

# MANAS NATIONAL PARK

*World Heritage Site*

### Administration

- Field Director, Manas Tiger Project
- Deputy Director
- Assistant Conservator of Forests
- Range Officers
- Frontline Forest Staff

### Park Divisions

- Bansbari (Central) Range
- Bhuyanpara (Eastern) Range
- Panbari (Western) Range

### Travel

- Road : Barpeta Road Town (20 km), Bongaigaon (60 km), Guwahati (150 km)
- Rail : Barpeta Road, Bongaigaon and Guwahati Railway Stations
- Air : LGB International Airport, Guwahati

### Accommodation

- Inspection Bungalows : Forest Department
- Lodges & Cottages : Private owners & local NGOs
- Guest House : Tourism Department

### **Season of Visit : November to April**

### Contact Details :

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*Website: [www.atree.org/action](http://www.atree.org/action) ; [www.worldheritagemanas.org](http://www.worldheritagemanas.org)*

### Conservation Milestones

- Reserve Forest (Proposed), 1905
- Reserve Forest, 1907
- Wildlife Sanctuary, 1928
- Tiger Reserve (core), 1973
- World Heritage Site, 1985
- Biosphere Reserve, 1989
- National Park, 1990
- Elephant Reserve (core), 2003

**M**anas National Park is located in the State of Assam in North-East India, a biodiversity hotspot. It spans the Manas River and is bounded to the north by the forests of Bhutan. The site's scenic beauty includes a range of forested hills, alluvial grasslands and tropical evergreen forests. The site provides critical and viable habitats for rare and endangered species. Manas has exceptional importance within the Indian subcontinent's protected areas, as one of the most significant natural areas in the region, where sizeable populations of a large number of threatened species continue to survive.

*(Excerpts from Adoption of Retrospective Statements of Outstanding Universal Value at the 35th Session of World Heritage Committee Paris, 2011).*

The significance of the Manas landscape as a transboundary entity across India and Bhutan is also acknowledged by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre to encourage cooperation in management of habitat and wildlife.

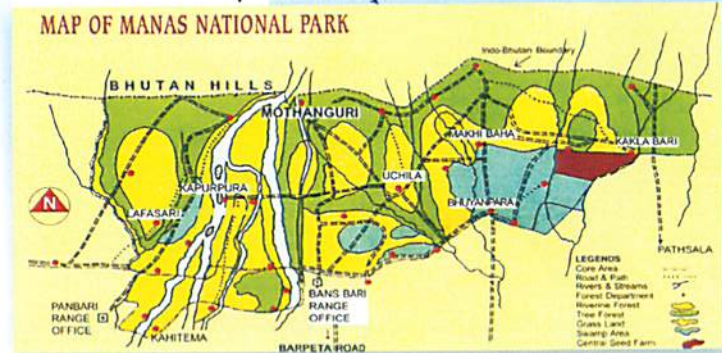
# Outstanding Universal Value

Manas fulfills the following natural criteria for assessment of its OUV under the World Heritage Convention:

**Criteria (vii):** ...contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance.

**Criteria (ix):** ...be outstanding examples representing significant ongoing ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals.

**Criteria (x):** ...contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.



Source : O/o Field Director, Manas Tiger Project

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Area        | : 500 sq. km.   |
| Coordinates | : 26°37'N to 26°50'N and 90°45'E – 91°15'E                                |
| Location    | : Baksa and Chirang Districts, Bodoland Territorial Area Districts, Assam |
| Altitude    | : 50 MSL to 250 MSL   |
| Climate     | : Sub-tropical monsoon climatic zone                                      |
| Rainfall    | : 3000 – 4000 mm  |
| Temperature | : 9°C – 37°C  |



*M*anas is recognized not only for its rich biodiversity but also for its spectacular natural landscape. The turbulent river waters swirling down against a backdrop of forested foothills, the serenity and vastness of the alluvial grasslands and the lushness of its sub-tropical forests offers a unique wilderness experience.

Manas harbours endemic species like the pygmy hog, hispid hare and golden langur, as well as the endangered Bengal florican.

© Sandesh Kador



Golden Langur (*Trachypithecus geei*)

© Dhritiman Mukherjee



Bengal Florican (*Houbaropsis bengalensis*)

© Gouram Narayan



Pygmy Hog (*Porcula salvania*)

The development of varied habitats resulting from the dynamic ecological processes are represented by three distinct types of vegetation — semi-evergreen forests, mixed moist and dry deciduous forests, and alluvial grasslands.





Cotton Tree (*Bombax ceiba*)



Blue Trumpet Vine (*Thunbergia grandiflora*)



Wild Turmeric (*Curcuma aromatica*)

The range of habitats accounts for high plant diversity of over 500 species of trees, species, shrubs, undershrubs, herbs, climbers, ferns and a variety of grasses.



Tiger (*Panthera tigris*)

Manas is home to nearly 60 mammal species, which includes 22 of India's most threatened species of mammals listed under Schedule I of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.



Clouded Leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*)



Leopard (*Panthera pardus*)



*A* diversity of smaller, elusive carnivores complement the larger species.



Jungle Cat (*Felis chaus*)



Leopard Cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*)



Large Indian civet (*Viverra zibetha*)



Wild Dog (*Cuon alpinus*)

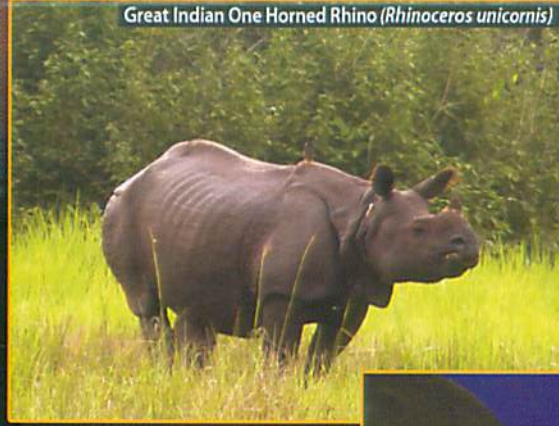
*Manas* is home to a substantial population of free ranging mega herbivores.

© Niraj Kakati



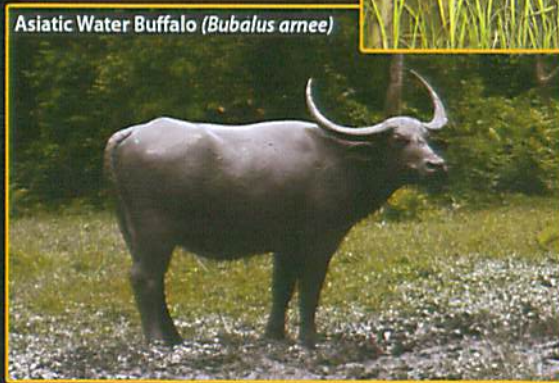
Elephant (*Elephas maximus*)

© Deba Kumar Dutta / WWF



Great Indian One Horned Rhino (*Rhinoceros unicornis*)

© Rajkamal Goswami



Asiatic Water Buffalo (*Bubalus arnee*)



Gaur (*Bos gaurus*)

© ATREE-UNESCO

A variety of deer species and other smaller mammals thrive in the diverse habitats and provide a significant prey base for the carnivore population.

© ATREE-UNESCO



Barking Deer (*Muntiacus muntjac*)

© ATREE-UNESCO



Hog Deer (*Hyelaphus porcinus*)

© ATREE-UNESCO



Wild Boar (*Sus scrofa*)

© ATREE-UNESCO



Sambar (*Rusa unicolor*)



Indian Peafowl (*Pavo cristatus*)

© Sandesh Kujur



Green Magpie (*Cissa chinensis*)



Grey Headed Fishing Eagle (*Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus*)

© Kiran Basumatary



Great Indian Hornbill (*Buceros bicornis*)

© Kiran Basumatary

Nearly 500 species of birds have been recorded in Manas. It is designated as an Important Bird Area, where 26 species of globally threatened birds are known to occur.

*A*n assemblage of over 40 reptile and amphibian species, along with a large number of inadequately studied invertebrates, adds to the unique biodiversity of Manas.



Elongated Tortoise (*Indotestudo elongata*)



Tree Frog (*Rhacophorus* species)



Indian Python (*Python molurus*)



Water Monitor Lizard (*Varanus salvator*)

The fringe area along the southern boundary of Manas National park has 61 revenue villages. These villages are predominantly Bodo, with other linguistic and ethnic groups like Assamese, Bengali, Nepali and Adivasi. The cultural festivals of the communities, celebrated during various seasons of the year, are characterised by colour and pageantry.



Tourists in Manas can enjoy jungle safari, elephant ride, river rafting, birding, camping and cultural activities. Local communities provide ecotourism facilities through organised societies, offering a unique local experience blended with nature.




Ecotourism Cottage



River Rafting on Manas River



Jungle Safari



The UNF/UNFIP approved project “Building Partnerships to Support UNESCO’s World Heritage Programme: India” was envisaged for the promotion of long term management and conservation of natural World Heritage Sites (WHS) in India. Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE) coordinated the implementation of the project at Manas National Park and Kaziranga National Park, in association with the Department of Environment and Forests, Govt. of Assam. The project was implemented over a four-year period (2008 – 2012) and was supported by the Ford Foundation, the Sehgal Foundation and the United Nations Foundation.

***The principle objectives of the project were to:***

- increase the **capacity of site staff** for effective conservation, management and protection;
- enhance the stake and the **involvement of local communities** in the parks ;
- increase the **connectivity at the larger landscape scale**;
- restore lost **attributes** of existing World Heritage Sites;
- incorporate principal concepts of **modern ecological and social science** in management and monitoring ;
- raise the **profile of the sites** through communication and advocacy;
- reform **policies and governance** to enable effective response to contemporary challenges to the conservation of biodiversity.