

CENTRAL PROVINCES
GAZETTEERS.

CHHATTISGARH
FEUDATORY STATES.

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patterns are also used. Shooting by visitors is well regulated, but the local people (especially the village *shikāris*) will have to be restrained to save the game from being exterminated. Of the wild animals tigers are common. Man-eaters are often reported and most of them are either tigresses who have, or are just about to have, cubs. Panthers are also plentiful. Large tiger cats (*Felis viverrina*, Jerdon) are found in the hill ranges. Leopard cats (*Felis Bengalensis*, Jerdon) are very common. The fishing cat is also found and the ordinary jungle-cat (*Felis chaus*) is common. Besides these the caracal (*Felis caracal*) and two civet cats (*Viverra zibetha* and *Viverra malaccensis*) are found, the first-named principally in the north-west and the two latter in the Kondāgaon and Jagdalpur tahsils. The palm civet cat (*Paradoxurus musanga*) also occurs. The caracal and the civets are eaten, not being considered members of the cat-tribe by the aborigines. The hyæna (*Hycæna striata*) is found throughout the western and southern parts of the State. Wild dogs are numerous, but they are not destroyed owing to the superstitious idea of the villagers that the killing of these animals will entail the destruction of their cattle.

The elephant and the rhinoceros are no more found in a wild state here. Mr. Blockman in his *Ain-i-Akbarī*, Volume I, states that in the Bastar forests elephants used to be found. As to the rhinoceros, Mr. Gayer writes: 'Some Murias in the hills of the Indrāvati described very fairly accurately to me a rhinoceros which they declared their fathers used to meet in the densely grassed valleys to the north of the river about the Bailādila range. I can hardly believe they had ever heard of the rhinoceros from other parts of India, still less their fathers might have evolved a wonderful creature from their imaginations.'

Jerdon in his *Mammals of India*, 1874, says 'that the lesser Indian rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros sondaicus*) is found at present in the Bengal Sunderbans and very few individuals are stated to occur in the forest tract along the Mahānadi river.' Bastar not being very far from the sources of the Mahānadi it is not unlikely that the Murias' story might be correct. The wild buffalo (*Bos bubalus*) and bison (*Bos gaurus*) are now comparatively rare. They are under protection for a period of five years from 1907, but there is no doubt that the