

# PROFESSIONAL NATURALIST TRAINING COURSE

## PRONAT IX

A learning initiative by Wildlife & Forestry Services and Pugdundee Safaris

**DENWA BACKWATER ESCAPE - SATPURA**

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Course Duration

August 18/2026 to September 08/2026

Extension- September 08/2026 to 11/2026



# PRONAT - India's first kind of professional naturalist training

For someone who dreams of working in the jungle, for someone who is willing to give up their corporate jobs to explore wilderness and follow a career path of a lodge naturalist.

For someone who is passionate about nature but doesn't have a science background or experience. This 21 night program conducted by experts in the field of wildlife and conservation focuses to elevate passionate wildlife enthusiasts into professional naturalists.

**→ CLASSROOMS LIKE THIS ...where you learn - about the wild & from the wild !!!!**



# TUNE INTO THE JUNGLE & LEARN TO DECODE ITS LANGUAGE

Learn to interpret the complexities of nature in simpler terms



Take back lot of learnings and memories of a lifetime



# MENTORS

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## 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 a 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 reintroduction of Gaur from Kanha to Bandhavgarh. Kartikeya is also a specialist trainer who regularly conducts training for frontline forest department staff, guides, and naturalists.



## David Raju

With over 18 years of experience as a senior Naturalist in Southern & Central India, David Raju has 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 & 'Wildlife of South India'. He was part of the team that discovered 12 species of frogs and two species of geckos in Central India & 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 davidrajui*) has been named after him for his contribution to natural history and dragonflies.



## 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.



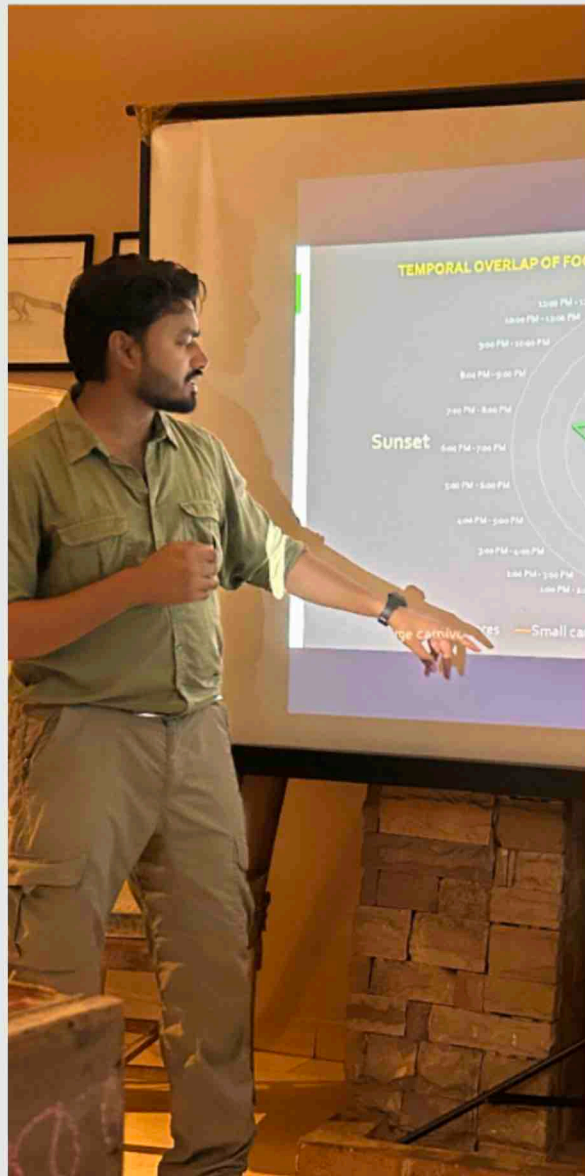
## Vikram Ahlawat

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.



# Interactive sessions with experts from fields

We also invite Experts from Forest Department, NGOs, pioneers in the field to interact with the students and share their experiences and practical challenges they face in wildlife and conservation.



# 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 and are taught the process of how to start identifying and learn things when they start practicing as a naturalist.



**BIRDS**



**BUTTERFLIES**



**AMPHIBIANS**



**REPTILES**



**TREES**



**MAMMALS**



**CONSERVATION**



**ANIMAL TRACKING**

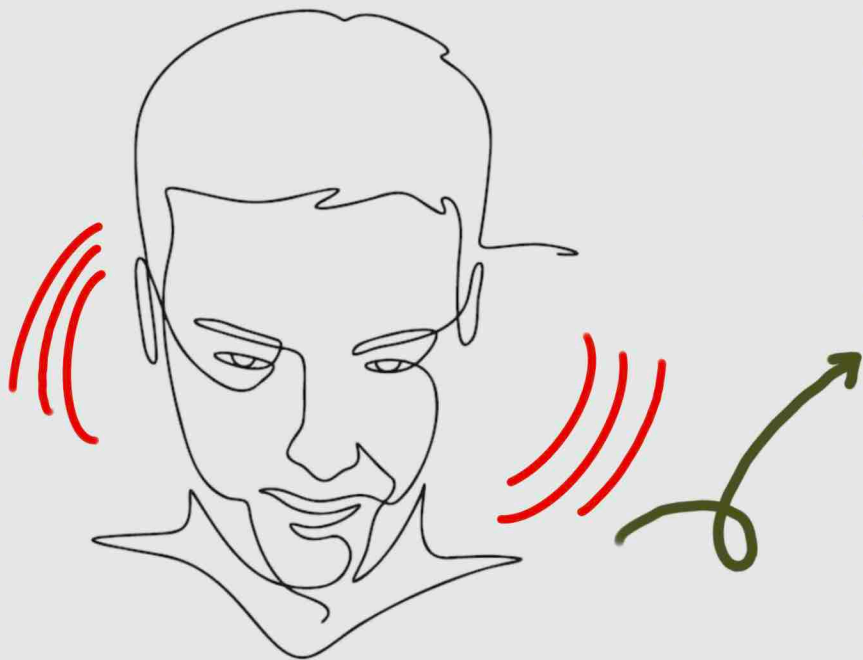


**FIRST AID**

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 & SCHEDULE

|                            |                            |                             |                               |                                     |                            |                              |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Date</b>                | <b>Monday</b><br>August 18 | <b>Tuesday</b><br>August 19 | <b>Wednesday</b><br>August 20 | <b>Thursday</b><br>August 21        | <b>Friday</b><br>August 22 | <b>Saturday</b><br>August 23 |
| <b>Module</b>              | Intro and<br>Ice breaker   | Module 1<br>Mammals         | Module 1<br>Mammals           | Module 2<br>Trees                   | Module 2<br>Trees          | Module 3<br>Reptiles         |
| <b>Sunday</b><br>August 24 | <b>Monday</b><br>August 25 | <b>Tuesday</b><br>August 26 | <b>Wednesday</b><br>August 27 | <b>Thursday</b><br>August 28        | <b>Friday</b><br>August 29 | <b>Saturday</b><br>August 30 |
| Module 3<br>Reptiles       | Module 3<br>Reptiles       | Module 4<br>Amphibians      | Module 4<br>Amphibians        | Module 5<br>First Aid               | Module 5<br>First Aid      | Module 5<br>First Aid        |
| <b>Sunday</b><br>August 31 | <b>Monday</b><br>Sept 01   | <b>Tuesday</b><br>Sept 02   | <b>Wednesday</b><br>Sept 03   | <b>Thursday</b><br>Sept 04          | <b>Friday</b><br>Sept 05   | <b>Saturday</b><br>Sept 06   |
| Module 5<br>First Aid      | Module 6<br>Butterflies    | Module 6<br>Butterflies     | Module 7<br>Birds             | Module 7<br>Birds                   | Module 7<br>Birds          | Module 7<br>Birds            |
| <b>Sunday</b><br>Sept 07   | <b>Monday</b><br>Sept 08   | <b>Tuesday</b><br>Sept 09   | <b>Wednesday</b><br>Sept 10   | <b>Thursday</b><br>Sept 11          | <b>Happy<br/>Learning</b>  |                              |
| Module 8<br>Conservation   | Conclusion                 | Module 9<br>Guiding         | Module 9<br>Guiding           | Module 9<br>Guiding<br>& conclusion |                            |                              |



**Which animal is making that ?  
The sound seems to come from this side !**

**What is this pattern on the ground ?**



# MAMMALS

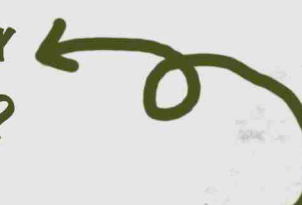
Detailed learning of mammals of central India .

To understand behaviours and identification .

To learn tracks and signs through walks, buffer safaris ,presentations and interactive sessions.



**Why is this deer away from the herd ?**



**Leopard !?  
Tiger !?  
Fresh or old**



# TREES

Learn as a group !!!



Leaves  
Bark  
Flowers  
Canopy

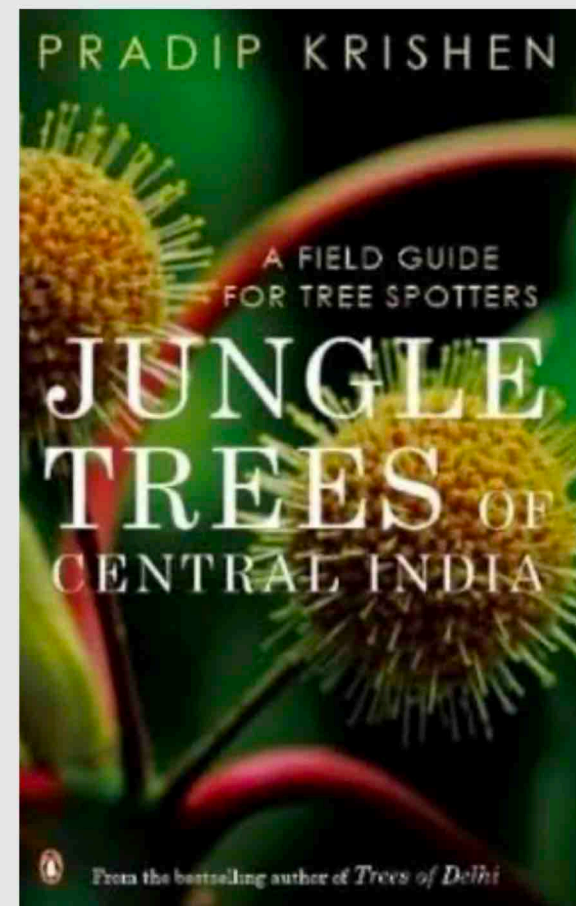


Step by step process....

Walk through the property  
and learn the  
difference  
from tree to tree  
**IDENTIFY**

Learn to weave stories around  
the trees....

How to use the guide?



# AMBHIBIANS AND REPTILES

A combination of indoor presentations & outdoor walks to search and witness the behaviour of amphibians & reptiles.

Sessions on behavior, characteristics and process of identification



Follow the croaking sound in the night into a water filled field!



To practice spotting and identification and to observe the behaviour in field



# BUTTERFLIES

Learn in detail the four families of butterfly.

Learn to identify the family, individual and its behaviour through flying patterns.

Learn about the host plants and trees of butterflies.

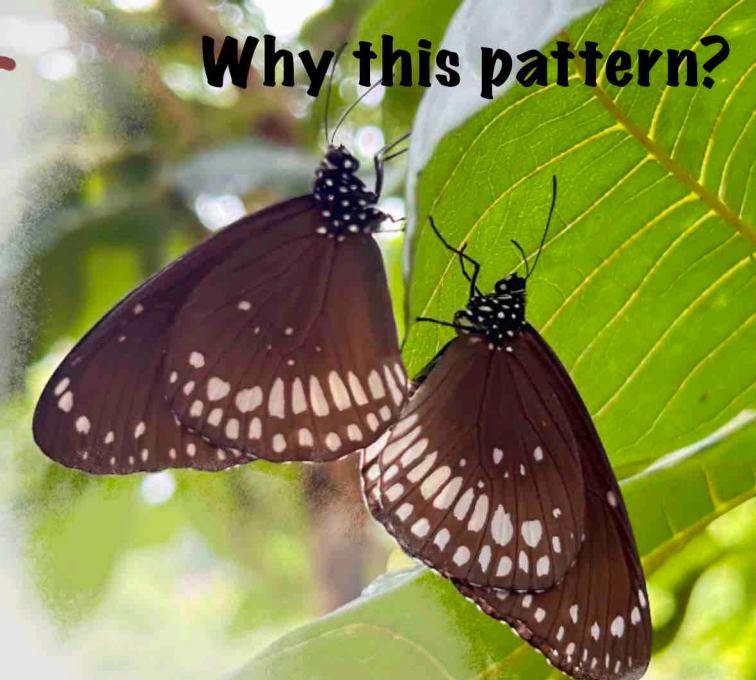
Learn about the different stages like eggs, caterpillar, pupa and their survival techniques.

Learn about the difference between moth and butterflies and basics of few commonly sighted insects.

**Learning to understand & interpret the behaviour of butterflies**

**Walks to look for caterpillars under every leaf & to watch & learn their behaviour**

**Why this pattern?**



**Why this colour?**



**Why this leaf?**

**Why this shape?**



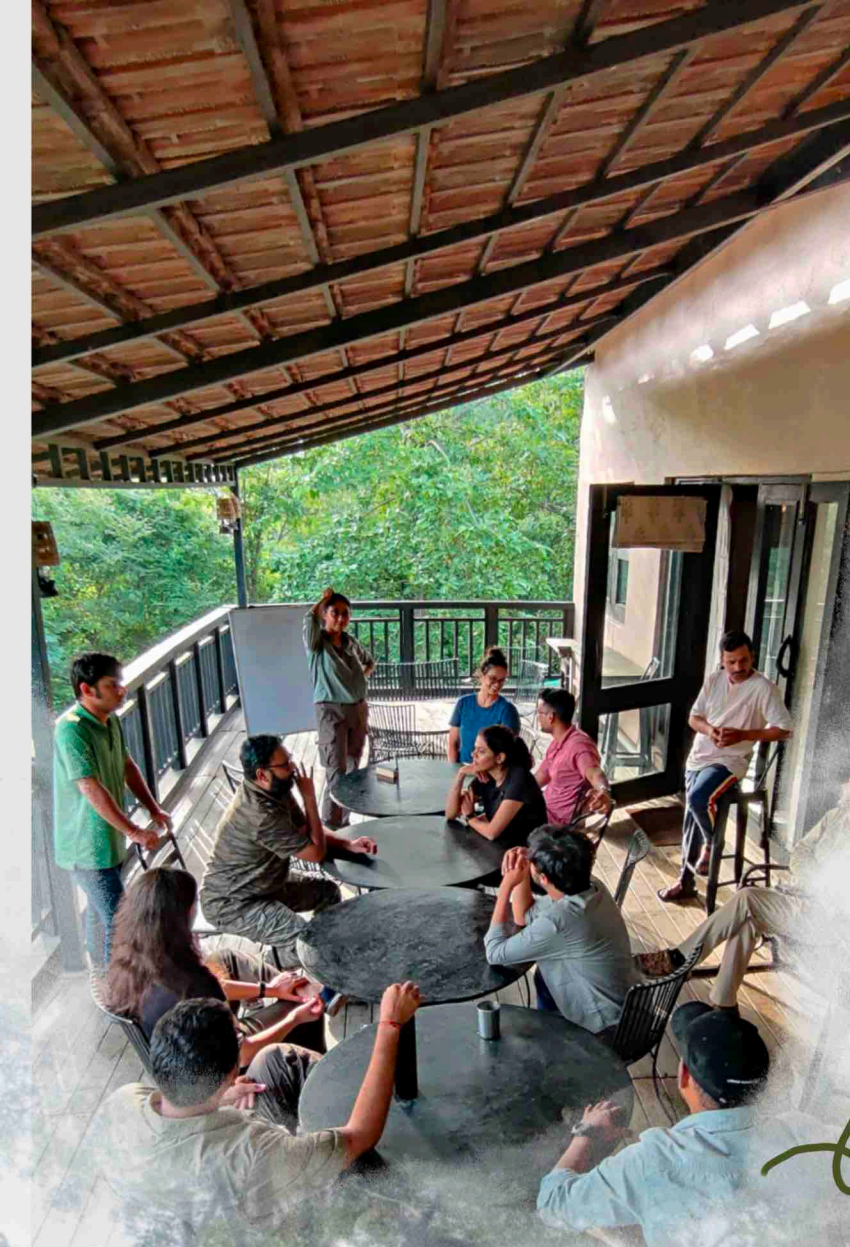
# BIRDS

To learn the process to identify birds in different habitats through flying patterns, statures and calls.

Practice bird identification through games, outdoor drives and indoor sessions.

Understanding flying patterns & statures through games

Field sessions to learn birding in different habitats



**Small Sandpipers**

**Temminck's Stint** EW  
① overall brown in appearance  
tail does not project beyond wings  
may show indistinct supercilium  
yellow legs  
② can be seen along with Little Stints

**Common Sandpiper** EW  
dark lore and eye-stripe  
narrow supercilium  
white shoulder mark  
robust body with large head  
tail projects beyond wings  
③ seen individually ④ continuously bobs tail

**Large Sandpipers**

**Wood Sandpiper** EW  
prominent neck  
supercilium present  
heavily spotted upperparts  
pale underwing  
sometimes seen bobbing its tail  
tail does not project beyond wings  
yellowish legs

**Green Sandpiper** EW  
robust body with small head  
supercilium does not extend behind eye  
greenish legs  
coffee-coloured wings with contrasting white belly  
tail does not project beyond wings  
⑤ dark underwing ⑥ sometimes seen bobbing its tail

# FIRST AID

This 4 day session aims to train the students with basic first aid techniques by giving them different kinds of scenarios and by making them practice.

End of the sessions, practical and theoretical exams are conducted based on which the students will be certified as a First aider, certificate of which will be valid for 2 years.

**Practice sessions  
with team - muscle memory**

**Role plays  
with different  
scenarios**



# GUIDING TECHNIQUES

( Covered in Extension )

Naturalists & nature guides are someone who are like a bridge between wildlife/nature/jungle & the guests. They make the walks and safaris more entertaining & educational.

They point out to the things which may otherwise go unnoticed and give a unique perspective to it. In simple words they make the guests fall in love with the jungle.

As much as the job sounds fascinating, being a good naturalist is a skill and it is a challenging job.

Our 3 days extension course on guiding aims to equip the participants with those techniques which are used in the field to guide the guests on walks and safaris and how to present all the stories and information learnt in a entertaining way to the guests.

How to present yourself?



Is hospitality a part?



How to make an experience memorable?

Mock walks and safaris to learn & practice guiding



# 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.

- **ACCOMODATION** : Triple sharing (same gender sharing) in standard rooms with attached facilities.
- **MEALS** : Three simple home cooked meals along with morning and evening tea.
- **LAUNDRY** : A vailable and chargeable .
- **AIR CONDITIONING** : No
- **BASIC HOUSEKEEPING** : Provided

## Certification

Over the course duration, all participants will undertake written tests, oral presentation, 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 zone for training purposes.
- Nature walks, indoor and outdoor learning sessions.
- Scheduled training classes.
- Course material.



# What to carry ?

- Earthly 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 by Richard Grimmet, Carol Inskipp & Tim Inskipp  
Snakes of India :The Field Guide by Ashok Captain & Romulus Whitaker  
Jungle Trees of Central India : Pradip Krishen
- Laptop
- Camera ( with spare batteries)
- Binoculars and torch
- Light fleece
- Rain gear ( ponchos/parasols)
- Water bottle
- Working Internet connection (only Jio work at Satpura)



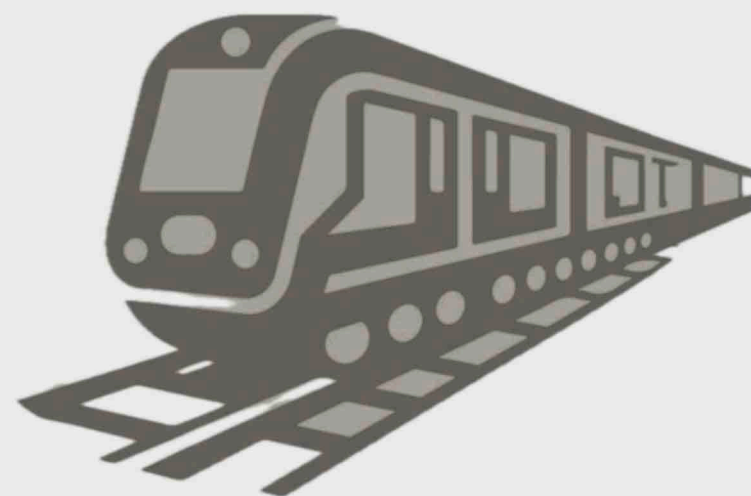
## How to reach the campus ?

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



### THROUGH AIR

136 km south east of Bhopal, the closest airport to Satpura.



### THROUGH TRAIN

Itarsi Railway Station  
66 km away

Sohagpur Railway Station  
19 km away



### BY ROAD

Satpura is just 19 km from a prominent state highway and 70 km away from the national highway 12

# Rules and Regulations

- Candidates joining the course are expected to abide by the PRONAT rules and regulations.
- Candidates are expected to thoroughly read the consent form given on arrival 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

August 18th to September 08th, 2026 ( main course )

September 08th to 11th, 2026 (extension )

**Main course ( 21 nights / 22 days )**

- On triple sharing : INR 1,15,000 + plus 5% GST per person
- Single rooms can be booked at the supplement of INR 65000 + plus 5% GST

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

- On triple sharing : INR 24,500 + plus 5% GST per person
- Single rooms can be booked at the supplement of INR 20,000 + plus 5% GST
- For Indian students under 27 years, fee is INR 95000/- for main course and INR 18000/- for extension on triple occupancy + plus 5% GST per person. ( Applicable for students born on or after 18th September 1999)

\*If enrolled before 31st Jan 2026, a discount of 10% will be provided on above fees.  
(Subject to availability on first come first serve basis)

# 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 2026.

## 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         | : Fazalpur ,Ujjain               |
| TYPE.          | : Current Account                |

# Students' Testimonials

## **Sudhir Shivaram - Wildlife Photographer (PRONAT BATCH 2021)**

The PRONAT course by Pugdundee Safaris is an outstanding initiative that nurtures future naturalists and guides. It builds scientific knowledge, field awareness and ethical values that are essential for working in India's wilderness. For those serious about a career in nature and wildlife, this course offers a fantastic starting point.



## **Shoba Rudra - Founder of Rare India. (PRONAT BATCH 2021)**

If the natural world interests you, Pronat's 6 week long course in the wilderness of Satpura is both a study of natural history for professional naturalists and those who write about wildlife and promote tourism. A combination of class room lectures and exploring the forests with expert ornithologists, herpetologists and experienced naturalists, each day is a deep dive into the natural world.



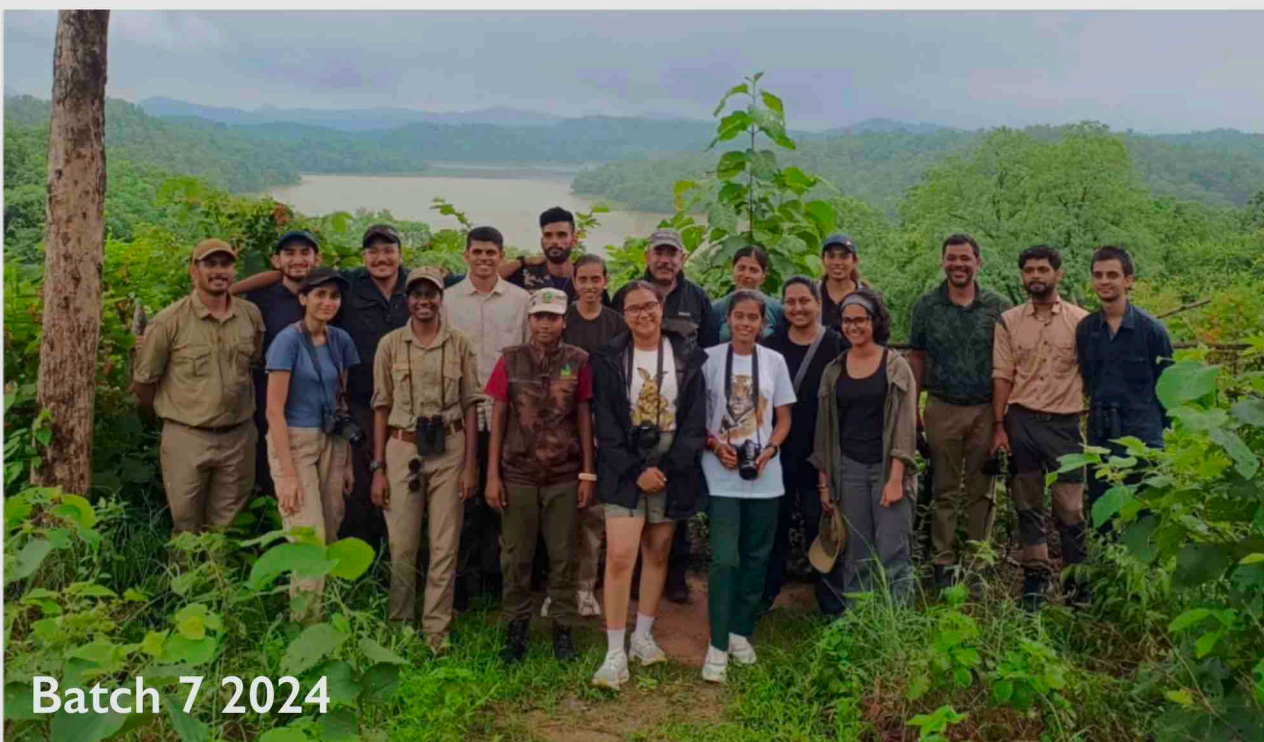
## **Deepa Rakshana - Naturalist at Pugdundee Safaris (PRONAT BATCH 2022)**

PRONAT is truly a memory of a lifetime. It so well equips the students with deep understanding of wilderness that for anyone who wants to become professional naturalist, it is the best start regardless of whatever field your background was before. The scientific lectures along with the field techniques learnt over 6 weeks from the experienced mentors stands as a guiding light no matter whichever jungle you start your career in.





Batch 3 2020



Batch 7 2024



Batch 6 2023



Batch 8 2025



Batch 5 2022

SEE YOU  
IN 2026