

Page 8
**VAASTU
AND
PLANTS**



The Sentinel mélange

NOVEMBER 06, 2022

Page 4
All things
black are not
beautiful



Page 10
Best Beach
Destinations
for Newly
Weds



Page 13
Dehydration
Blues in
Winter



Answering the Call of the Wild

WWF-India's Landscape Coordinator Deba Kumar Dutta gives a glimpse into the serious threats to wildlife survival and stresses on the need for urgent management and conservation efforts

Deba Kumar Dutta is a conservation biologist with an interest in Indian rhino conservation, landscape ecology, human wildlife interactions, habitat management and community conservation. He is currently working as Landscape Coordinator of WWF-India. He was the first Indian to have a Doctorate degree on the research of translocated rhinos' behaviour and habitat preferences.

His passion for the natural world and its inhabitants has led him to work in some of the most remote regions of the country. He has been involved with various projects on field research, behaviour studies of rhinos, and was also instrumental in establishing the rhino population in Manas National Park, a World Heritage Site. He is also a SSC/IUCN Asian Rhino Specialist Group Member (2017-2023) and IUCN/Asian Rhino Specialist Group Accredited Rhino Monitoring Instructor.

Why did you choose to be a Wildlife Biologist and what are the risks associated?

I am more of a conservation biologist by nature and interest. The work I do is focused on addressing the impact of humans on biological diversity and developing practical approaches to secure the habitat and wildlife. This profession has a wide range of interests, and there are limitless opportunities to explore, which is why it is so appealing for me.

The nature of conservation biologist is multidisciplinary, and it is influenced by a variety of factors. As with limitless opportunities, risks are numerous. Hence a more inclusive approach is necessary to develop professionalisation of this



Deba Kumar Dutta

career so that it reflects the full range of practitioners and needs increased recognition in regions and countries with high biodiversity.

When did you decide to work in the field of wildlife conservation and why?

Throughout my childhood, there has been an innate love of nature and wildlife. When I studied zoology in college / university, I

conceptualised it. My first experiences were when I got involved in a few conservation-based NGOs as a volunteer. Eventually I turned it into a full-time profession from November 2007.

Tell us about the measures undertaken to spread awareness about conservation among rural people.

Conservation efforts require the ac-

tive participation of local people where awareness plays a strong role. The true participation of locals may lead to more effective conservation. We are creating awareness on conservation issues in the rural areas through education, rallies, meetings, use of audio-visual tools, exposure learning, knowledge exchange, mass media communication and social media. This is a regular event since starting this career I have been interacting with lakhs of people (age ranges from school children to octogenarians) in different parts of Assam.

Tell us about your journey so far with WWF.

WWF-India has been my workplace since November 8, 2007 and I have completed 15 years in this versatile organisation. During my long career span, I have been fortunate to involve many in flagship programmes like Indian Rhino Vision 2020, Conservation Acres for Tigers, Transboundary conservation between India and Bhutan, Community conservation and many more. I also met many national and international personalities who have dedicated their life to wildlife and habitat conservation work. Currently I am leading Manas Landscape as Landscape Coordinator. I am also looking after WWF-India's rhino conservation work in the state.

Please let us know about the man-animal conflicts and mitigation measures in Northeast India (Special reference to elephants, tigers and rhinos).

Northeast India, comprising the Eastern Himalayas, is considered to be one of the most significant biodiversity hotspots of the world. There are many endangered animals and plants thriving