharp image of moving subjects?

The simple thing to keep in mind is





that you need a high shutter speed to capture fast moving subjects in sharp. I would suggest anything above 1/1600 shutter speed will be good enough. If you are in a low light condition, you can bring down your aperture (f number) to the lowest possible with your lens and also you may have to increase your ISO. For moving subjects, AI Servo / AF-C is the best mode, as this mode constantly refocuses while tracking your subject. And finally do a lot of practice.

Do you have any advice that you'd like to pass on to photographers just beginning to take an interest in wildlife photography?

Start photographing from your backyard or the nearest environment you live. Go to the same place frequently and photograph the same species. Try to learn more about the species that you photograph and this will help grow more interest in your photography. Until unless you know your subject you won't be able to anticipate their behaviour. Learn to be patient in the field. You have to wait for the right moment to happen. Keep in mind that you can create great images with small species, which means every species matters. Last, do it for the passion, and not for the fame.



© Cynthia Bandurek

© Hermis Haridas



Brown Bear (*Ursus arctos*)



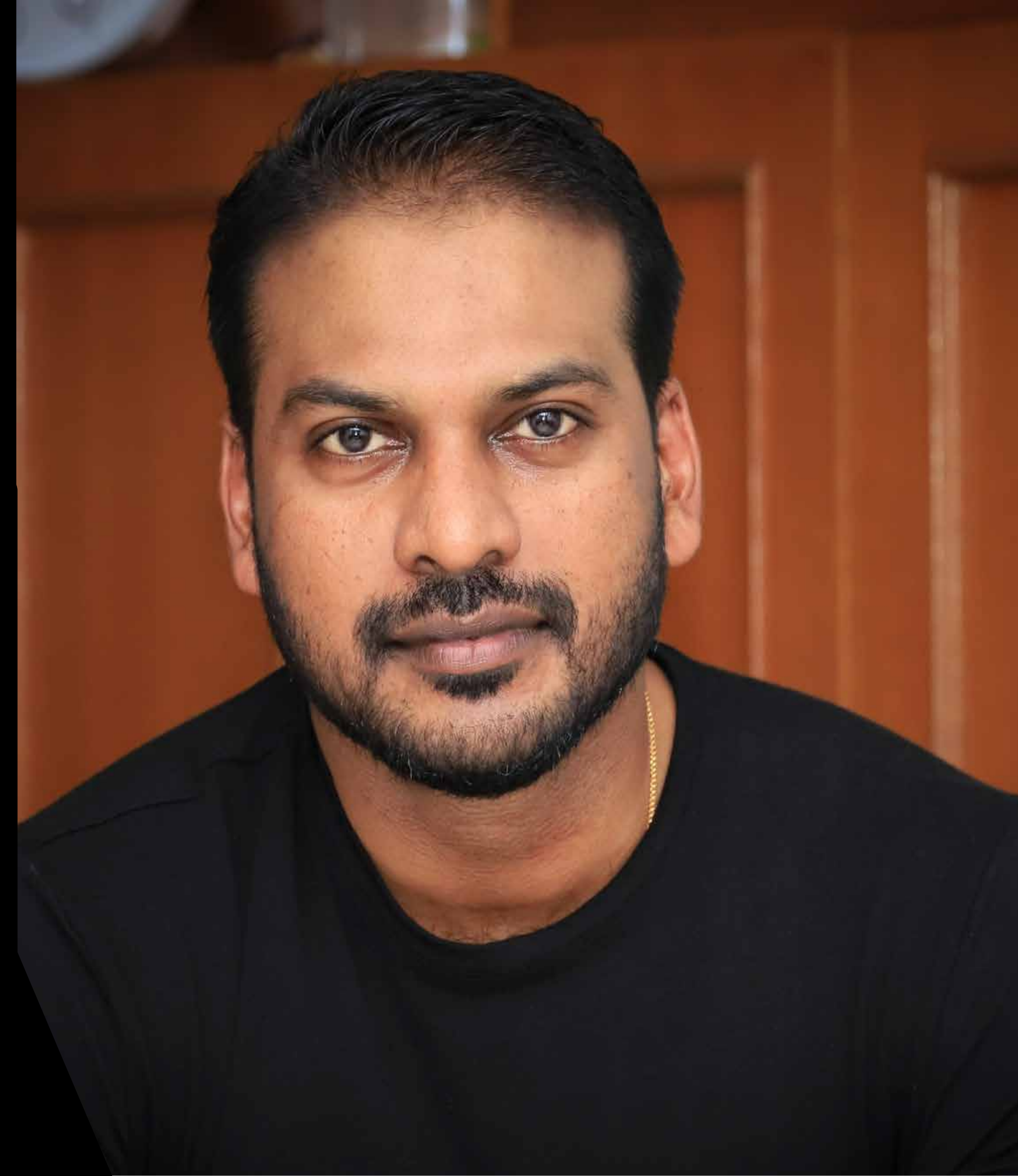
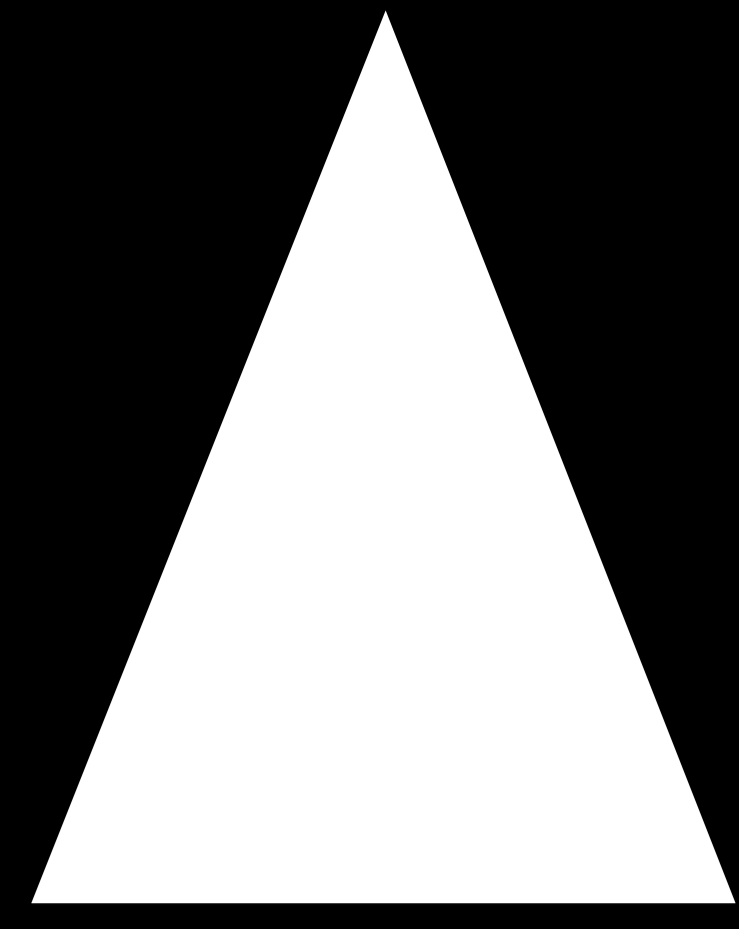


CONSERVATION

Man In The Forest

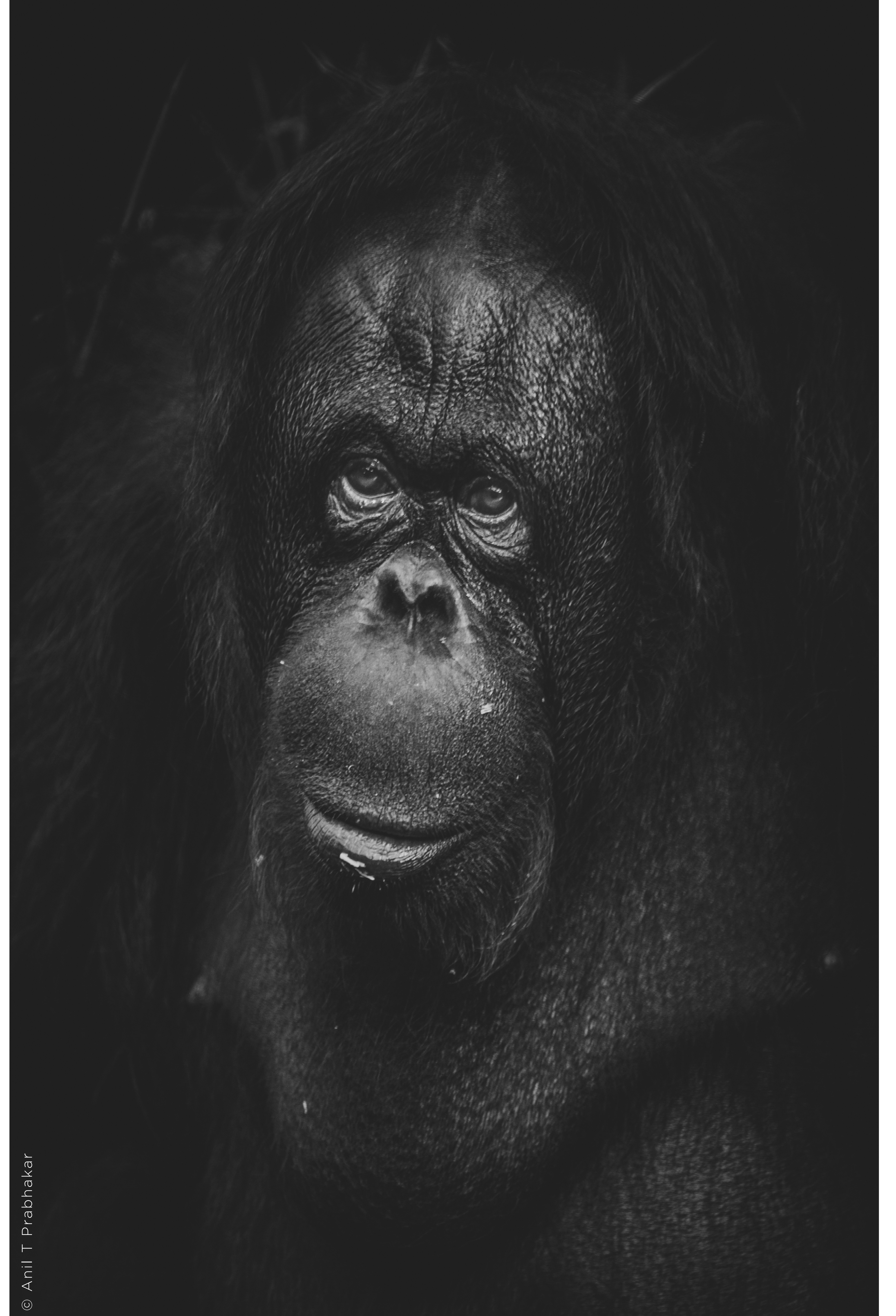
“The tale of an unexpected incident”

By Anil T Prabhakar



Anil T Prabhakar- A renowned photographer, has been an active advocate and activist for orangutan protection and conservation. He is also associated with ,”Konservasi Alam Nusantara” an NGO committed towards protection of Magroves. With over 40 International photo exhibitions to his credit, Anil has also published a photobook titled “The Beauty and Bleakness Of Mount Bromo”. He has won several prestigious international awards and accolades in his photography journey namely the Annual Photography Award '20 (APA), Global Sino Photo Awards, Green Cap Award.

**reminiscenceframes.com/
twitter.com/Aniltprabhakar**



© Anil T Prabhakar



Lately, forest-fires and deforestation are a regular worldwide occurrence. Deforestation of tropical rain forests is particularly concerning, as these forests are home to most of the world's biodiversity. Amazon, the world's largest rainforest has lost around 17% of its lush wilderness in the last 60 years to forest fire, monoculture, mining, and illegal logging. Though deforestation in this region is particularly rampant near the populous areas, the remote areas are also being encroached for valuable mahogany, minerals, and oil reserves. According to WWF, the world's most ecologically important forest landscapes that are home to orangutans, Tigers, and Elephants will suffer cataclysmic damage or loss (of about 80 percent) globally by 2030. Up to 420 million acres of forest is estimated to disappear between 2010 and 2030, if the current deforestation trend continues. The hot spots are located around the Amazon, the Atlantic Forest, Gran Chaco, Borneo, Cerrado, Choco-Darien, the Congo Basin, East Africa, Eastern Australia, Greater Mekong, New Guinea, and Sumatra.

About orangutans

The orangutan is the only member of the Giant Apes family found in Asia, in the Borneo and Sumatra islands. Three co-generic species, *Pongo Pygmaeus*, *Pongo Abeli* and *Pongo Tapanulis* are reported in Southeast Asia. Most of the orangutans (90%) are found in Indonesia, while the remaining 10% are found in Malaysia. Bornean orangutan (*Pongo pygmyus*) is found in Borneo Island, Indonesia (Kalimantan) and Malaysia (Saba and Sarawak) but the Sumatran orangutan

(*Ponco Abeli*) and Tapanuli orangutans are found in the Sumatra Island in Indonesia.

The Bornean orangutan (*Pongo pygmyus*) has a large body and is characterized by dark or reddish-brown hair. Sumatran) orangutans (*Pongo abeli*) are smaller in size and have bright orange hair. Tapanuli orangutans are more similar to Sumatran orangutans than Bornean orangutans in physical features and hair color. In all the three species, male orangutans are much larger than the females, usually two to three times their weight. Male orangutans develop large cheek pads (flanges) that enhance with sexual maturity. Both male and female Tapanuli orangutans have beards, while only the male have beards in the case of Bornean orangutans.

Bornean orangutan

The Bornean orangutan is classified into 3 sub-species: *Pongo Pygmaeus Pygmaeus*, *Pongo Pygmaeus Wurmbii* and *Pongo Pygmaeus Morio*.

They are mostly found in the tropical dryland and the mangrove forests in the lowlands, up to 500 m of elevation. The orangutans are the largest arboreal animal; however, males do spend time on land as they usually travel to other territories to find their mates. They make a sleeping bed or platforms with tree branches and leaves. Orangutans are predominantly moderate eaters whose broad diet includes flowers, leaves and bark of the trees. They also eat insects, ants, honey, fungi and in rare cases small mammals.

Orangutans live a very secluded life; the



© Anil T. Prabhakar



sole potential kinship exists between the mother and the infant. In fact, they live in very loose clusters of related females which occasionally meet in twos and sometimes more during periods of higher food-availability to maintain the bonds and enable the offspring to play and learn together. Males disperse away from their mothers' home ranges to prevent inbreeding and become sexually mature at around 15 years of age. Between 18 and 20 years of age, they grow much larger and develop secondary sexual characteristics of cheek flanges and large throat sacs which can be used to lure women and to alert other males and make them produce longer sounds. Female orangutans give birth to a baby after eight and a half months of pregnancy, and another child is not born until the first child reaches seven years of age. It is the longest birth interval known in the animal kingdom, enabling the mother to give full attention to her children as the offspring learns the skills necessary to survive on their own. Orangutans are very intelligent creatures with advanced problem-solving skills. They can use things in their environment for equipment and medicines. They exhibit cultural traits, and different populations treat a single problem in different ways. They learn from other orangutans and pass on their own skills when they meet each other, which is more frequent when food availability is high.

**Female Bornean orangutan
The need for conservation**

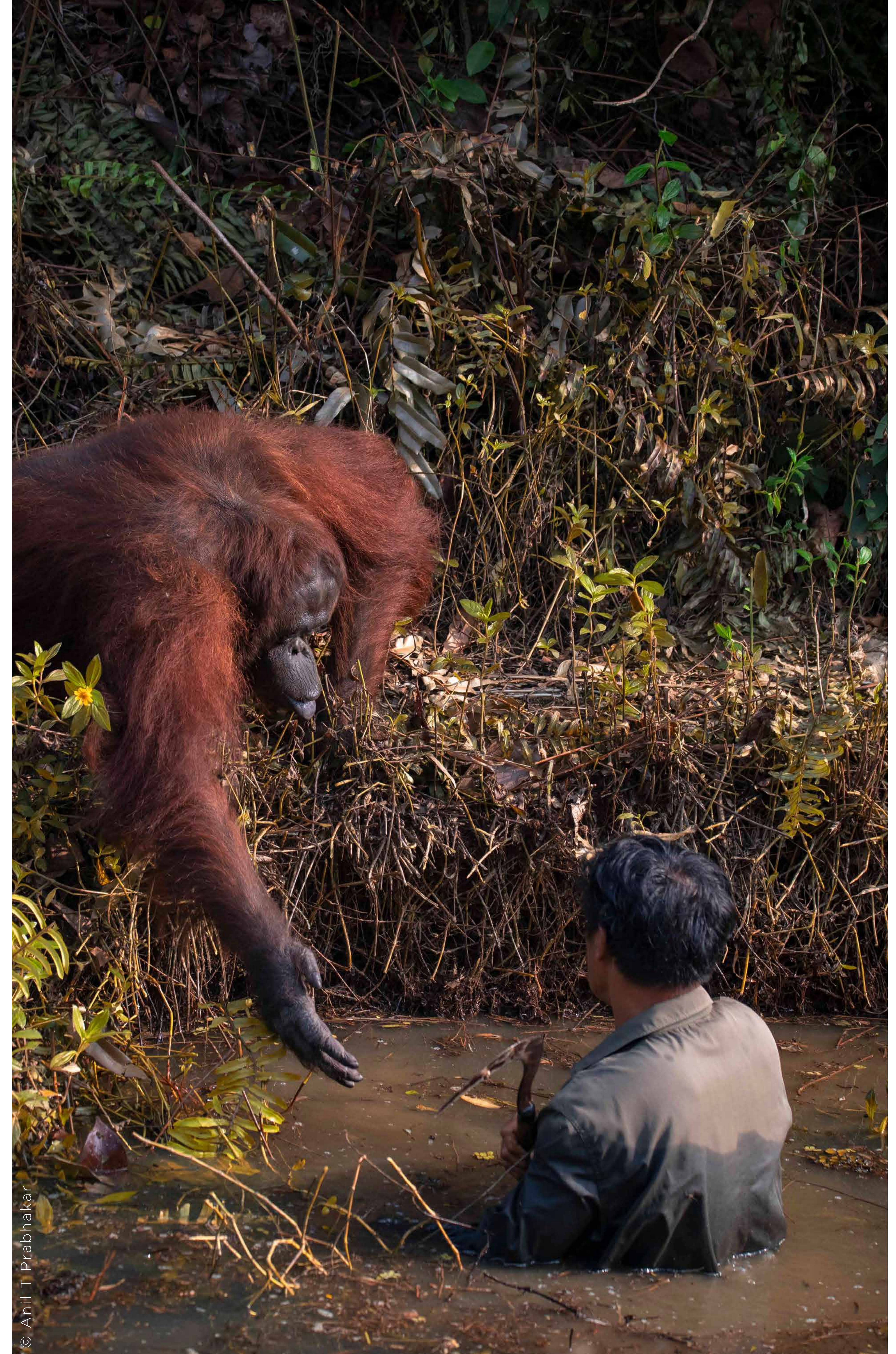
“When we lose orangutans, we risk losing forests and all life within them - and then the whole world pays the price”

The primary reason I chose to write about orangutans is my staunch belief that we should stand for these voiceless beings among us while we still can. The charismatic and intelligent big apes of Asia are facing a steady decline in population and are on the top of the list of endangered species. The specie has been facing mass destruction and loss of natural habitat during the last decade. They have been losing their homes to illegal encroachment by the monoculture farmers. The orangutan / Orang Hutan is called ‘The Men of the Forest’, owing to their intelligence and similarity to human beings. As this species is in the brink of mass extinction, it is imperative that we attempt conservation now, before it is too late. Of the above-mentioned species, the Bornean, Sumatran, and Tapanuli orangutans fall under the endangered category. Statistics suggest that The Bornean orangutan population has declined by 80% over the past three generations, the highest rate of extinction reported across all species in the world. Both the species are listed in the The World Conservation Union’s data and in the appendix of the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Wild Fauna and Flora.

Orangutans are legally protected under the national and international law; but the conservation of orangutans require the concerted efforts of all stakeholders in the region and the political arena to ensure its success.

The glimpse of an unforgettable moment

Going out in the woods and taking pictures during leisure time is a passion; I love to grab lovely moments from the life



© Anil T Prabhakar





of wild animals without disturbing them or their natural habitats. Recently I chanced to behold a spectacular sight during a safari at BOSF survival forest; an orangutan challenged the humanity in me. Another reason that urged me to write this article is this unusual incident that I witnessed during my trekking in the survival forest.

During my trek near the Island Forest, the wildlife guard who was our guide and I were engaged in a casual conversation about orangutans and the conservation initiatives at BOSF. I suddenly noticed another wildlife guard plunge into the muddy river. The BOSF Warden's main responsibility in the Conservation Forest is to secure the orangutan's habitat and ensure that it is free of snakes and predators. Turned out that the Guard was scouting the river for poisonous snakes as part of the routine maintenance activity. While the warden was at his job, a female orangutan got closer to the riverbank, watching the guard amusingly. I clicked a few closeup photos of the orangutan. As the guard kept searching for snakes and cleaning the riverbanks, his feet seemed visibly stuck in the muddy river floor. As he struggled to move further, the female orangutan who until then was a quiet spectator, suddenly got up. She came closer to the riverbank and stretched out one of her hands towards the guard, as if she were offering him assistance to get out of the thick mud. She stood there; arms reached out to the guard for three to four minutes. Absolutely awe-struck at this unexpected, sweet gesture from the orangutan, I somehow managed to fix my camera and captured 4 frames of this heartwarming, unique moment. I watched on as the guard declined her kind gesture and managed to move away

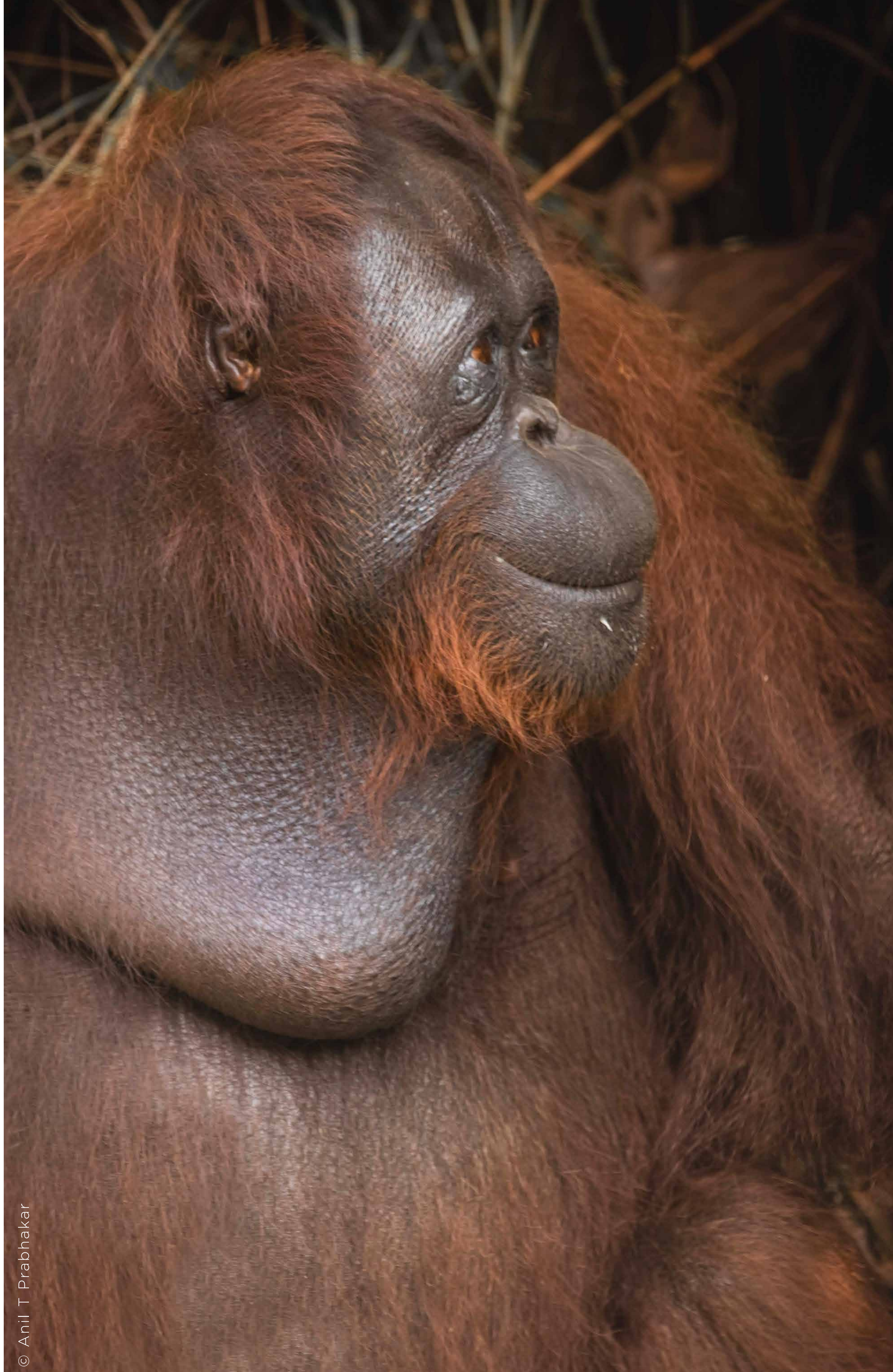
from there. He later explained that there are strict guidelines in place for the staff to avoid unwanted interaction with the orangutans. This is considering the animal's 'wild' and 'unpredictable' nature and to avert hazardous circumstances that adversely affect the safety of the orangutan.

As heartwarming as that image was, the irony of it really shook me. We human beings, with all the power of reasoning and the inherent virtue of "humanity" are on a wild spree destroying the natural habitat of these animals and pushing them towards extinction. These animals on the other hand, are still lending us a helping hand. It got me thinking how we need to make serious efforts to protect our values and our nature for posterity. I posted the picture on social media platforms in January 2020 with a caption: **Let me help you? Once Humanity is dying in Mankind, sometimes animals are guiding us back to our basics**

The picture received global recognition and was featured in CNN, BBC, and SWNS. I was fortunate to have been offered platforms to share my story with the world. I feel grateful that I could witness and capture this spectacle and could be instrumental in spreading awareness on the criticality of orangutan conservation. The Bornean orangutan Survival Foundation (BOS) was founded in 1991 and has been working relentlessly towards this cause since. They work in partnership with the local communities, the Indonesian Forestry Ministry and international partner organizations. The organization's primary objective is to rescue the rangutans displaced from



© Anuj T. Prabhakar



© Anil T Prabhakar

their natural habitat, provide medical and rehabilitative facilities, and prepare them to be returned to the wild.

The younger orangutans are taught survival skills in their 'Forest School' and the older and disabled ones are cared for in the facility. The foundation ensures medical care, nutrition and shelter similar to their natural habitat. The severely impaired or critically ill animals are provided with intensive care facilities as well.

BOS is instrumental in protecting the remaining natural ecosystem for orangutans through their reforestation initiatives. They also collaborate with the local authorities and other stakeholders to prevent activities that lead to environment damage and natural human-orangutan conflict. The efforts of BOSF towards the conservation of this critically endangered species is truly commendable. After the photograph was published, BOSF management contacted me and published a statement about this incident, announcing the names of orangutan (Anih) and the wildlife guard (Syrhul). I feel very fortunate to have been given this opportunity; to do my share in spreading awareness towards the conservation of this remarkable specie.

There is a universal message that Vaikom Muhammad Basheer, the renowned writer from India gives us in one of his great works "The Inheritors of the Earth" (Bhoomiyude Avakashikal) where he reiterates the concept of heterogeneity in this world. The universe is a Noah's Arc for all creatures of the world. Human beings aren't any more significant than

insects and beasts who share the earth with us. Earth is a haven for ants, snakes, lizards, termites, birds, bats and worms just like man. This philosophy goes hand in hand with the tenets of Zen Buddhism. The world is not man-made. Instead, man is a part of the Nature. Man has no right to infringe upon the laws of Nature. Man Made things are artificial, fragile, and transient. But Nature is awe-inspiring, eternal, apocalyptic, guileless, and real.

It is important to emphasize that the severity of the current environmental crisis is highly alarming. There are issues like climate change due to global warming, groundwater depletion, holes in the Ozone layer, destruction of rainforests, extinction of species and sharp decline of biodiversity. Most of these alarming situations are created by human attitude and their reckless behaviour. We should realize that these environmental problems adversely affect the human population as well. The ongoing threats due to the occurrence of natural disasters such as landslides, floods, tsunamis, wildfires, and earthquakes act as catastrophic hazards causing widespread damage though they may be naturally occurring. It is important to understand that human vulnerability to natural disasters is generally increasing day by day. Increase in population density and lack of safer settlements pose a direct threat to human life leading them to build their shelters in the floodplains, hill slopes and coastal belts. Hence it is important for all of us to take up this challenge to protect our nature and its assets with a hope to regain and restore the earth's equilibrium, for us and the generations to come.



SPECIES

The extraordinary world of Fynbos

By Leon kluge



Leon Kluge is a third generation botanist in South Africa. He represents South Africa at international garden and flower exhibitions.

[facebook.com/leonklugegardendesign](https://www.facebook.com/leonklugegardendesign)


I grew up in the in the eastern most part of Southern Africa, surrounded by giant Baobab trees and prickly Euphorbia's. In this wild part of Africa Elephants and other large and constantly hungry herbivores such as Giraffe are common place, always sweeping the landscape for food, and as a result the plants have to protect themselves from a constant attack by animals and insects. That meant most of the wild plant life that I grew up with were hostile, they were either covered in needle sharp spines or dripping with poison when damaged.

I have had a keen interest in flora since I can remember. I grew up going on hikes with my dad and the local Orchid society looking for weird and interesting plants. My dad was the curator of the Lowveld botanical gardens, and sometimes he would fly to Cape town to visit the Botanical garden's headquarters called



Leon Kluge





Kirstenbosch, which in my very biased opinion is still one of the best botanical gardens in the world. On my Dad's return I would be besides myself with excitement, as with most parents returning from a long trip away, a small gift would be surely expected for all the kids, but I knew what my gift was already beforehand, as there was only one thing I wanted from Cape town, and that was a bunch of fynbos. The soft foliage, strange alien-like flowers and the unmistakable scent is a memory that will stay with me forever, back then wishing I could see the fynbos in real life... perhaps someday.

Fast forward quite a few years ,and I'm living in a small town called Franschhoek, famous for its incredible wine, but most importantly its located in the heart of the fynbos or the Cape floristic region.

What does the word fynbos mean, it's a term loosely used by the local people to describe all the woodland growth, except for the trees (as in most areas of the Cape trees are noticeably absent). Fynbos generally have smaller finely shaped leaves, either needle like or short and densely packed, hence the word fynbos. Fynbos is mostly defined by being evergreen, hard or leathery-leaved small shrubs mixed with grass like Restios, growing on nutrient poor soils such as leached sandstone or limestone.

Fynbos is well known for being the smallest of the six floral kingdoms, but size does not matter as the cape floristic region hosts around 9000 species of plants in a 90 000 square kilometre area and most of them occur nowhere else on earth. The Cape Floristic Region



Pyramid Kabong (*Lapeirousia pyramidalis*)

averages about 94 unique species per 1000 square km, compare that to other Mediterranean regions such as California or Southwestern Australia who respectively have 14 and 12 unique species per 1000 square km.

Not only is the diversity in the fynbos so intense but the sheer beauty and longevity of the fynbos flowers have caused a run on fynbos flower production globally, especially on the Proteas and Leucospermums.

Horticulturally the Fynbos region has contributed immensely to the world of gardening with this region's plants found in most garden centres around the world, such as Agapanthus, Nemesia, Scabiosa, Diascia, Kniphofia, Erica's and hundreds more. But nothing beats seeing these commercial plants in their natural habitat, and that is where flower tourism is so important to the Western Cape, as people from around the world visit the fynbos to view the beauty first hand, weather dependent the best time to see the fynbos would be between August and October.

The climate of the South western cape is moderate and that is due to its close proximity to the ocean, the coastal fynbos has a temperature that averages between 7 and 15 degrees Celsius in winter, and between 15 and 25 in summer. but the valleys inland can reach into the early 40s in summer. There is not a lot of frost in the region, although the mountain peaks can get a few dustings of snow during winter.

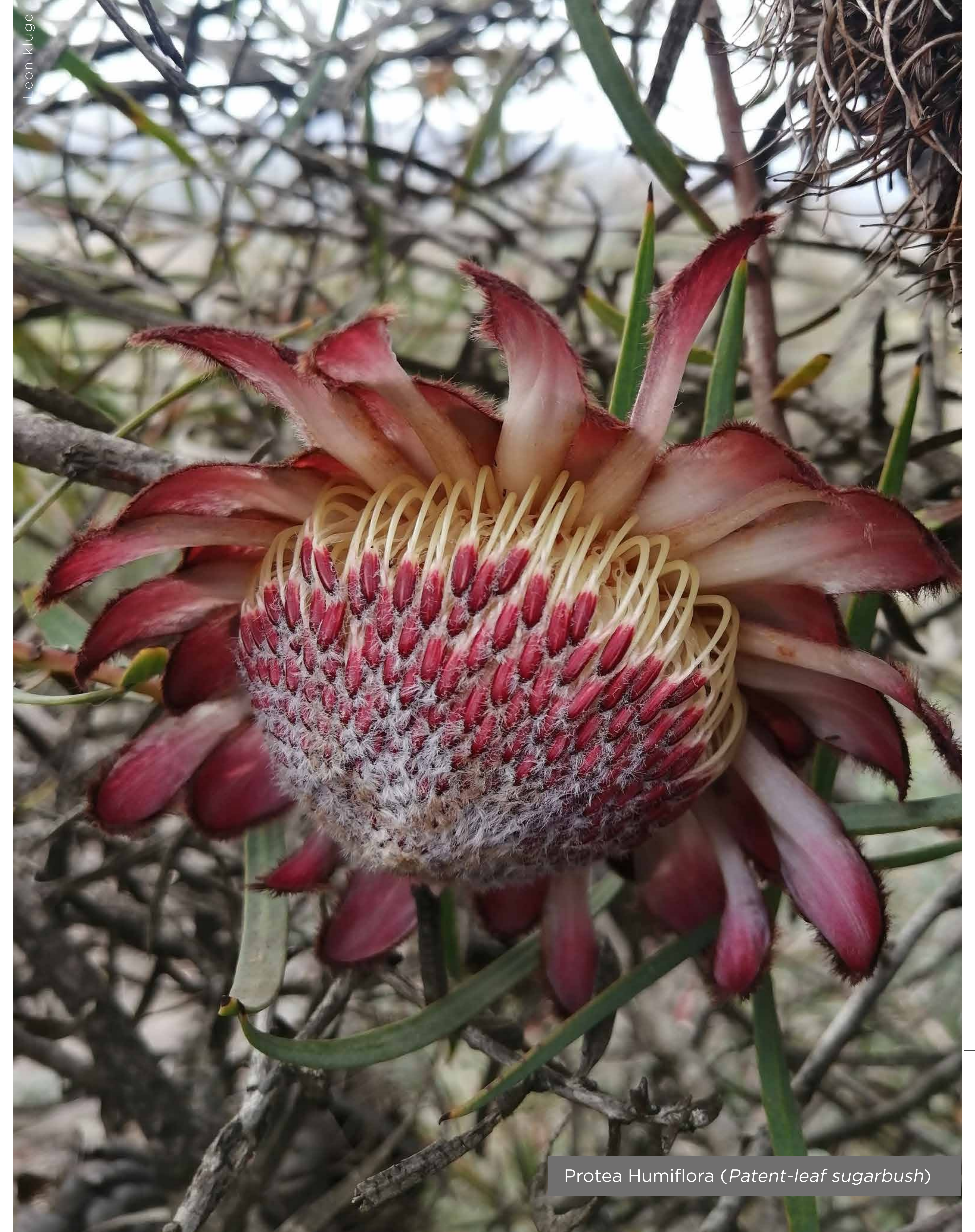
The rainfall varies depending on the area within the region, it can be between

250mm and 650mm of rain per season ,but the precipitation higher on the mountains can easily reach a 1000mm a year. The rain mostly occur during the winter, making it a true Mediterranean climate with the exception of the far western coastline of the south western cape. The area between Mossel bay and Port Elizabeth is non seasonal and rain can occur on a monthly basis, and that is why we have some pockets of temperate forests within the fynbos, that are filled with giant Podocarpus trees, Strelitzia's and tropical looking ferns.

Fynbos has a close and very dependent relationship with fire, but lately it has become more of a love-hate relationship.

The soil fynbos prefer are very poor in nutrients especially nitrogen and phosphorus, and a fire is essential to restore the balance of nutrients in the soil. As fynbos shrubs get older and bigger the nutrients get less because it's all used up, the plants get woody and create dense shade over the smaller shrubs, bulbs and annuals, this causes most of the smaller plants to lie dormant in the ground in the form of seed or bulbs, waiting for sunlight and nutrients to return. When a fire finally burns through the fynbos it would kill most of the shrubbery, there are only a few Protea and fynbos species that has a corky thick exterior to their base trunk in order to help them survive the heat of the flames and then sprout thereafter, but with most of the fynbos the flames are a death sentence.

The flames might have killed the parent plants but the seeds required the heat



Protea Humiflora (*Patent-leaf sugarbush*)

Leon Kluge





Needle-Leaf Pincushion (*Leucospermum lineare*)

of the flames to burst out of their sealed capsules where they have been waiting patiently for years, chemicals in the smoke causes the seed to germinate quickly after the first rains, it will take many years for the bigger shrubs to return to their adult size, but in the meantime the dormant bulbs, new annuals and small perennials can now enjoy the nutrients that the ash of the fire has provided and most importantly-the sunlight.

A well balanced fynbos area would normally receive a fire between every 10 and 14 years, but human activity has greatly increased the frequency of fires, and if the fires burn too often then the plants will never mature to make seed and so a species would go extinct in that affected area.

Fynbos are at their flowering peak in spring where nearly 60 percent of the species will be in flower, but unlike other regions of the world where there are times of almost no flowers due to weather conditions, in the fynbos nearly a fifth of the fynbos species will always be in flower at any month of the year. Some plants have seized the opportunity to flower during the dry summer months when food would be more scarce, and so attract more pollinators. Other bulbs such as the Amaryllis would flower in autumn so their seed can be ready to germinate in the winter rains.

The Fynbos flowers have developed spectacular adaptations to attract pollinators. Producing nectar and large quantities of it is a specialty of a lot of the fynbos species, in order to produce

nectar does not require a lot of soil-based nutrients as the soil does not contain much. But the synthesis of the sugars to nectar requires carbon, which is in the air and unlimited in quantity, and that is why our Protea's are commonly known as sugar bushes.

The Cape is fairly poor in insect species, and rely heavily on only a few groups of insects to do most of the pollination duties, the hairy monkey beetles love brightly coloured cup shaped flowers. some flowers have even added markings on their petals in order to fool the beetle in thinking there is a potential mate on the flower waiting for him, the sunbirds prefer the larger flowers such as Erica's and Proteas, and the Cape butterfly loves to visit all flowers that are scarlet in colour.

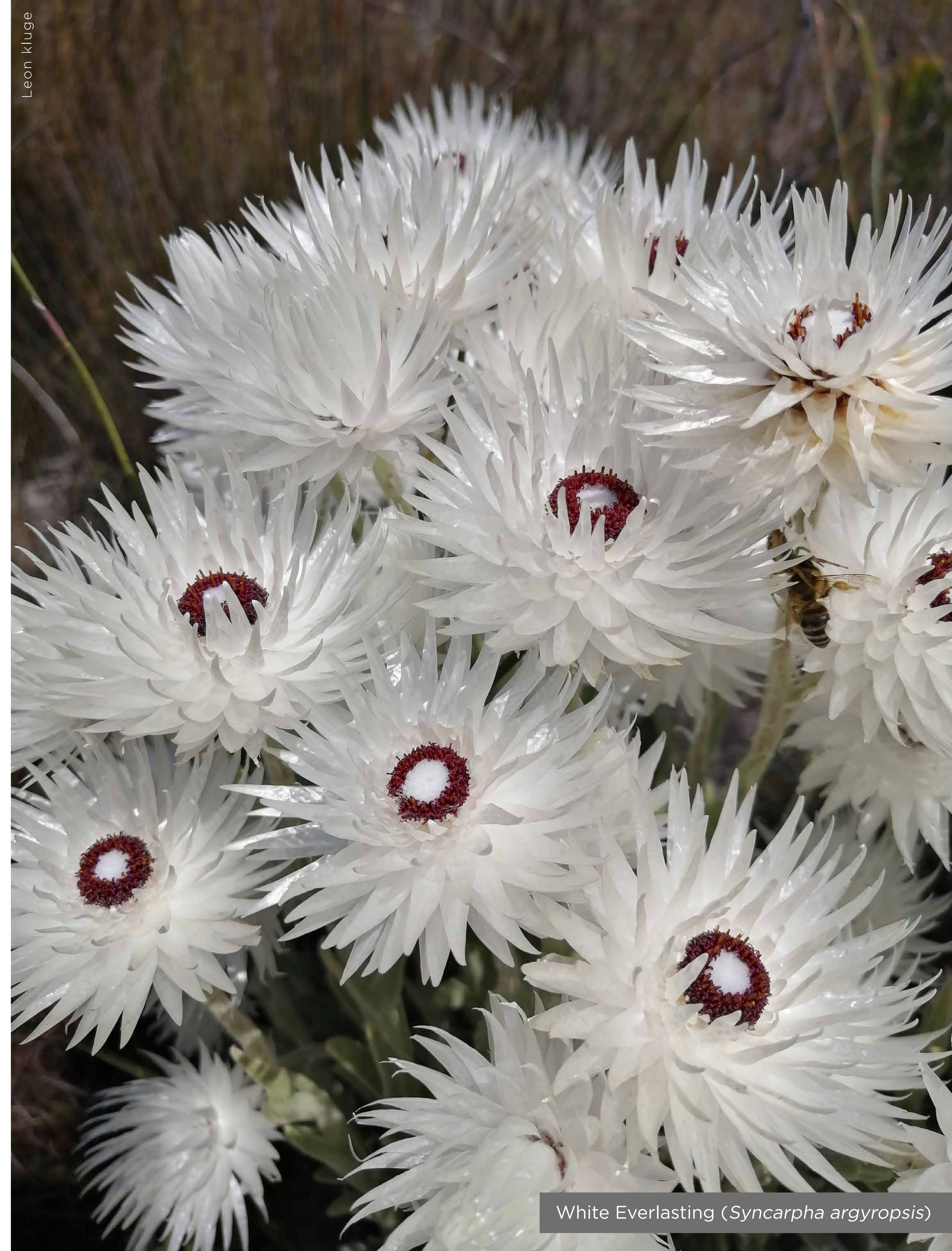
My favourite must be the ground Protea's that has seized the opportunity to attract the fynbos rodents, at dusk the low to the ground and downward facing flowers emit a strong scent that resembles yeast, the rodents follow the scent and lick the nectar and so pollinate the flowers with their pollen dusted snouts. Wind also has an important role to play in pollination especially with the grasses ,sedges and Restios in which they are mostly pollinated by the gusting wind that occurs in the Cape.

For fynbos plants to produce seed takes a lot of nutrients especially nitrogen which is in short supply around the Cape, that is why seed production is relatively low in the fynbos. In order to overcome this obstacle some plants adapted by only making a single ovule per flower, or



Apricot Tulp (*Moraea ochroleuca*)

Leon Kluge



White Everlasting (*Syncarpha argyropsis*)

Leon Kluge

let the seed mature over a much longer period of time in order for the plant to slowly but surely collect the necessary nutrients needed to produce a mature seed. This valuable commodity needs to be protected and some species have developed hard spiky capsules to lock the seed in until conditions are favorable, they might remain in the capsule for many years.

Ants play a very important role in protecting the seed, some 20 percent of fynbos developed a mutual beneficial relationship with ants, the seed contain a fatty food parcel which the ants love, and is very nutritious to them, the ants harvest the seed and take them down into their nests, there the fatty nutrients are consumed by the ants and the seed is then discarded, but underground, so in return for the fatty nutrients the ants have successfully planted the seed underground for the mother plant, and as soon as the smoke of a passing fire above would come into contact with the seed it would start to germinate.

Conservation of the Fynbos remains of utmost importance, because of the difficult topography of this region filled with steep mountain ranges, urban development has mostly been happening on the low lying flat areas where the species that remain there are under major threat and many unfortunately already extinct. Agriculture and in particular vineyards and rooibos plantations are now also encroaching and threatening the higher parts of the mountains. The biggest threat on our mountain slopes must be from the invasive Australian trees such as Eucalyptus and Wattle species that deplete the soil of water and

nutrients, and kill most plants growing under their canopy.

Farmers want to protect their properties from fire and so burn the surrounding land, and then prevent the development of mature fynbos plants to set seed. Illegal plant harvesting for export to collectors abroad also has a detrimental role to play. But in the light of things, the people of the Cape love the fynbos, it is part of the fabric of everyone living in this beautiful flower filled Eden, and account for a lot of tourism, improving people's lives. Entities such as Cape Nature protect vast areas of the Cape to keep it in a pristine condition and control fires.

When visiting the Cape floristic region I would recommend the following places to see fynbos at its best.

Kogelberg nature reserve
Westcoast nature reserve
Ferkloof nature reserve
Tygerberg nature reserve
Table Mountain nature reserve
Mont Rochelle nature reserve
Cape Point nature reserve



Wagon Tree (*Protea nitida*)

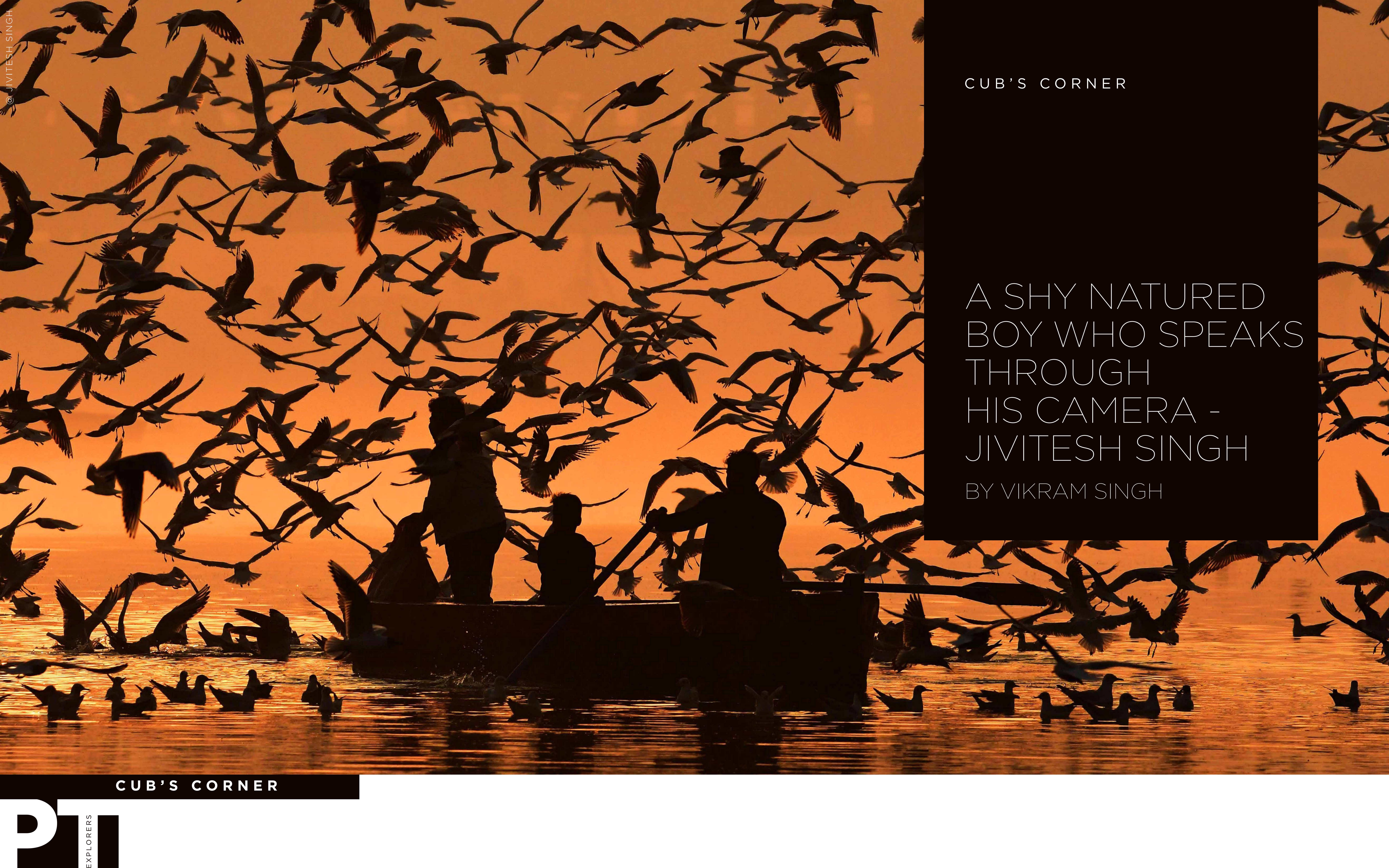
Leon Kluge

Common Brunia (*Brunia noduliflora*)



Blushing Bride (*Serruria florida*)





@ JIVITESH SINGH

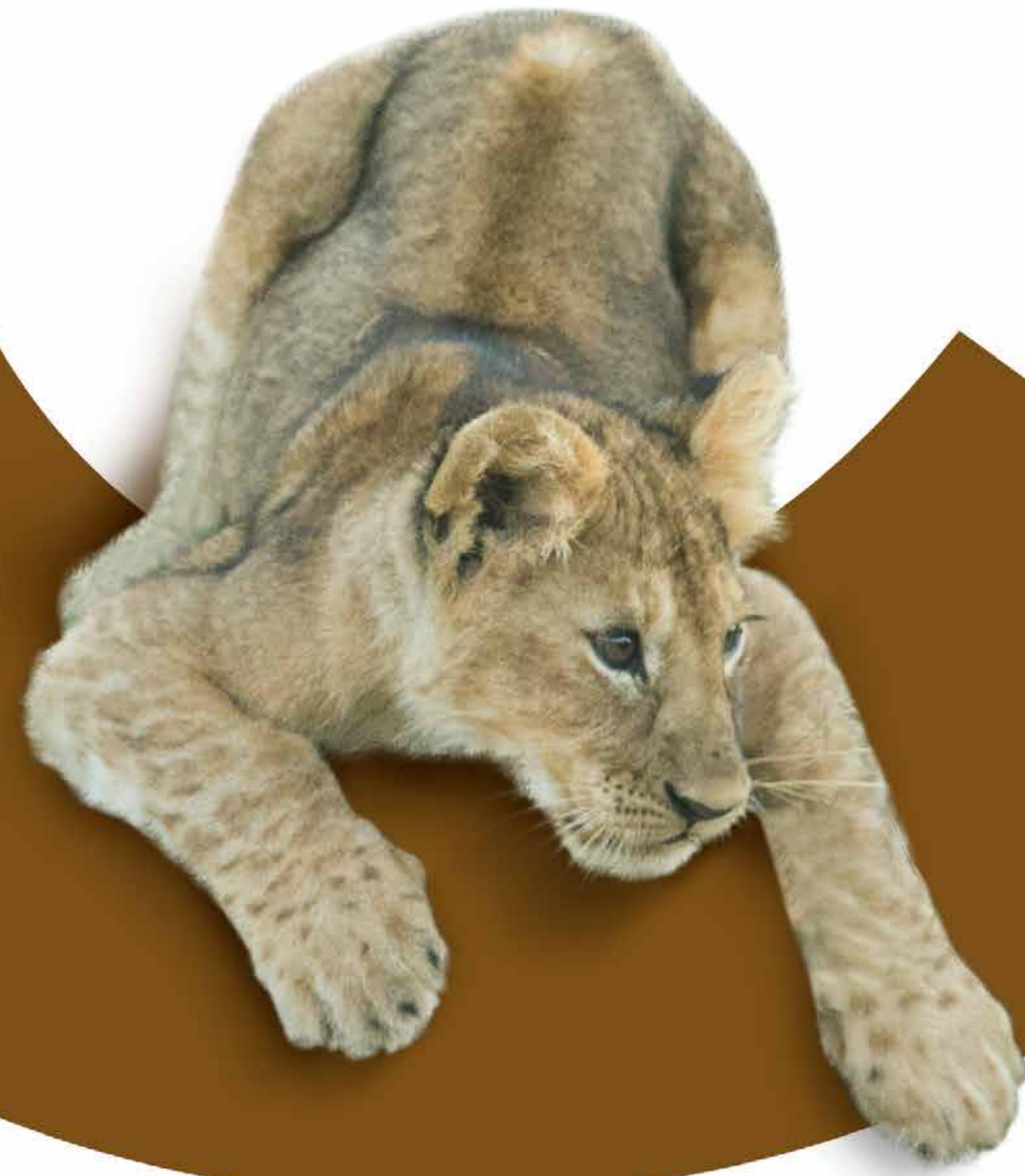
CUB'S CORNER

A SHY NATURED
BOY WHO SPEAKS
THROUGH
HIS CAMERA -
JIVITESH SINGH

BY VIKRAM SINGH

CUB'S CORNER

CUB'S CORNER



Jivitesh Singh, 15 years of age now, a student of SLSDAV Public School, Mausam Vihar Delhi, started taking interest in photography when he was just four years old. He used to go with his father to different forests and birding places where he started taking interest in birds, nature as well as in wildlife photography. By seeing his interest, his father gifted him a camera at the age of four years, and since then he started taking photos of wild life, nature and birds.

As of now he has photographed above 500 to 600 different species and clicked much more than 25000 photos covering different species of birds and animals and the collection is expanding. His work is published in many newspapers/magazines from time to time.



Indian White-eye (*Zosterops palpebrosus*)



Great White Pelican (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*)



Rosy Starling (*Pastor roseus*)

At age 10 years

He was selected and participated in the 3rd National Art Exhibition at All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society, Rafi Marg, New Delhi, where in many big personalities from all over India and from different fields including photography and art visited and appreciated his work...

Age 11 years

He was awarded as the YOUNGEST WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER OF INDIA by India Book of Records..

He was the youngest Indian Wildlife Photographer by Incredible Book of Records

His name is enlisted in Assist Book of World Records as Youngest Birder..

National newspaper HINDUSTAN has given him a new Identity as CHHOTI UMAR KA BADA PHOTOGRAPHER (a bigger photographer beyond his age).

Age 12 years

GLOBAL YOUNGEST WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER by Global Records and Research Foundation a 'Premier Records Processing Authority' in the field of Standardization, Uniformity and Measurement of Records globally.

Participated in the National Group Art Exhibition in New Delhi and won the Gold Medal.

His interview as YOUNGEST WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER OF INDIA was telecast

on DD NATIONAL CHANNEL for which he got appreciation from all over the country and abroad.

Letter of appreciation by Director General, NIA, Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India. Photos of Jivitesh were displayed in NIA Headquarters building, which was inaugurated by Hon'ble Home Minister of India and his work was highly appreciated by the distinguished guests from all over the country and from various Departments.

"THOSE PHOTOS CLICKED BY JIVITESH ARE PERMANENTLY DISPLAYED IN THE NIA HEADQUARTERS."

Proudly, he donated all those pictures to NIA as a token of his love for the soldiers of our country.

Age 13 years

He received "PEARL OF NATION AWARD" in the field of Birds, Nature and Wildlife Photography.

He was awarded as Best Child Entrant in International Artwork Circuit , 2020

Age 14 years

He received the "International Excellence Award in Wildlife Photography" for his outstanding individual achievements and distinguished services to the Nation..

He received "Pride of India Award" in the field of Birds, Nature and Wildlife Photography..

His main interest is birding. His photos are in many news portals, local and national newspapers, magazines cover









Red-billed Blue Magpie (*Urocissa erythroryncha*)

his work in their esteemed newspapers/ magazines from time to time. He is always ready whenever there is any work to be done for nature and wildlife and donates his pictures as prints for anything related to conservation and for nature awareness.

A sober, disciplined and a shy natured boy, Jivitesh Singh wanted to contribute his work to save the birds and their habitats.

To date Jivitesh has covered many wildlife sanctuaries, national parks -birds sanctuaries and wetlands in different parts of the country and abroad for his passion including Bandhavgarh National Park, Panna National Park, Kanha National Park, Ranthambore National Park, Okhla Bird Sanctuary, Sultanpur Bird Sanctuary, Surajpur Bird Sanctuary, Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary, Velavadar National Park, Nal Sarovar Bird Sanctuary, Thol Bird Sanctuary, Little Raan of Kutch National Park, Greater Raan of Kutch, Akola Bird Sanctuary, Dumna Nature Reserve, Sariska National Park, Sattal, Chopta and many birding places of Uttarakhand, Chidiya Tapu, Mount Harriat, Diglipur, Mayabunder, Dhani Nallah, Long Island, Havelock, Neil island, Little Andaman and many other parts of Andaman, Chandlai Lake, Jaipur, Barkheda Pond, Jaipur, Gir National Park, Gujarat Black Buck national park, velavadar, Khijariya Bird Sanctuary, Jamnagar, Rani Durgawati wildlife Sanctuary, Chhevla Talab, MP, Pench National Park, Churna Wildlife Sanctuary, Madhai Wildlife Sanctuary, Pachhmarchi, Van Vihar, Bhopal, Sattal Wildlife Area, Corbett National Park, Pariyat Reserve, Jabalpur, Payali Forest Area, Budhan Sagar, Nandan Kanan Van, Chitwan National Park, Nepal, Area of Leh N Ladakh, Coorg, Mysore, and Bangalore, Masinagudi.



Chinkara (*Gazella bennettii*),



Her Views & Visuals

By Ana Maria Casas-Cordero

Quebrada de Paipote, Desierto de Atacama

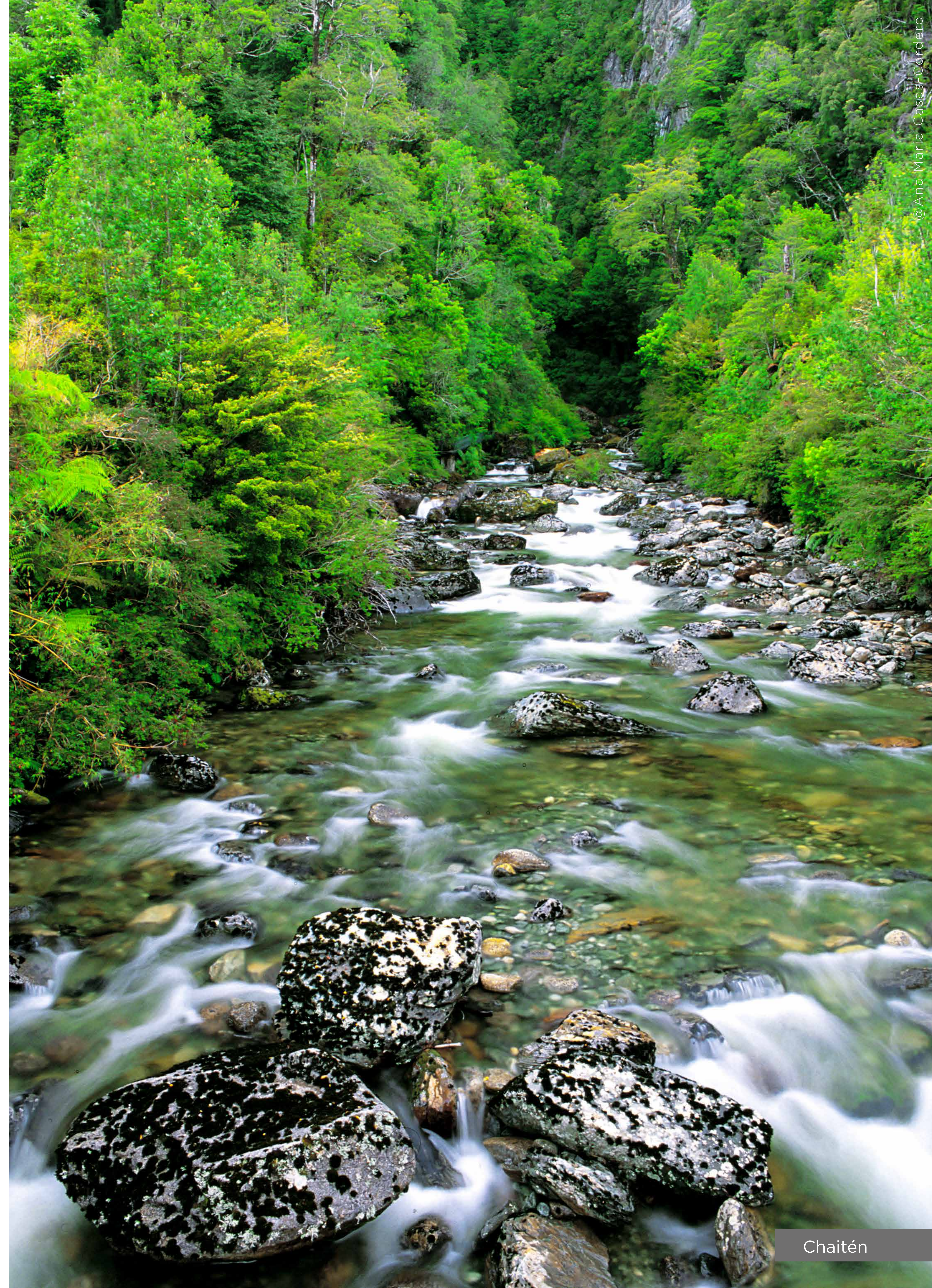
HER VIEWS & VISUALS



Ana María Casas-Cordero is a Chilean photographer whose passion is to capture the beauty and visual poetry of our extraordinary nature. Creator of the concept “The emotion of the landscape”, she seeks to take photographs that connect people not only with the place, but also with the sensations and emotions that these natural compositions generate in them, to favor and enhance respect, care and protection of the fragile ecosystem in which we live.

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Her Views and Visuals





How did your interest in landscapes begin?

Although during my childhood and adolescence I did not have many possibilities to go to natural spaces, I always felt a deep feeling of love for nature. For that reason, when I was in my university years, I began to travel to know my country and discover new places that with their beauty would feed my soul and my heart. Nature became the main destination of my vacations. I traveled to meet those landscapes that gave me emotions, feelings and sensations. And Chile is perfect for it! It is a country with beautiful, diverse, and contrasted natural spaces. It is a privileged territory with varied and changing lights that draw beautiful, challenging, and motivating atmospheres... I couldn't help falling in love with its landscapes.

How do you describe your journey as a photographer and a person?

The love for nature, travel, and adventure, especially for those most isolated and unknown places, motivated my interest in capturing and perpetuating those magical moments in the landscape.

Little by little, I began to feel the need to convey to people not only the beauty of the place but also the emotions that the connection with these natural spaces produced in me.

I bought a basic SLR camera (a Zenit) and made it my new travel companion, but having no photographic knowledge, the images I took were frustrating, to say the least, because they did not reflect at all what I had seen, lived and felt in the place.



Valle del Arcoiris

©Ana María Casas Cordero



For this reason, during the years 1999 and 2000 I took a Diploma in art with a mention in photography at the Catholic University of Chile and thus began this beautiful journey through the landscape, which for the past 20 years has focused on the constant search for beauty and visual poetry that gives us our wonderful and extraordinary nature.

During this journey I have made several solo exhibitions and participated in several group exhibitions, I have collaborated in various publications, participated as a jury in various photography competitions, gave talks and developed a complete Image Bank specializing in landscape, nature and travel.

All these activities allow me to be in a continuous learning process that constantly motivates my personal and photographic growth. Tiredness, cold, extreme heat, waiting and patience have been my traveling companions, but so have the emotions that lights, shadows, colors, lines, shapes, presences have caused me and the absences in the landscape.

In this photographic adventure I have created and developed a concept that guides my walk through photography and nature ... it is "The Emotion of the Landscape", a concept that seeks to rescue the essence of each place, stopping time in an image that motivates the spectator to think and feel, where I position myself in natural spaces from contemplation, from that spiritual state that appears in the human being when mental silence is practiced. I seek to go beyond the mere descriptive field and show the intimate dialogue sustained

with nature to stage created emotional landscapes, where images have their own voice.

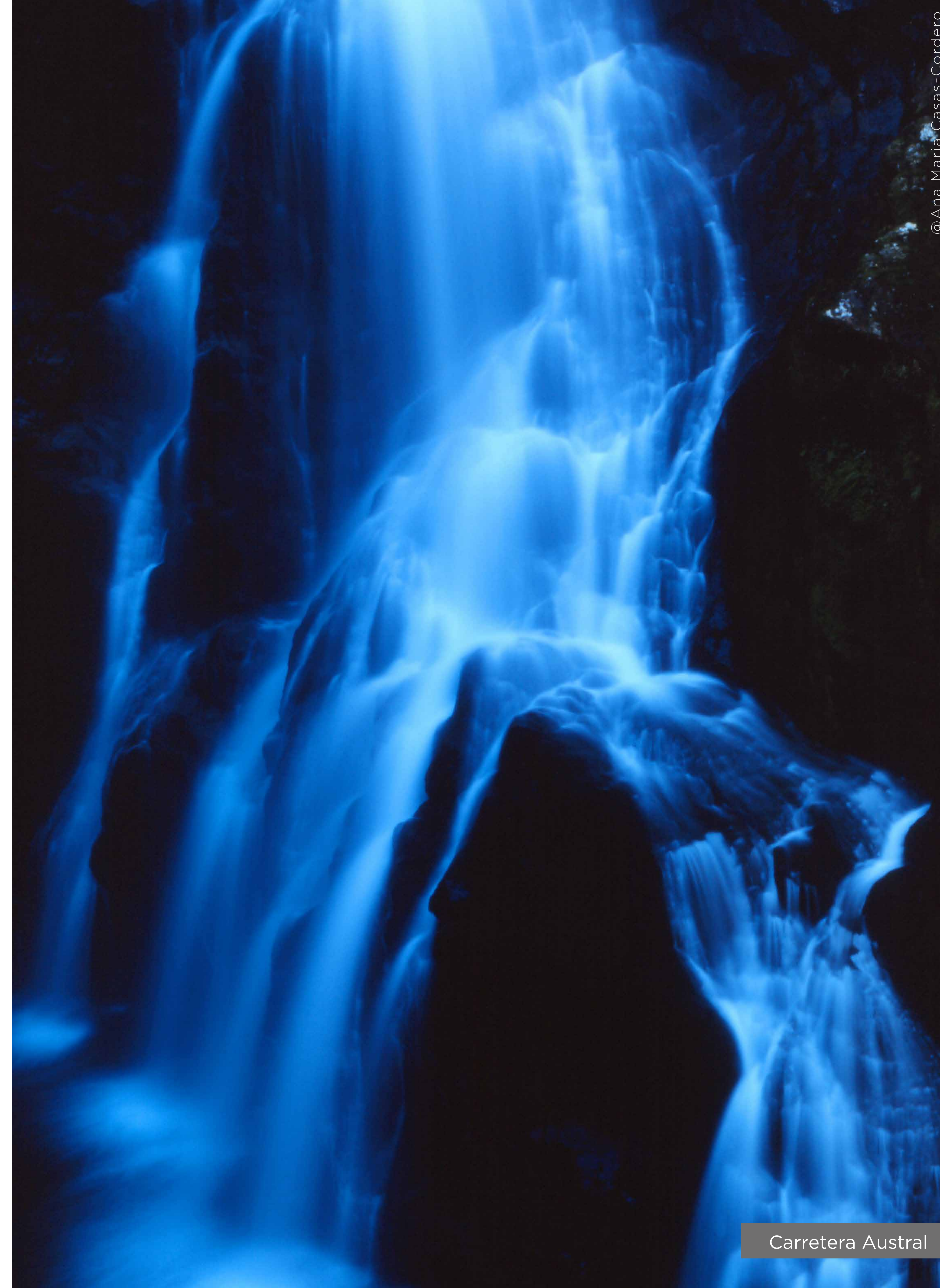
What is your view on Nature Conservation? How can we, as landscape photographers, help to protect our Mother Nature?

We are in a time where the human being and its accelerated and excessive pace of life has negatively impacted nature, generating serious damage, which not only endangers the continuity of many species on our planet, but has also caused the extinction of some of them. Hence the importance and urgency of being able to relate to the natural environment from respect, care, responsibility and it is here where education plays a very important role in this process.

My intention is to contribute to the enhancement of the majestic natural heritage that we have, rescuing the charm of the immense, the simple and the beautiful found both in a great landscape and in a small detail.

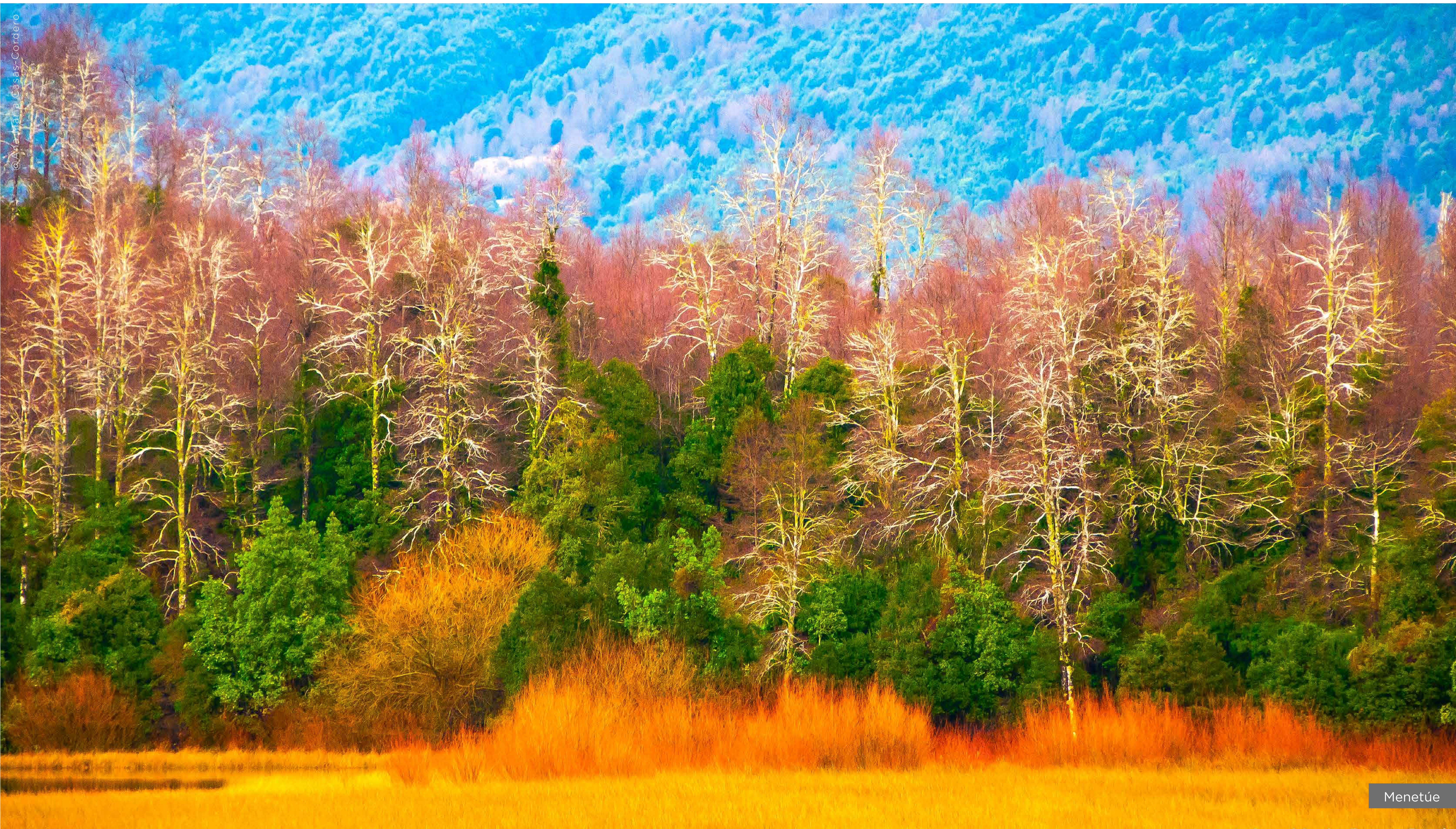
In this sense, photography has become a communication tool for me, where I try to rescue the silence and the essence of each place to transport viewers not only to these spaces, but also to the feelings that the interaction evokes in them with these natural compositions, facilitating the generation or strengthening of an emotional bond between people and the landscape.

Serenity, peace, nostalgia, admiration, harmony and amazement are some of the emotions that accompany my



Carretera Austral

@Ana Maria Casas-Cordero



© Menetúe Casas-Cordero

Menetúe





Llama (*Lama glama*)

photographic work and that I intentionally share to generate or enhance a positive feeling, which allows raising awareness about the importance of respect, protection and care of the fragile ecosystem in which we live, where each of us always has something important to contribute. I consider that generating an emotional connection with nature is of vital importance to generate respectful and responsible behavior towards the environment. As Jacques Cousteau said: “People protect what they love, love what they know and know what they are taught.” And here we are the photographers and nature photographers to contribute to publicize natural beauties, so people fall in love with them and are more likely to take care of and protect them.

Finally, in the editorial area I published “Chile in Silence”, a photobook that transmits the important natural heritage of Chile and that was considered by the Learning Resource Center of the Ministry of Education as “a stimulating support for the knowledge of geography and the valuation of the country’s natural spaces”. Also, since 2016 I have been a collaborator of the “Ladera Sur” Landscape and Nature Platform.

In short, taking care of nature is taking care of ourselves.

Can you give our readers the best landscapes photography tips? Do you have any recommendation on settings or gear for landscapes photography?

Embarking on the adventure of the landscape is a path that requires a lot of creativity. It is not so easy to find compositions that transcend the common gaze and that differ from classic shots. Capturing an interesting image depends a lot on the photographer’s



@Ana Maria Casas-Cordero

Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*)





Road to Lonquimay

ability to capture an emotion, a feeling, a sensation, a mood, an idea. For me, the main value is not found in the image itself, but in what it causes us. It can be love, joy, admiration, energy, peace, security, freedom, hope, nostalgia, loneliness, abandonment or endless other sensations.

Knowing how to observe and contemplate can make a difference. Sometimes, small details transform what would be a common photograph into a special photograph: an object, a color, a shape, a perspective, a light ... you just have to contemplate, I mean

seeing not only with your eyes but also with the heart. But in order to achieve this we need to know and master the photographic technique and we achieve this by studying, either in a photography school or in a self-taught way. In these times the internet provides us with a lot of material to be able to carry out self-learning processes. Another essential element is practice. Once the necessary knowledge is acquired, it is essential to put it into practice. We have to practice, practice and practice until we achieve the expected results.

For me the essential photographic

equipment to use is the following:

- A camera body that has manual control.
- Lenses of different focal lengths, which allow obtaining different frames.
- Polarizing filter, to handle reflected light and color saturation.
- Tripod, for when slow shutter speeds are used in order to achieve greater depth of field or to rescue, for example, the movement of water. Also, it is useful when using a telephoto lens.
- Cleaning supplies, mainly cleaning

cloths or paper, brush and air bulb, to clean the dust and dirt that remains on the equipment.

- Bag and / or suitcase to protect equipment and materials.
- Clothing appropriate to the climate, the place and the activity to be carried out.
- If you still use an analog camera, use a fine-grained slide film to obtain greater detail and sharpness of the image.

Many times the photographers require long walks to achieve their objective,



Pichidangui

having to select and prioritize the equipment to be used very well, since any small unnecessary weight seems to be a great burden as the hours and kilometers pass. At such times a single camera body, zoom lens, lightweight tripod, and lightweight bags are valued.

What plans do you have in the future related to landscapes Photography?

To keep capturing and transmitting “The emotion of the landscape”

Tell us something about the gears you use.

My photographic archive comprised of different cameras over time, analog and digital. Currently I work mainly with a Nikon D810.



Cajón del Maipo



Memories of Tadoba

By Kaushik Vijayan

THROUGH THE LENS



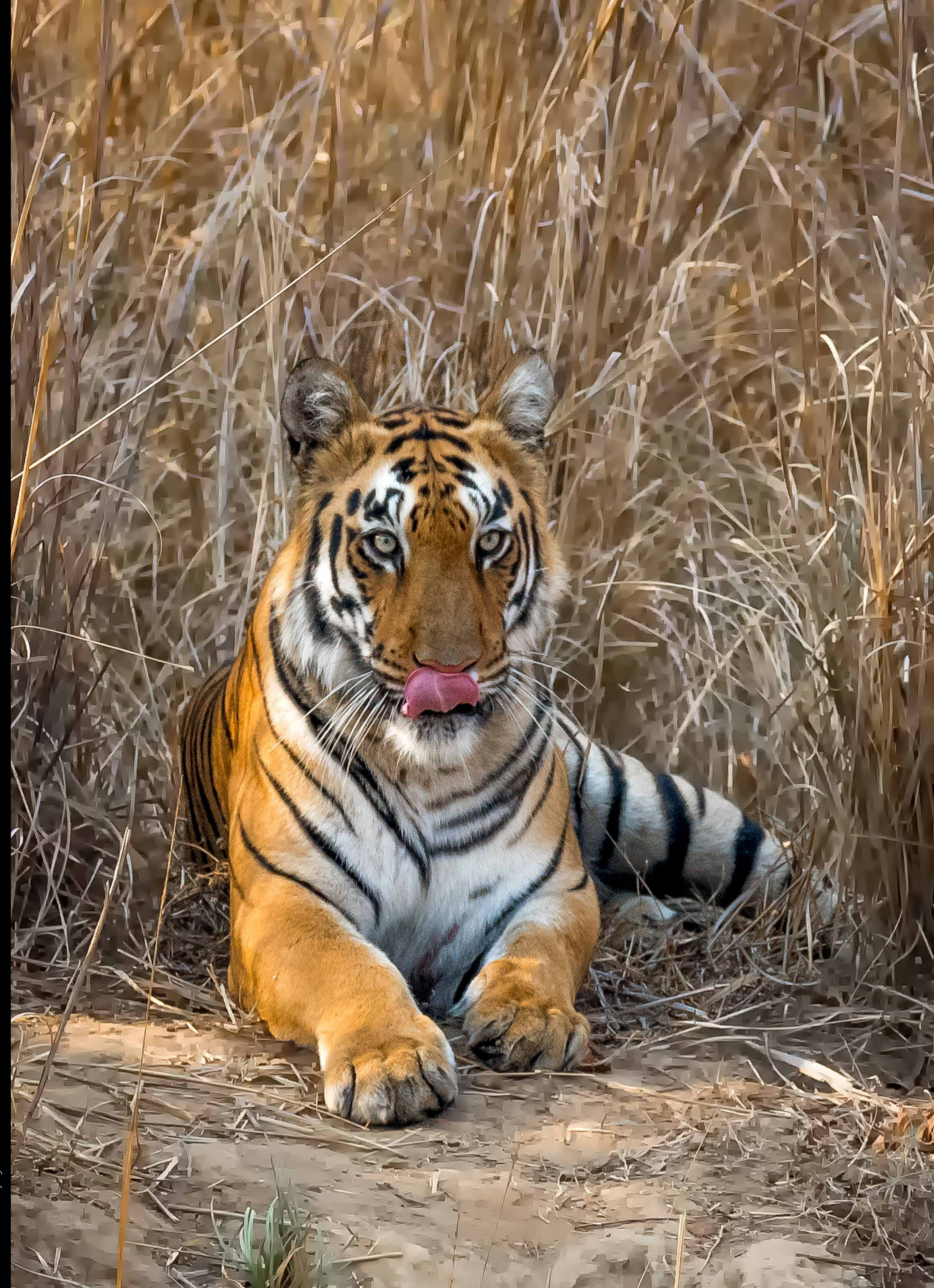
Kaushik Vijayan hails from Kerala, India, and for the past 14 years, he has been settled and working in Saudi Arabia. He started dabbling in photography since his arrival in the middle-east and photography has turned into a serious passion over the last four years.

[instagram.com/kaushikvijayan.photography/](https://www.instagram.com/kaushikvijayan.photography/)

[facebook.com/kaushikphotographs](https://www.facebook.com/kaushikphotographs)

After all these years being surrounded by the dunes of Arabia, it was time I headed back home to India. It's been a while since I've ventured into wildlife photography and a dedicated trip to capture the spirits of the wild was absolutely necessary.

After some research I found a forest complemented by harmonious weather and throbbing wildlife. It was the "Tadoba National Park", also known as the "Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve" which is one of India's 47 project tiger reserves existing







in India. It lies in the Chandrapur district of Maharashtra state and is approximately 150 km from Nagpur city. The total area of the tiger reserve is 1,727 square kilometers, which includes the Tadoba National Park, created in the year 1955.

So our expedition began, we reached Nagpur to its scorching heat and we really felt the 48° C temperature instantly. To pick us up from the airport a taxi has arrived from Mohali. We boarded our first ride and headed towards Mohali which was 150 odd kilometers away from Nagpur. After a few hours we reached a beautiful village where we had arranged our stay. A comfortable homestay which became our home for the next few days and during these time we took a total of six jungle safaris.

The next morning our safari jeep arrived to pick us up for our first safari. The feeling you get while trembling into the forest is indescribable. So we set out for our adventure. The safari team handed us the breakfast package for everyone which would be consumed during a 10 min break in between the safari at a designated spot where all the safari vehicles meet.

The breakfast is nothing special to ride home about. It's usually a sandwich or something along that line. Although the lush jungle is blessed with a lot of tree lives the scorching heat still penetrates inside and we could feel it. To battle the heat we packed a couple bottles of water in an ice box to stay hydrated along the way. The safari team also provided us with a big bag to store the leftovers and empty bottles. With all these we proceeded to



attacking the trails of the jungle.

When we entered the forest, the first animal we met was the Sambar deer which was standing proud and tall on a lush meadow in all its glory. However, the real star of every reserve in India is still the tiger and the story isn't any different here. The safari team more or less has the objective to get the sighting of a tiger or more. To find a tiger in this dense forest is looking for a needle in a haystack but during hot summers they tend to roam near water bodies with primarily two intentions. One is to submerge themselves underwater to cool their body and the other is to prey on other animals coming towards the water bodies for drinking the water.

So we set our sights to finding a water body in hopes to get a tiger sighting and after a good few kilometers we struck gold. We got the sighting of not one but three tigers. Tigers residing in every reserve are usually given a name for easy identification by the officers and the story wasn't any different here. The majestic one we saw here was the tigress "Maya" and her two young tigers. The young tigers were around two years old. We captured their images to our hearts content. After a while we moved from there only to be blessed by another tiger which was submerged in a water body as we expected earlier.

We didn't waste any time and started capturing him in his complete glory. Along our way we got the sightings of several other tigers and we often stopped for a long time to capture images. Our safari started at 6 am and usually the



© Kaushik Vijayan



safari wraps up at around 10:30 am and any time beyond this will be unbearable due to the extreme heat. We then rounded back to our room to freshen up and have our lunch only to start the next safari of the day which starts in the evening. This was the routine for the upcoming days and during these times I gathered a ton of valuable memories in which two of them stand out particularly. The first one was during our second day, the safari for this day was around 75 KM away from Mohali. After a long drive we reached at the gates at around 3 PM. The safari started as expected and we ventured into the forest. While on a safari we'll always have a guide with us to ease the navigation. Once our safari was off and after a few minutes our jeep halted and our guide hopped on top of our vehicle and asked us to remain silent. After listening for a bit our guide pointed to a bush a bit farther from our position and he said "tiger". Every pair of eyes on that jeep searched for them. Through the thick bush we saw not one but three tigers.

There were two male tigers and one female tiger and two of the tigers were mating at the time. Usually when two tigers are mating and during this time if another tiger invades their space the two male tigers proceed into a ferocious fight and whoever wins the duel will win the territory as male tigers have the habit of ruling their very own territory. The female tigress was named "Mayoori" and the tiger invading their territory was a new one and he didn't have a name given yet.

While all these were happening we were struck with the disappointment of not

being able to capture a good image. While all this was going down Mayoori came towards us and laid down near our safari jeep. We were able to capture some good images of Mayoori. There were around 20 safari jeeps halting at the same place during this time and the tigers were mating some distance from all of us.

This is when the unexpected happened. The male tiger was disrupted of his peace due to our overwhelming presence and he ferociously leaped towards us. Everyone on our jeep yelled for their lives and hearing this the tiger halted suddenly near us. Tigers are usually very gentle creatures in their habitat and it only becomes aggressive when we invade their territory which this incident made very clear. We wrapped up our safari for the day and returned to Mohali afterwards.

The next incident was during our third day. We were on our usually evening safari and which was a quite one with mediocre sightings, we were all more or less disappointed to say the least. The safari was about to end in a few minutes and it was when we saw that eye catching instance. A large open meadow with a huge pond in the middle where a bunch of deer were drinking water from and near to them was a tiger carefully making ground towards the deers without making any slightest of noises.

To any photographer witnessing a live tiger hunt is probably one of the rarest and the most challenging shots to get a hold of and we were all excited naturally. All the curious eyes on our jeep were fixed on the tiger. The tiger carefully made up ground towards the deer



© Debarpan Datta

© Kaushik Vijayan

Monitor Lizard (*Varanus*)



without alerting them. Every step the tiger took was with at most precision and accuracy. Everyone started getting impatient as the tiger took his mighty time to getting near the deer and everyone who had their eyes fixed on the viewfinder of their lenses was starting to get tired. Some even gave up and started to enjoy the scenery with their own eyes. I endured the pain in hopes of getting a spectacular shot.

After a while the tiger carefully laid down near the deer and the deer didn't even suspect a thing. To our hearts disappointment the deer had then sensed the danger and flocked away from the tiger instantly. The tiger didn't proceed to a chase to our surprise. We were all disappointed to say the least.

However, the spirit from our safari team to let us stay in the forest although after safari timings to get the shot was commendable. This was the only day when we reached our home later than usual. Although, we couldn't witness a whole hunt we were still amazed by the tigers stealthy approach to grab a hold of its prey and it will be something that we'll all be cherishing for the rest of our lives when we think of Tadoba.

Our most successful photography trip, the trip where we got the maximum number of tiger sightings, the names to summarize our Tadoba trip was plenty and it sure was eventful indeed. With all these experiences and memories we returned back home.

Gray Langur (*Semnopithecus*)

© Kaushik Vijayan





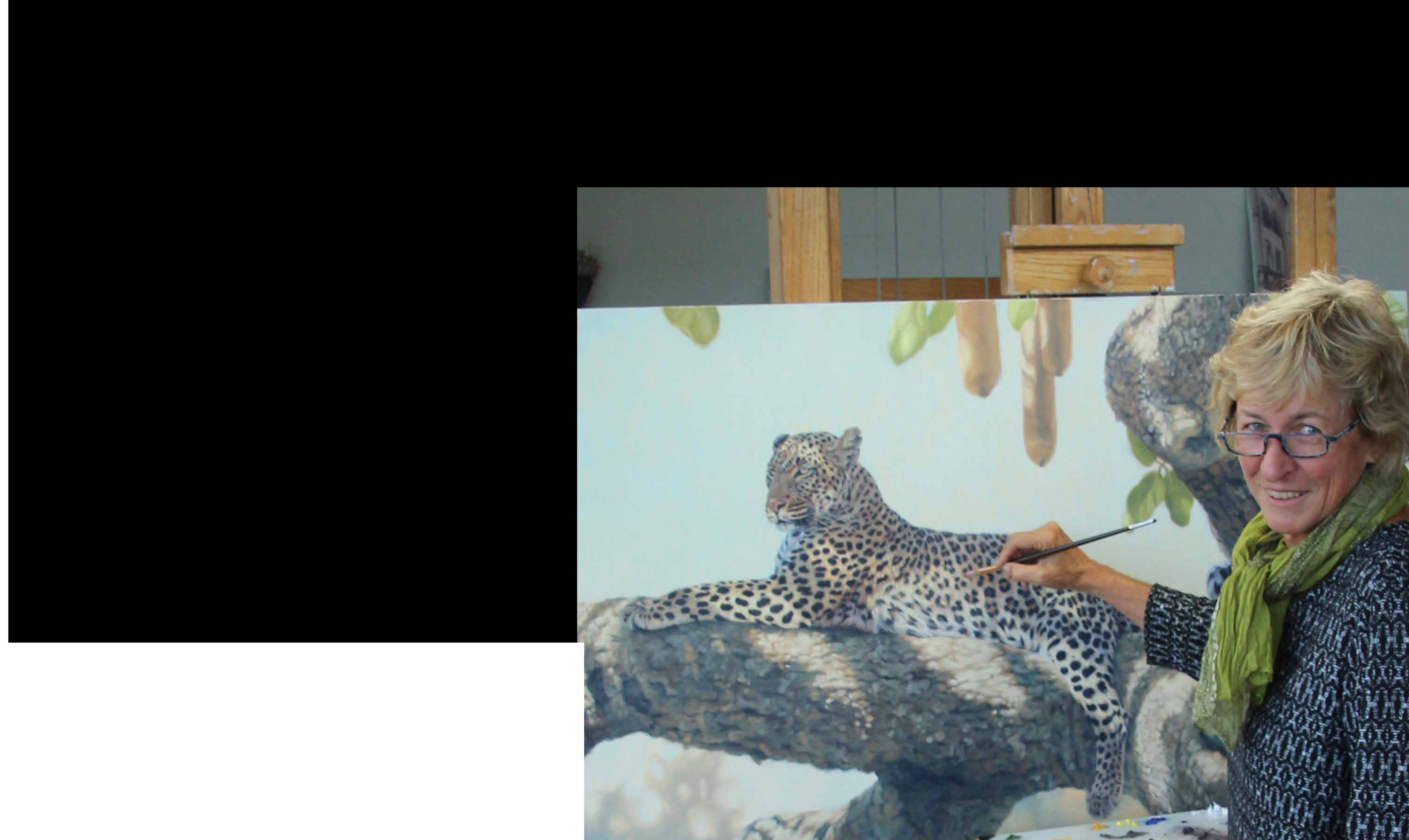




© Lindsay Scott

Lindsay Scott – Wildlife Artist

WILD ARTS SHOWCASE

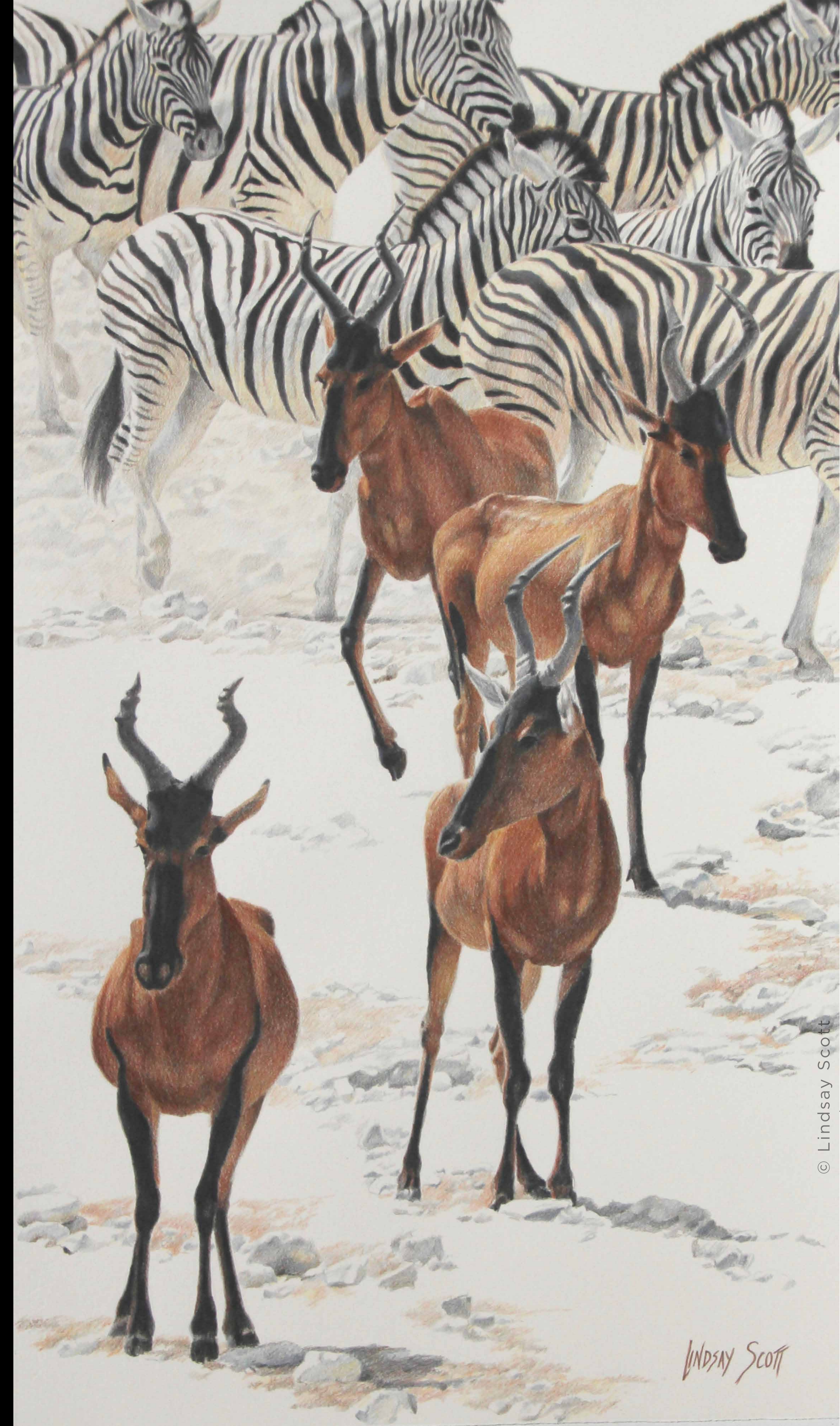


Lindsay Scott is well known for her fine detailed pencil artwork. Lindsay was raised in Africa where she developed a knowledge and appreciation for the large mammals and birds of Africa that are the subjects of artwork. Lindsay displays her wildlife artwork in the United States where she is much appreciated by collectors. In her article, Lindsay explains her approach to wildlife art and discussed her techniques. New Zealand is now her home.

www.lindsay-scott.com

How did a girl growing up in Zimbabwe become a professional wildlife artist? Many factors were involved, the most important being family, the environment I grew up in and education. I was born in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, then Southern Rhodesia, and grew up in the semi-rural outer suburbs. I was surrounded by the beauty of Africa, the trees and birds, which gave me my deep and enduring passion for nature. My interest in art

must have been sparked by the art in our home, reproductions of works by Vermeer, Cezanne and Turner. Genes also helped, I seem to have been born with the ability to draw, there are a number of professional artists in the family. My family provided a supportive, nurturing environment, my mother being wise enough to make sure that I had plenty of time “to dream” as she said.



“Cautious Approach”
coloured pencil 30 x 15.5
inches. Colored pencil
lends itself to detail and
textures. I prefer not
to do full scenes with
it as the white of the
board offers a wonderful
juxtaposition to the detail
and subtle colours that are
achievable.

© Lindsay Scott

LINDSAY SCOTT



© Lindsay Scott

“The Deep Crossing” oil on canvas 19 x 37 inches. This was a wonderful scene I witnessed on the Savuti Channel in Botswana, as the sun was setting, all we could hear was the swishing of the water, it was magical.

PT EXP

At high school I had a wonderful art teacher, from Chicago, so was well versed in art history and under her guidance was able to develop my art skills. I attended the University of Cape Town for two years doing a dual major in art and biology and then the University of Minnesota for a further two years where I continued these studies. As interesting as these years were I left not knowing where to head next. Then followed years of searching for my direction, was it to be biological research or art. All of this changed when I moved to Sedona Arizona and moved in next door to Adele Earnshaw, a wildlife artist from Warkworth, New Zealand, close to where I live now. She inspired and encouraged me to follow both of my life passions, art and biology, and become a wildlife artist.

I started on this venture by doing pencil drawings, my most comfortable medium, for many years. I regard it as an apprenticeship, really getting to explore and understand composition and values (lights and darks). After a number of years I ventured into coloured pencil, getting to know colour in an unthreatening way. I had been fortunate to have met Thalia Lincoln, in South Africa years before, who does the most wonderful coloured pencil botanical drawings and she was generous enough to give me some invaluable pointers.

At this point I started doing art shows across America: Birds in Art, Pacific Rim Wildlife Art Show and the Southeastern Wildlife exposition amongst others. This is where my work came to be known to collectors and galleries. It was invaluable, but very tiring, to stand around for days on end talking to people and getting the

reaction to my work. I had by then moved to California and met the love of my life, Brian McPhun, my greatest fan, muse and supporter. We moved to the Caribbean for a year shortly after we met and that time out gave me the chance to explore painting, pencil did not do well in the humid environment there. I had not really learned much about painting at art school so essentially taught myself... this was well before the days of YouTube, so had to rely on art magazines for tips..

These were exciting and heady times, my work was well received and many doors opened. I got to mingle with so many wonderful talented people and found that wildlife artists are incredibly supportive of each other. A wonderful environment in which to flourish.

Art is about passion. For me this is nature, so to get started requires hours, days, months outdoors sketching, studying and photographing. In the studio I use all this information, but yet I try to paint what I feel about something rather than just reproducing things that I have seen. I always start in my sketch book with thumbnail sketches with the layout of the composition, mainly shapes and values. I may do many for an idea, or just one if I hit it the first time. I got into this habit when I only did pencil and coloured pencil drawings. These are both very unforgiving media. The idea has to be fully formed in my head and in the sketches before I start any drawing.

Once you start it is very hard to change anything so I like to be very sure of where I am headed. With these media the first thing to work out is where the

© Lindsay Scott



“Aerobatics” coloured pencil 28 x 28 inches. Carmine Bee-eaters are my favourite birds, a wonderful subject for coloured pencil.



Study for "A Russe of Leaves" 2.5 x 3 inches. All my work starts out as a thumbnail in my sketch book, just laying out the basic values and composition, sometimes I only need one as in this case, sometimes there are many, but usually it is the first one that I use.

white areas are. These areas are simply the paper and must not be touched, no eraser marks, smudges or finger prints, otherwise you just end up with an ugly mess. It is always possible to darken areas, but very difficult to lighten them. I was warned by art dealers that I would never get anywhere working in black and white, and African subject matter to boot... I was happy to prove them wrong, winning a number of best of shows with pencil work..

Gradually I started doing more oil paintings and these were also well received. At one show a collector of mine said to me "your work is great, but it is not big enough" It took a lot to get over my fear and do my first large painting, which was probably only about 30 x 40 inches (I use inches for my work as this is what is used in the USA where I sell my work). I soon realized, especially seeing originals of the likes of John Singer Sargent, that I love big paintings, so started to do them... 60 x 80 inches and larger... it is very exciting and some subject matter deserves that size, especially African scenes, it is such a vast continent, with large animals. I became fearless and really enjoyed doing these and they were very well received.

As with pencil drawings my oil painting ideas start as thumb nail sketches. Once I have one I am happy with I can then decide on the size of the canvas needed, Brian stretches the canvas for me - aren't I fortunate. I then sketch out the idea on to the canvas and do a very rapid underpainting, blocking in colours and values. This I may set aside for days, or even months. I will look at it occasionally, make sure I am happy with

the composition, make sure the anatomy and proportions are correct and generally consider whether it will be worth putting the time into that particular idea.

I normally use quite a limited palette which ensures that my work has a unity of colour, so that just about every colour has a bit of the other colours in it. For certain paintings I will sometimes add other colours, depending on the subject matter. My normal palette is French Ultramarine blue, Cerulean Blue, Cobalt blue, Cadmium yellow, Cadmium Lemon, Naples Yellow, Transparent Yellow Ochre, Rose Madder, Burnt Sienna and white. Cadmium red is occasionally added, as is Oxide of Chromium.

When the stars are aligned I start the final painting. I generally paint from the back ground to the foreground so that things in the front overlap things in the back. Having the underpainting really helps me assess the value and colour and how they relate to each other and to keep the entire painting consistent. I normally keep going on a single piece once the final painting is started, I don't switch from one to another. Once the piece is dry it is varnished, before being fitted into the frame, which Brian has normally been working on while I am painting. I am so fortunate to have such a talented husband, an artist in his own right, who has an incredible eye for what will work with a particular piece. He studied water guiding in Santa Fe New Mexico. He then crates and air freights the work to the venue in America.

For over 35 years now I have been so fortunate to have had wonderful success



"A Russe of Leaves" oil paint on canvas 9 x 13 inches. A recent piece playing with light and color...

in wildlife art. With the changing world of Covid I have had a lot of time to reflect and wonder “where to from here”. I constantly try and improve my skills as an artist. Not being able to travel has given me more time to do this.

It is definitely a case of the more you learn the less you realize you know. I have recently been doing colour charts to refresh my appreciation of mixing colours in oil paint.. This is one of the first exercises that students do at art school. When I did them all those years ago I was too early in my journey to fully realize how valuable they are and am learning so much from them now. With colour charts you mix every colour on your palette with a bit of every other colour and then mix that with increasing amounts of white..

After years of pounding the pavement at art shows I now mainly show my work through a few select galleries across America and attend openings when we can. Art has taken us on an incredible journey, going to places we never dreamed of and meeting wonderful and extraordinary people.

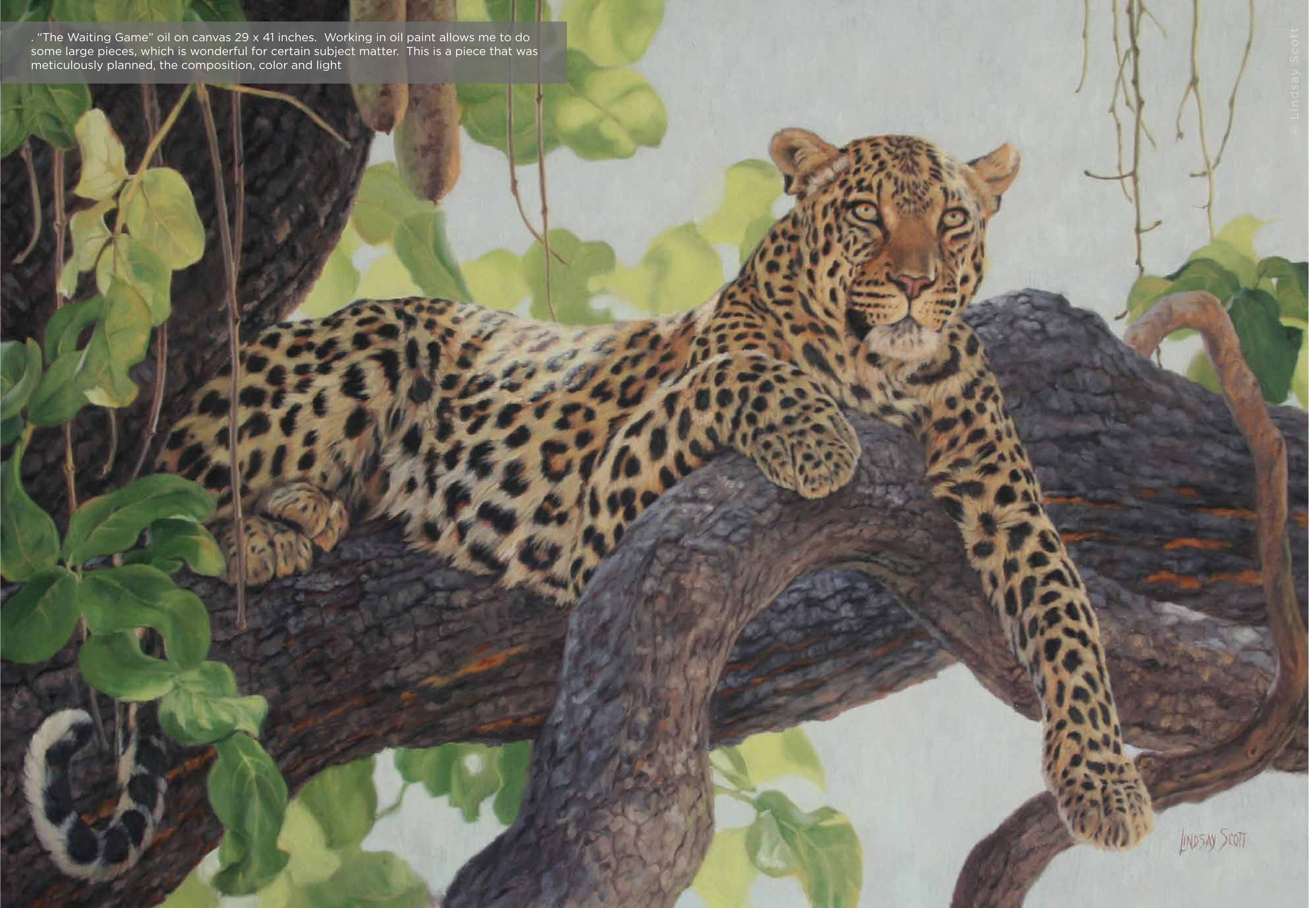
It is going to be interesting to see where this journey takes Brian and me from here.



“A Russele of Leaves” oil paint on canvas 9 x 13 inches. A recent piece playing with light and color...

© Lindsay Scott

. "The Waiting Game" oil on canvas 29 x 41 inches. Working in oil paint allows me to do some large pieces, which is wonderful for certain subject matter. This is a piece that was meticulously planned, the composition, color and light



© Lindsay Scott



YOUR GALLERY

Mustansir Dungarpurwala
Montagu's Harrier (*Circus pygargus*)
Kuwait



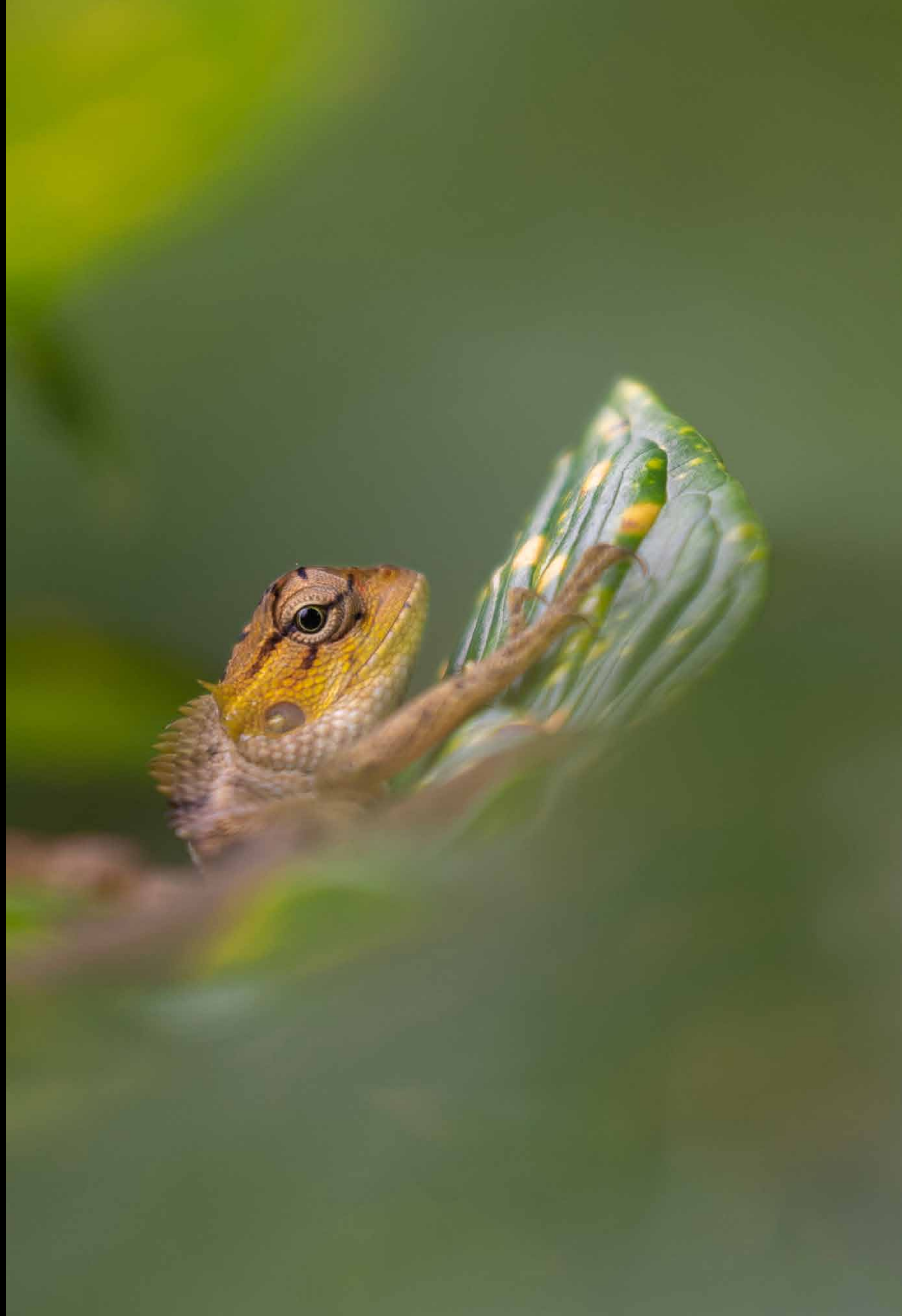


YOUR GALLERY



Debarpan Datta

Indian Rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*)
Chilapata Forest, West Bengal, India

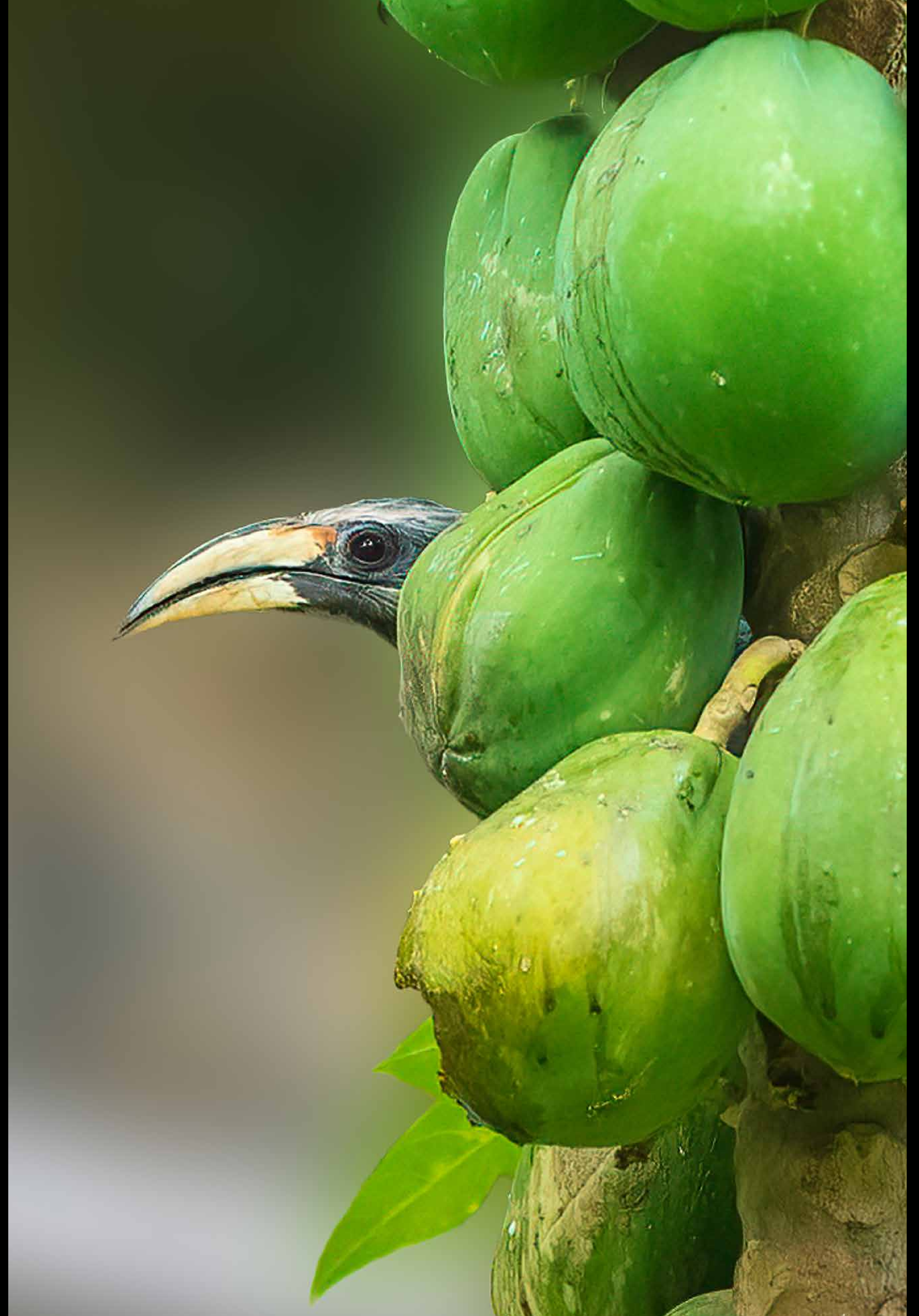


YOUR GALLERY



Mathew Scaria

Oriental Garden Lizard (*Calotes versicolor*)
Kerala, India



YOUR GALLERY



Mathew Scaria

Grey Headed Hornbill (*Ocyrceros birostris*)
Kerala, India



YOUR GALLERY



Debarpan Datta
Northern Shoveler (*Spatula clypeata*)
Mangalajodi, Odisha, India



YOUR GALLERY



Shyaam Maniraj
Tiger (*Panthera tigris*)
Kabini, Karnataka, India



YOUR GALLERY



Rohith R
Orb-weaver Spiders (*Araneae*)
Pathanamthitta, Kerala, India



YOUR GALLERY



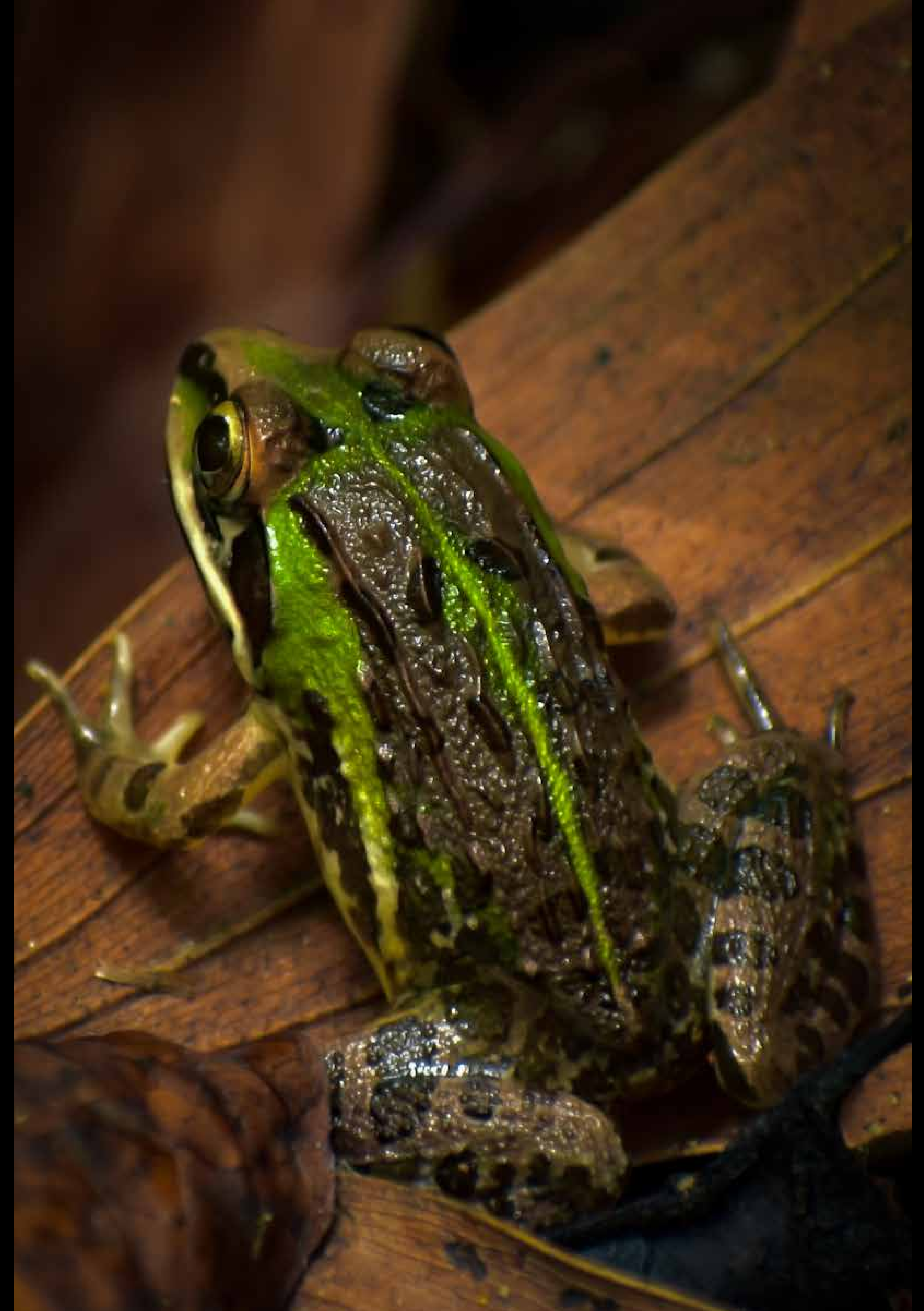
Pramod CL
Lion (*Panthera leo*)
Amboseli National Park, Kenya



YOUR GALLERY



Kamalak Kannan Bownaan
Gelada (*Theropithecus gelada*)
Debre Libanos, Ethiopia



YOUR GALLERY



Arun Subramannian
Indian Bullfrog (*Hoplobatrachus tigerinus*)
Kerala, India



YOUR GALLERY



Shyaam Maniraj
Great Hornbill (*Buceros bicornis*)
Valparai, Tamil Nadu, India



YOUR GALLERY



Deepa Girish
Ostrich (*Struthio camelus*)
Masai Mara, Kenya

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EXPLORERS

UPCOMING
FEATURES



AUSTRALIA'S HOODED PLOVERS

By Bec Westlund



ZANSKAR, INDIA

By Dheeraj Khandelwal



GERMAN WILDLIFE ARTIST

Diana Höhlig