



Professional Naturalist Training Course

PRONAT VIII


A learning initiative by Wildlife &
Forestry Services & Pugdundee Safaris

DENWA BACKWATER ESCAPE - SATPURA

Course begins

August 18 to September 08, 2025

Extension - September 08 to 11, 2025




Course Overview




PRONAT, India's first-of-its-kind Professional Naturalist Training Program is conducted at Satpura's, Denwa Backwater Escape, by Pugdundee Safaris in association with Wildlife Forestry Services (WFS).

Every year when we receive applications for the position of a naturalist, it comes from two kinds of candidates - the ones who dream of becoming a naturalist and the others who are willing to give up their corporate jobs to explore the wilderness and follow the career path of a lodge naturalist. Therefore, PRONAT has been curated with belief that no prospect should be turned down for the lack (or presence) of specific educational background or domain experience.


This twenty-one-night program conducted by experts in the field of wildlife and conservation focuses to elevate passionate wildlife enthusiasts into professional naturalists.





There is an additional 3 nights extension available for guiding techniques. With the completion of this program, the participants will be equipped to be inducted as trainees or lodge naturalists in the wildlife-based tourism sector, start leading nature-based tours, or simply learn how to appreciate nature from a wider lens.

As experienced Lodge operators and wildlife professionals, we realize that the forest is a vast observatory for passionate nature lovers, but to succeed professionally as a naturalist, there are further requirements. For instance, to pursue a career as a Naturalist, the following are a must

- 
- Appreciation towards all forms of nature.
 - Knowledge of habitats and ecosystems.
 - Ability to not just comprehend, but also interpret the complexities of the forests in simple terms.

The course is designed to guide participants begin their journey to become brand ambassadors of wildlife & its conservation

What does the Program offer?

- Guided course delivery from subject experts
- Thorough classroom sessions and practical sessions in the wilderness
- Excellent opportunity for peer learning through engagement
- First-hand exposure to the actual life of a naturalist
- Certificate of accomplishment



Who should join?

- Are you keen on expanding your scientific knowledge about forests, flora, and fauna?
- Are you looking to boost your career as a professional guide or conservationist?
- Do you wish to change your routine and experience the distantly fascinating life in a wilderness setting?




The Wilderness Experience with PRONAT



Explorers and enthusiasts who wish to learn more about Indian wildlife, or kick-start their career as nature guides and lodge naturalists, are welcome to apply. The enriching experience of peer learning and professional guidance, while living in a remote boot camp is a life-altering experience.

For those who are looking to ditch the routine city life for the wilderness, PRONAT will provide quintessential techniques for inculcating new hobbies like species identification, interpreting tracks and signs, or learning first-aid in the forests.

- Life in the camp will be an adventure for the ones who are passionate about nature and can minimally appreciate the lack of internet, as much as the presence of it
 - The candidates should be willing to learn from the experts and the experiences of their peers (forest life is about teamwork and upgrading life skills)
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- Experts will deliver lectures in English. An understanding and speaking fluency in the English language is a must
- Candidates joining PRONAT, who wish to take up guiding as a profession must obtain a valid LMV driving license prior to the commencement of the course. This is mandatory for candidates taking the extension for guiding techniques.
- Though one of the modules of the course covers reptiles, participants are prohibited from handling any form of wildlife including snakes and amphibians.
- We do not cover snake handling, and therefore do not encourage the participants to handle any form of wildlife even after undertaking the course.
- Candidates joining with the purpose of exploring and expanding their knowledge of wildlife must be willing and enthusiastic about the course curriculum.
- Towards the end or at intervals of every module, candidates may be required to take a practical and theoretical examination. The qualifying candidates will be rewarded with a completion certificate.



About us & Trainers

“Wildlife & Forestry Services”, professional wildlife management & forestry consultancy firm in association with “Pugdundee Safaris”, a leading sustainable wildlife tourism company organizes this unique wildlife training course.

Wing Leader – **Kartikeya Singh** is the course coordinator and lead trainer. Associate trainers are **Nikhil Bhopale**, **David Raju**, and **Vikram Ahlawat**.



Kartikeya Singh



Kartikeya holds a Master's Degree in Ecology & Environment and has eight years of research experience working with the Wildlife Institute of India during which he studied the ecology of Indian Wolves and the Asiatic Lions. Kartikeya has also worked as an additional photographer on several documentaries produced by BBC and other eminent production houses. A proficient trapper of wolves and other canids, he has expertise in catching, anesthetizing, and radio-collaring wild animals. In 2011, he was one of the specialists involved in the reintroducing of Gaur from Kanha to Bandhavgarh. Kartikeya is also a specialist trainer who regularly conducts training for frontline forest department staff, guides, and naturalists.

Nikhil Bhopale

Nikhil has worked on several research projects as an Ornithologist and Herpetologist. He has spearheaded effective conservation projects across India and has been a recipient of several awards for nature conservation. A biodiversity expert, an eco-tourism consultant, a hands-on mentor, an experienced trekker, a knowledgeable author, a wildlife photographer, and above all, a committed conservationist, Nikhil has been a faculty for BNHS educational courses and also co-authored 'Book of the Indian Subcontinent - A Field Guide' published by BNHS and Oxford University Press

Vikram Ahlawat

A Master Trainer with RLSS (Royal Life Saving Society) since 2009, which is one of our country's leading organizations for First Aid and Life Guard training. An avid swimmer & sportsman, Vikram has a varied experience in life-saving trainings.



David Raju

Over 18 years of experience as a senior Naturalist in Southern and Central India. He had always been interested in wildlife and with specific interest and expertise in multiple taxa like Birds, Mammals, Butterflies, Reptiles, Amphibians, and his first love Dragonflies.

David has co-authored three books- 'Dragonflies of Kerala', 'A Photographic Field Guide to Wildlife of Central India' and 'Wildlife of South India'.

He was part of the team that discovered 12 species of frogs and two species of geckos in Central India and the Western Ghats. He was conferred the prestigious Lodge Naturalist of the Year Award by Sanctuary Asia and Toft in 2014. Recently a wasp (*Tiphia davidraju*) has been named after him for his contribution to natural history and Dragonflies



What will you learn?

As a stepping-stone into the world of natural systems, diversity in subjects has been at the core of the course design. Candidates are provided an introduction to these subjects:

- Birds
- Butterflies
- Amphibians
- Reptiles
- Trees
- Mammals
- Conservation
- Animal tracking
- First Aid

1. Field guiding as a profession (Only in extension)
2. Help creating a guided nature experience (Only in Extension)
3. Techniques of Guiding (Only in extension)



Modules Covered

Date	Monday August 18	Tuesday August 19	Wednesday August 20	Thursday August 21	Friday August 22	Saturday August 23
Module	Intro & ice breaker	Module 1 Mammals	Module 1 Mammals	Module 2 Trees	Module 2 Trees	Module 3 Reptiles

Date	Sunday August 24	Monday August 25	Tuesday August 26	Wednesday August 27	Thursday August 28	Friday August 29
Module	Module 3 Reptiles	Module 4 Reptiles	Module 4 Amphibians	Module 5 Amphibians	Module 5 First Aid	Module 5 First Aid

Date	Saturday August 30	Sunday August 31	Monday Sept 01	Tuesday Sept 02	Wednesday Sept 03	Thursday Sept 04
Module	Module 5 First Aid	Module 5 First Aid	Module 6 Butterflies	Module 6 Butterflies	Module 7 Birds	Module 7 Birds

Date	Friday Sept 05	Saturday Sept 06	Sunday Sept 07	Monday Sept 08	Tuesday Sept 09	Wednesday Sept 10
Module	Module 7 Birds	Module 7 Birds	Module 8 Conservation	Conclusion	Module 9 Guiding	Module 9 Guiding

Date	Thursday Sept 11
Module	Module 9 Guiding & Conclusion



Living on campus

The camp is set up on the premises of Denwa Backwater Escape (a Pugdundee Safaris Lodge in Satpura (Madhai) adjoining Satpura Tiger Reserve

- Accommodation: Triple sharing (same gender sharing) with attached facilities
- Meals: Three simple home-cooked meals along with morning and evening tea
- Laundry: Available and chargeable
- Air conditioning: No
- Basic Housekeeping Provided

Certification

Over the course duration, all participants will undertake written tests, oral presentations, and practical evaluations (walk evaluation and drive evaluation) to receive a field guide certification from the course coordinator on completion of the program.

Inclusions

- Triple sharing (same gender sharing) in standard rooms with attached facilities.
- Three simple home-cooked meals along with morning and evening tea
- Safaris in buffer zones for training purposes
- Nature walks, and indoor and outdoor learning sessions
- Scheduled training classes
- Course material

Please note that the lodge facilities aren't made available to the participants during the course.

What to carry?

- Earthy coloured, outdoor clothing
- Personal clothing (6–8 sets)
- Outdoor footwear for walking and floaters
- **Mandatory Books**
 - Indian Mammals by Vivek Menon
 - Birds of the Indian Subcontinent - India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and the Maldives by Richard Grimmett, Carol Inskipp & Tim Inskipp
 - Snakes of India: The Field Guide by Ashok Captain & Romulus Whitaker
- Laptop
- Camera (with spare batteries) /tripod/monopod
- Binoculars and Torch
- Light fleece
- Rain gear (ponchos/parasols)
- Water bottle
- Working internet connection (only Jio work at Satpura)



Reaching the Campus



Satpura Tiger Reserve is well connected from all parts of India by road, air, and rail.

- It is 136 km south east of Bhopal, the closest airport to Satpura.
- Itarsi is a prominent railway junction with trains from all across the country and is just 70 km away.
- Sohagpur is the nearest railway station around 18km away.
- Satpura is just 19 km from a prominent state highway and 70 km away from the national highway 12

Rules & Regulations

- Candidates joining the course are expected to abide by the PRONAT rules and regulations
- Candidates are expected to thoroughly read the attached consent form and acknowledge the same with the date and signatures
- Adhere to the timings and instructions provided by the course coordinator
- Possession and use of alcohol and any form of drugs are strictly prohibited on campus
- Smokers will have to declare in advance. Smoking in common areas and accommodation is prohibited
- Refrain from any form of sexual misconduct
- At the time of submission of the form, send us a copy of your Aadhar card and License
- Cancellation policy applies
- Candidates joining PRONAT should be in the age group of 18-45 & are required to sign an indemnity bond before commencing the course



Course Fee

If enrolled by 31st March 2025 (subject to availability on a first come first serve basis)

Main course (21-nights / 22-days)

- On triple sharing: INR 1,00,000 + plus 5% GST per person
- Single rooms can be booked at a supplement of INR 65000 + plus 5% GST

Extension (03-nights / 04-days) - for additional modules

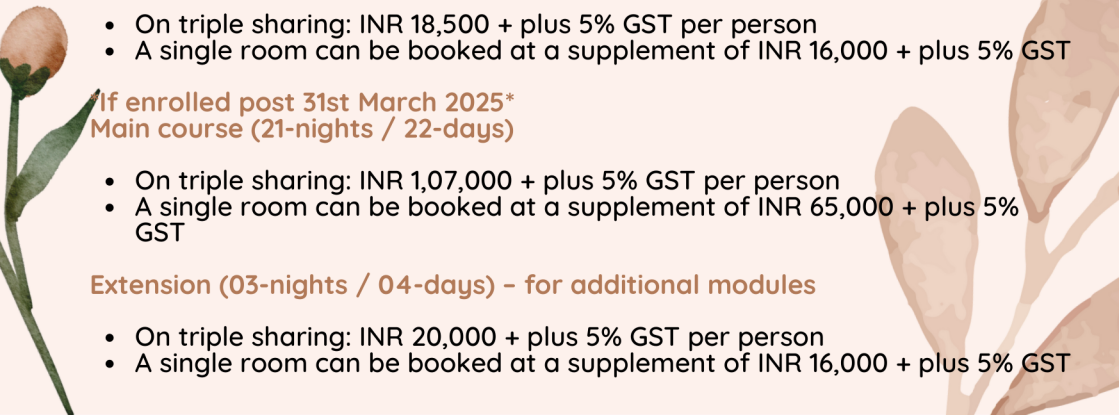
- On triple sharing: INR 18,500 + plus 5% GST per person
- A single room can be booked at a supplement of INR 16,000 + plus 5% GST

If enrolled post 31st March 2025
Main course (21-nights / 22-days)

- On triple sharing: INR 1,07,000 + plus 5% GST per person
- A single room can be booked at a supplement of INR 65,000 + plus 5% GST

Extension (03-nights / 04-days) - for additional modules

- On triple sharing: INR 20,000 + plus 5% GST per person
- A single room can be booked at a supplement of INR 16,000 + plus 5% GST





Important Details

Seats available – 18

To enroll, you are required to deposit 25% fee at the time of filling the application form. Balance amount is payable latest by 15th June, 2024.

Cancellation policy:

1. Initial deposit once paid is nonrefundable
2. 50% cancellation charges between 31-59 days from the commencement of the course
3. 100% cancellation charges within 30 days from the commencement of the course

Bank details:

Account Name: Wildlife and Forestry Services

Account Number: 34142497348

IFSC Code: SBIN0030288

Bank: State Bank of India Branch: Fazalpura, Ujjain

Type: Current Account



We can't wait to see you
in the next batch

