

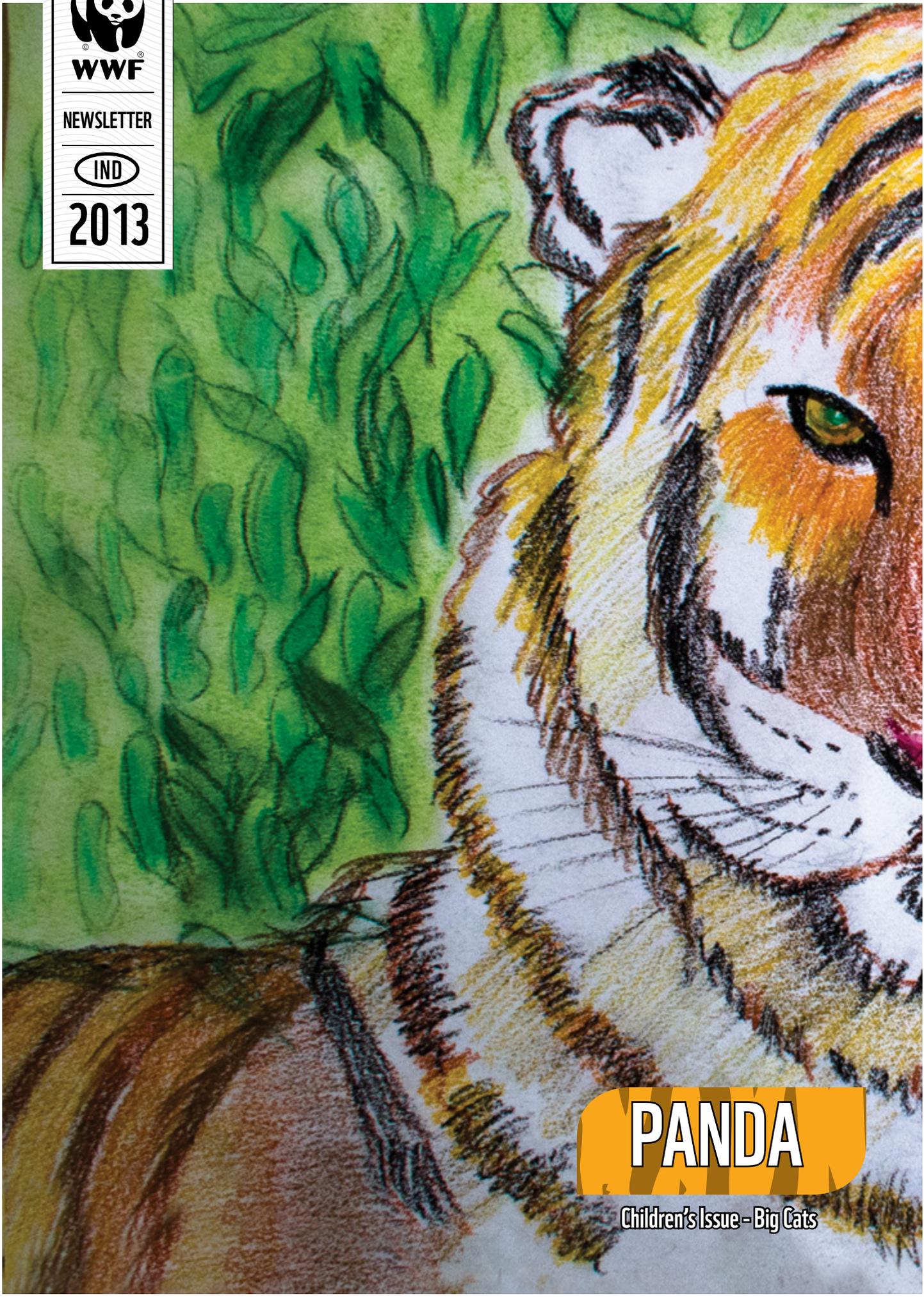


WWF

NEWSLETTER

IND

2013



PANDA

Children's Issue - Big Cats

FROM THE SG & CEO'S DESK

Dear young friends,

Big cats are some of the most magnificent creatures on our planet. We all have, since childhood, been enamoured by their grace and beauty. This issue of Panda is dedicated to four of the big cats, namely, lion, tiger, leopard and snow leopard. This issue of Panda is also dedicated to all you nature enthusiasts who will make the world a better place in the future. Here you will find articles, poems and paintings by young people for their fellow budding conservationists.

Big cats are at the apex of their food-chains. This means that any danger to the big cats is going to impact the entire food-chain, affecting all the other animals and people in their immediate environment. However, the existence of all the four big cats is threatened. These apex predators are falling prey to habitat destruction, poaching as well as illegal wildlife trade. It has become imperative to bring the message of conservation to the forefront. The future generations need to be sensitive to these issues.

It is important to make sure that we take care of the environment and the natural habitats of the big cats so they have a place to live. Young conservationists must keep their curiosity about nature alive and spread the word of conservation in their circles. It is you who need to make sure that young people of the future can appreciate nature and wildlife like you do!

Ravi Singh

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Greetings friends!

From impassioned poetry to heart wrenching stories and brilliant photography, after working on this unique issue of Panda, we feel like we have seen a montage of amazing collaborations between students from all over the country and their muses, the big cats. While going through the submitted work, we were overwhelmed with lions, tigers, leopards and snow leopards coming alive with the voices of children. We also learnt that editing is not a simple task!

This issue, apart from being a children's issue, is also unique as it focuses on big cats. Some that we've seen and some that we might've seen had we existed millions of years ago! Big cats with their might and magnificence have always been a source of curiosity. But that being said, as of today they are fighting for their mere survival. The world around us today is slowly being destroyed, piece by piece. One by one, the building blocks which constitute our environment and living system are falling down until in the end we will be left with a bare planet. The big cats are a crucial part of the biosphere. They are high up in the food chain and help maintain an ecological and environmental balance.

In this bleak situation we bring a ray of light to you—this issue of the Panda. This issue is made by us, the new generation. We are a part of this magazine to represent each lion, tiger, leopard and snow leopard out there. We are the future and today we are here to speak on behalf of the planet. We hope this inspires and encourages many more young conservationists and instills a feeling of responsibility in you.

So, presenting to you, (drumroll please) Panda – Big Cats!

Tanushri Mazumdar and Pallavi Rawla
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HEAR MEROAR!

WHO ARE THE BIG CATS?

By: Radhika Sinha

Class: X A

School: Bluebells School International,
New Delhi



Conservation Status of Big Cats as per the IUCN Redlist :

Tiger
Status - Endangered

Asiatic lion
Status - Endangered

Leopard
Status - Near Threatened

Snow leopard
Status - Endangered

 Tigers, lions, leopards and snow leopards. They are much bigger than our pet cats and ferocious. This is why they are called the kings of the jungle. Scientifically speaking, these four members of the genus *Panthera*, are specifically nicknamed the 'big cats' because of their ability to roar, which is not present in other cats due to a specially adapted hyoid apparatus in the necks of these animals.

 Each year people visit wildlife sanctuaries in huge numbers to specially see these majestic creatures whose skill and agility makes them most feared amongst the animal kingdom. Those who have read books like *Life of Pi* or seen movies such as *Duma*, would have a fair idea of these animals. They are dangerous and may attack without warning but we should remember that they do so because of the fear of hunger and of losing their territory. This is usually common to almost all wild animals and it is natural because it is in their instinct to kill. Yet they can be trained. Circus lions are a good example of this. Our zoos too show that if our big cats could not be trained, then well, I pretty much doubt we would even have them there!

 It is of great interest to a zoologist to observe any big cat. Contrary to popular belief, animals do express themselves. Take the prusten of a tiger for example. Prusten is equivalent to the purring we see in domesticated cats. The animal closes its mouth and blows through the nostrils, and is similar to a snort. Tigers usually do this when they are ready to accept someone and initiate some sort of friendship with them.

 Having said that, there is another thing about the fascination with big cats that intrigues me. If these animals are as magnificent as we think they are, then why do we like to stand on rugs made of their their skin with our expensive heels instead of seeing them roam freely in their habitat? Yes, I am talking about hunting and poaching because of which these animals are endangered now.

 It is indeed something to think about because the extinction of our big cats may challenge our very humanity. Why do we need campaigns such as "Save the Tiger", to teach us that what we are doing is not morally and socially acceptable. I do not think we need a law to be passed to make us realize that killing an animal for its claws or teeth makes no sense. It may yield thousands of dollars or euros, but the bigger picture here is that in a few years from now all that we will have in the zoos in the name of lions and leopards will be nothing but claws, skin and teeth. Maybe we need to reconsider our actions and make an effort!

“ If a man aspires towards a righteous life, his first act of abstinence is from injury to animals. ”

-Leo Tolstoy, *The First Step*

CAT SONG!

Hey big cats,
Hey big cats,

You are the most powerful,
You are the fastest and beautiful,
You are the sleepest animal in the world,
And your shiny mane is gold,

You are ten times stronger than man,
And you hunt always with a plan.
You live all over Asia,
From rainforests to the woodlands of Siberia.

You live with your family,
Happily in your royal territory.
For you to live and survive,
Let us plant more trees forever.

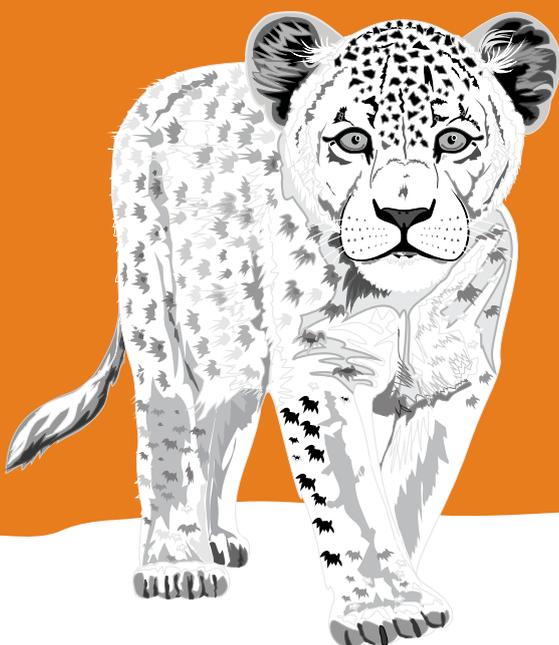
Hey big cats,
Hey big cats.

You are often nocturnal,
You are our National Animal.
You are the strongest animal worldwide,
And you are our pride.

By: Adarsha

Class: VII

School: The Pupil Saveetha Eco School,
Chennai



FORGOTTEN FELINES

By Tanushri Majumdar,
Class: X
School: Cambridge
School, Noida

Prehistoric big cats

Haven't you always wondered where tigers came from? What the basis of their existence is? I don't know about you, but I sure have! I mean, yeah, we evolved from chimps, dogs came from wolves, but what did our present day "kitty" evolve from? So, one day, I got up with a goal in my head – I had to figure this out! And that's how this article came into existence. Forgotten felines are all the cats that have been forgotten over the ages - all the prehistoric cats that evolved into our present day big cats.



Smilodon or the saber toothed cat

Often called a tiger, this prehistoric predator was not really a tiger. Fossil evidence indicates that it was a lot smaller, more like a bobcat — around 3 feet tall, to be precise. A distinct feature seen in this peculiar feline was its fangs. This cat had huge canine fangs that closely resembled sabers, as the name indicates. These extremely sharp fangs were, on an average, 8 inches long! Also known as the smilodon, the saber-toothed cat was built for the kill. Almost bear-like with an extremely muscular neck and forelegs, its well-engineered body was perfect for latching onto the necks of its unfortunate prey. Its mouth opened very wide and it could bite huge chunks out of a prey. Clusters of fossils found in California suggest that it may have been a social animal.

American Lion or *Panthera atrox*

This big cat, a probable ancestor of our present-day lion, once roamed the continent of North America. This predator was huge, more than four-thirds the size of any modern lion. Standing 4 feet high, this predator had a huge head and long legs. Surprisingly, this big cat weighed less than expected, for something its size — between 256kg and 351kg. Also called the American lion, this predator lived at high altitudes, probably using caves as shelter against the cold weather. American lions likely preyed on deer, horses, North American camels, North American tapirs, bison, mammoths, and other large herbivorous animals. Human predation may have contributed to its extinction, indicated by the huge number of lion bones found in American Indian settlements of the Paleolithic age. This prehistoric lion was truly the king of beasts in its age.



All illustrations by: Vishnu , WWF-India

Dinictis

The dinictis was a strong and fierce predator indigenous to North America. Fossil evidence suggests that this beast was a strange mixture of the prehistoric smilodon and present-day felines like the house cat and tiger. It had a sleek body, almost 1.1 m long, with very short, un-catlike front legs. It looked like a small leopard, roughly the size of the present-day cougar and dwelled in trees. Its teeth were like modern cats and it is considered an ancestor to them. Fossils found in the western states of North America show that the dinictis preferred to live and hunt near rivers and open plains.

Homotherium

Also known as the Scimitar cat, the homotherium was one of the most formidable felines in prehistoric times. Found in North and South America, Europe, Asia and Africa, it adapted very well to different climatic conditions and survived for five million years until its extinction. The homotherium may have been a social carnivore and was active mostly during the day, thus avoiding competition with nocturnal predators. Its short hind legs and rather long forelegs helped it in grabbing prey. An adept mammal hunter, its exceptional speed helped the homotherium hunt fast animals as well.

Cave Lion

The cave lion was a subspecies of the *Panthera leo*. This skilled hunter was one of the largest cats of its time (much larger than our present-day Siberian tiger and hybrid tiger) with the males weighing between 270kg and 320 kg. It was one of the most dangerous and powerful predators during the last Ice Age in Europe, and evidence indicates that it was feared. Interestingly it played a role in paleolithic religious beliefs evident from artefacts like cave paintings and a few statuettes that depicted the cave lion as a majestic, regal beast. Surprisingly, this cat did not have a mane like the present-day lion as indicated by paleolithic cave paintings and clay busts. They also show the cave lion with faint, tiger-like stripes on its body. Scientists have suggested that it may actually have been more related to the tiger. Extensive genetic studies on the fossils, however, have confirmed that the cave lion was actually a lion!

BIG CATS

By: Mahak Kohli

Class: VI

School: Bluebells School
International, New Delhi

Big cats roaming in the grasslands,
Roaring as loud as music bands.
To kill their hunger, hunting prey,
Almost everyday.

Searching water to kill their thirst,
Racing through the forest to get there first.
There is severe competition for food,
They have fun and play depending on their mood.

We are making them disappear altogether,
To make our lives better.
They are dying... yes they are,
We should not let them vanish, yaar.



Name unknown

FELIDS (WILD CATS) OF INDIA

Felidae comprises 36 species of wild cats which are a family of carnivores, that is flesh-eating mammals. Of these, 16 species are found in India. The reason for such diversity within a comparatively small region is because India supports many different types of habitat like ice-capped mountains, different types of forests and even deserts. Unfortunately, this treasure of biodiversity is seriously threatened due to man-made factors such as destruction of forests and poaching. One species, the Asiatic cheetah, has already become extinct in the wild in India. It is important for us to help save the wild cats to ensure our own safety in the future.



Rusty-spotted cat
Prionailurus rubiginosus
Body length: 25-48 cm
Weight: 1-1.6 kg
IUCN status: **VU**



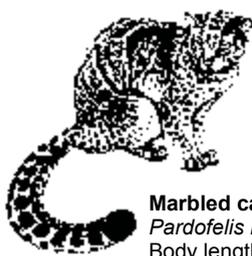
Pallas's cat
Otocolobus manul
Body length: 50-55 cm
Weight: 2-5 kg
IUCN status: **NT**



Jungle cat
Felis chaus
Body length: 60 cm
Weight: 5-6 kg
IUCN status: **LC**



Desert cat
Felis silvestris
Body length: 47-54 cm
Weight: 2-4 kg
IUCN status: **LC**



Marbled cat
Pardofelis marmorata
Body length: 40-60 cm
Weight: 5.5 kg
IUCN status: **VU**



Asian golden cat
Pardofelis temminckii
Body length: 120 cm
Weight: 6-11 kg
IUCN status: **NT**



Caracal
Caracal caracal
Body length: 40-60 cm
Weight: 5.5 kg
IUCN status: **LC**



Eurasian Lynx
Lynx lynx
Body length: 85-90 cm
Weight: 18-21 kg
IUCN status: **LC**



Leopard or Panther
Panthera pardus
Body length: 185-215 cm
Weight: 39-68 kg
IUCN status: **NT**



Black panther
Panthera pardus
Body length: 185-215 cm
Weight: 39-68 kg
IUCN status: **NT**



Fishing cat
Prionailurus viverrinus
Body length: 70 cm
Weight: 5.5-8 kg
IUCN status: **EN**



Clouded leopard
Neofelis nebulosa
Body length: 60-110 cm
Weight: 11-20 kg
IUCN status: **VU**



Leopard cat
Prionailurus bengalensis
Body length: 40-60 cm
Weight: 3-7 kg
IUCN status: **LC**



Snow leopard
Panthera uncia
Body length: 100-130 cm
Weight: 35-55 kg
IUCN status: **EN**



Asiatic cheetah
Acinonyx jubatus
Body length: 121-145 cm
Weight: 43-54 kg
IUCN status: Extinct in India
CR



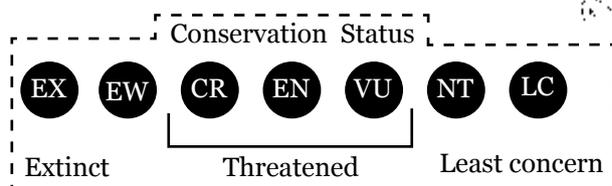
Indian or Bengal tiger
Panthera tigris
Body length: 260-300 cm
Weight: 135-230 kg
IUCN status: **EN**



Asiatic lion
Panthera leo
Body length: 275 cm
Weight: 110-190 kg
IUCN status: **EN**



White tiger
Panthera tigris
IUCN status: **EN**



Illustrations by: Pitchandikulam Forest Consultants, Auroville International Township www.pitchandikulamforest.org

Key Facts

Common Name: Royal Bengal tiger

Scientific Name: *Panthera tigris*

Geographic habitat: Widely distributed across India

Length: 275-290cm (male), 260cm (female)

Weight: 135-230 kg

Population: Around 1706

Status: Endangered



Radhika Arora
Class: X
School: Springdales School,
New Delhi

READ BETWEEN THE STRIPES



Radhika

TIGERS IN INDIA

By: Manas
Class: VI

School: The Pupil
Saveetha Eco School,
Chennai

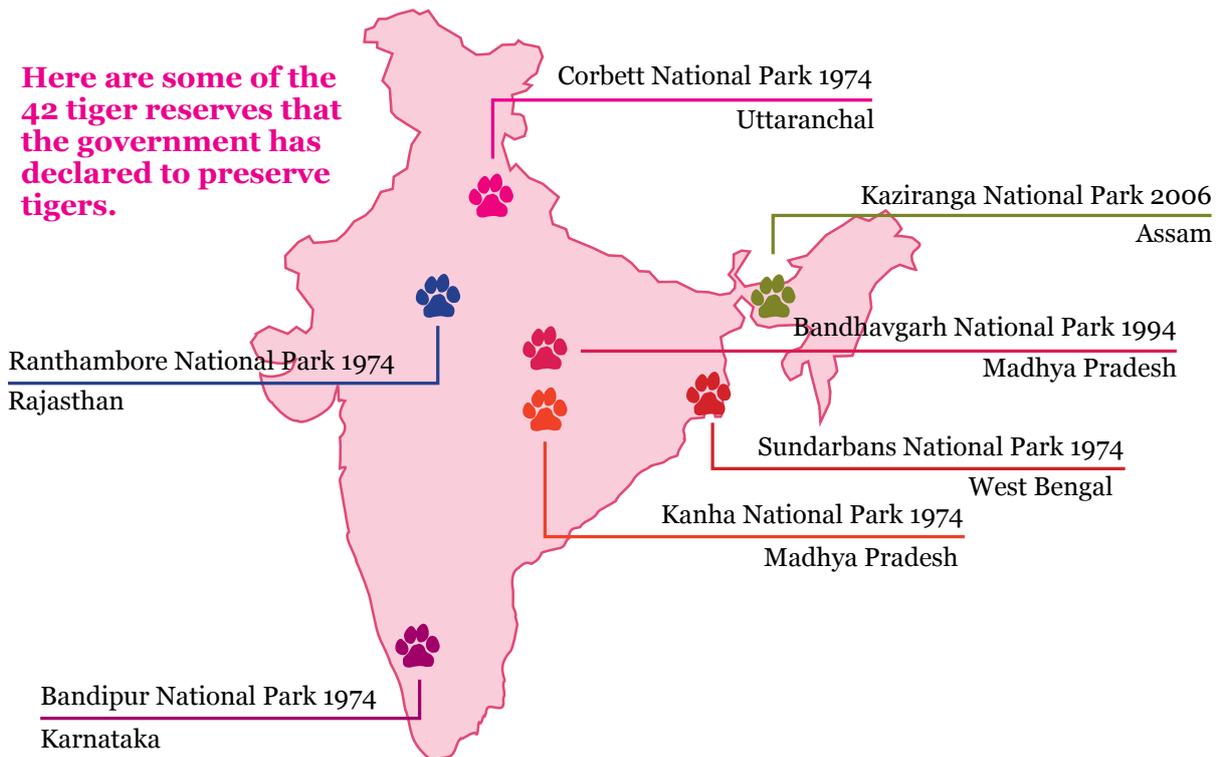
Q Why is it important to save the tiger?

A It is important to save the tiger because they are at the top of the food chain in the ecosystem. Therefore, monitoring the health of the tiger is an excellent way to monitor the health of the entire ecosystem. It will be a shame for the nation to lose its national animal if the tiger becomes extinct. So it is our duty to save it.

Q Why are they being hunted?

A Tigers are being hunted because the pelt of the tiger is in high demand and poachers hunt them for their fur and for Chinese medicines. Their hides are worth a lot of money in the black market and some people are just vain enough to want a tiger skin rug without thinking about the effect it may have on the dwindling species. Even their teeth and nails are powdered and used in medicines.

Here are some of the 42 tiger reserves that the government has declared to preserve tigers.



Q What are the other actions taken by the government to preserve tigers?

A The following measures have been taken by the government to protect tigers:

- Amendment of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 for enabling provisions towards constituting the tiger as a national animal.
- Constituting the Tiger Authority and the Species Crime Control Bureau.
- Enforcement of punishment in cases of offence relating to a tiger reserve or its core area.

A FRIENDLY TIGER

By: Sailender
Class: VII

School: The Pupil Saveetha
Eco School, Chennai

I met a tiger in the forest,
And his eyes were shining bright.

I met a tiger in the forest,
And his teeth were big and white.

I met a tiger in the forest,
And he ran fast and free.

I met a tiger in the forest,
And he was strong and bold.

I met a tiger in the forest,
He fasted for his feast.

I met a tiger in the forest,
And he looked sweet and brave.

I met a tiger in the forest,
And he loved and cared for his cubs.

I met a tiger in the forest,
And he became a favourite of mine.



S. Kiran Kumar
Class VII
School: Sri Sankara
Vidhyashramam Mat.
Hr. Sec. School, Chennai

BECKY'S BEST FRIEND

By: A. Priyanthi

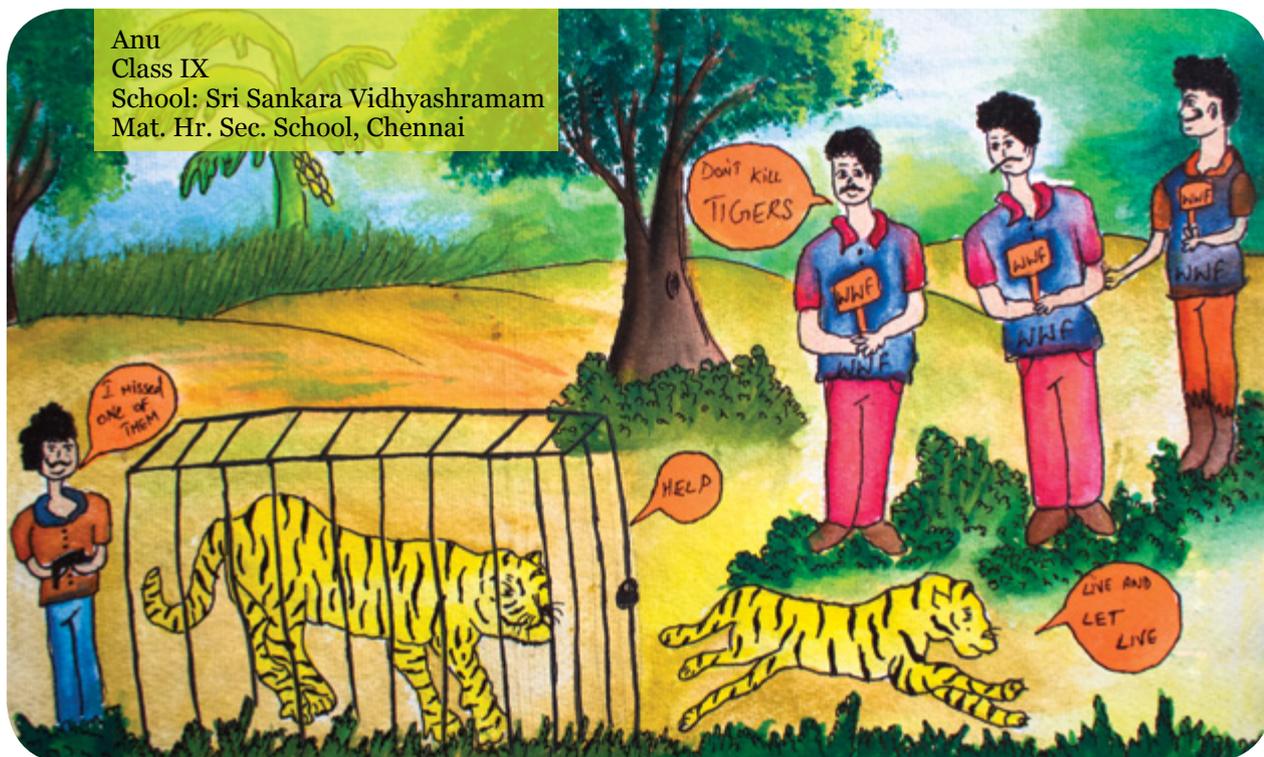
Class: IX

School: A.M.M.
Matriculation Higher
Secondary School,
Kotturpuram

This is an imaginary story of a friendship shared by a tiger care centre girl, Becky and her favourite tiger, Adam. After Becky was done with her schooling and college, she and her friends decided to start an exclusive care centre for tigers. Becky loved tigers. Since her childhood she had been collecting articles and pictures of tigers. She was always interested in tv-shows and documentaries on tigers. Her love for tigers inspired her to start the care centre for tigers with the help of her parents and friends. The tigers were well taken care of. It was a rehabilitation centre for the tigers in the zoo. The tigers there were well-trained and harmless. Becky loved her job and was thrilled to be a tiger caretaker.

Once, a tiger cub from the nearby zoo was brought to the care centre, and even though Becky had many tigers under her care, this tiger cub was very special for her. His perfectly tawny skin, his cute sharp teeth and his adorable roar were very admirable. She took extra care of him and named him Adam. She had a special bond with him and the two were inseparable. She was unable to give Adam away to the zoo. So she sought special permission from the zoo authorities to keep Adam. They both had a joyous life they enjoyed; until the day when Becky found out that Adam was affected by severe animal tuberculosis. Adam's health was deteriorating and she was pained to see his health fail.

In a week's time, Adam died. Saddened by Adam's death, Becky quit the care centre but continued to lend her support to protect the fast disappearing species. The impact of the death of our loved animals cannot be expressed. So let us all lend a helping hand to the fast dying tigers.



THE MOONLESS NIGHT

By: Shivanshi
Class: VII

School: The Mother's
International School,
New Delhi

Last night there was no moon,
It was all dark and very frightful,
But as the season here is summer,
The wind on my face was delightful.

The grass around me is pretty,
As my torch shows that it's green,
A patch in front I see is orange,
Oh my God! It's a tiger lean.

She turns around and looks,
Her eyes are like fire,
But shouldn't she be asleep,
Or doesn't she even tire?

Then suddenly she turned and ran,
As fast she could go,
What an experience that was,
This I will not forget, at least that's what I think so.



Jacynth Kaur
Class: VIII
School: Springdales School

LIVE AND LET LIVE

By: Akul Chaudhari

Class: VIII

School: Delhi Public
School, Greater Noida

Four pairs of eyes groping in the dark of the night, hunting for the majestic beast. "We will use her skin to make money. We'll earn in dollars—we'll be rich!"

"Oh God! Not again. Why can't these people let me live in peace? Why have they come here again to destroy the sanctity of the forest? Don't I have a right to live? Only yesterday, two poachers took away my younger cub. God knows where they have taken him. Can anyone ever understand the pain that we experience? In this materialistic world, is there anyone who understands that there will be no tigers left? The chain will finish and the world will come to an end."

With dark eyes that show no remorse or compassion, he takes out a gun and shoots me. The woods are silent, only deep anguish and pain in the eyes of fellow animals watching. The question in everyone's heart, "Will we also meet the same fate someday? Will humans never learn?"

My soul asks, "I have been silenced for greed, not need. I wish I had been hidden away somewhere or God had not given me this coat for which they brutally killed me. My striped friends and I will soon fade away. Save me, save our environment, save human beings.

Running, panting and gasping for breath, my earnest appeal to all of you:

"I too have a right to live—live and let live!"

Medha Majumdar

Class: VIII

School: Bluebells School International

Tyger! Tyger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful
symmetry?

- William Blake



THE TIGER

By: Shreeja Jha

Class: X

School: Delhi Public School,
Vasant Kunj, New delhi

His majestic face,
His royal walk,
He was the king,
and rule, he did.

Animals cringed with fear,
Just with his roar,
so he was the pride,
of the jungle.

Looked at with respect and awe,
by us meek humans,
He was the conqueror,
and conquer, he did.

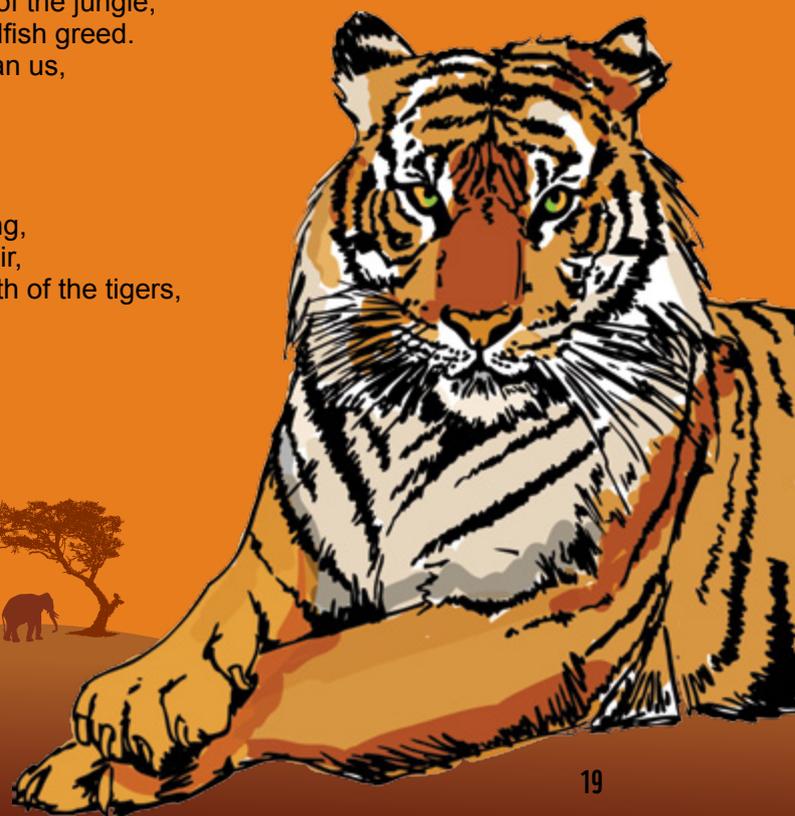
But we, cruel humans,
with our conditioned conscience,
could no longer stand,
anyone mightier than us.

So we got out our guns,
and shot him down
from far away —
cowards, we were.

He roared and screamed,
but we remained hidden
you see, we were still afraid
Even at the door of death;
He was still the mightier,
Still the king.

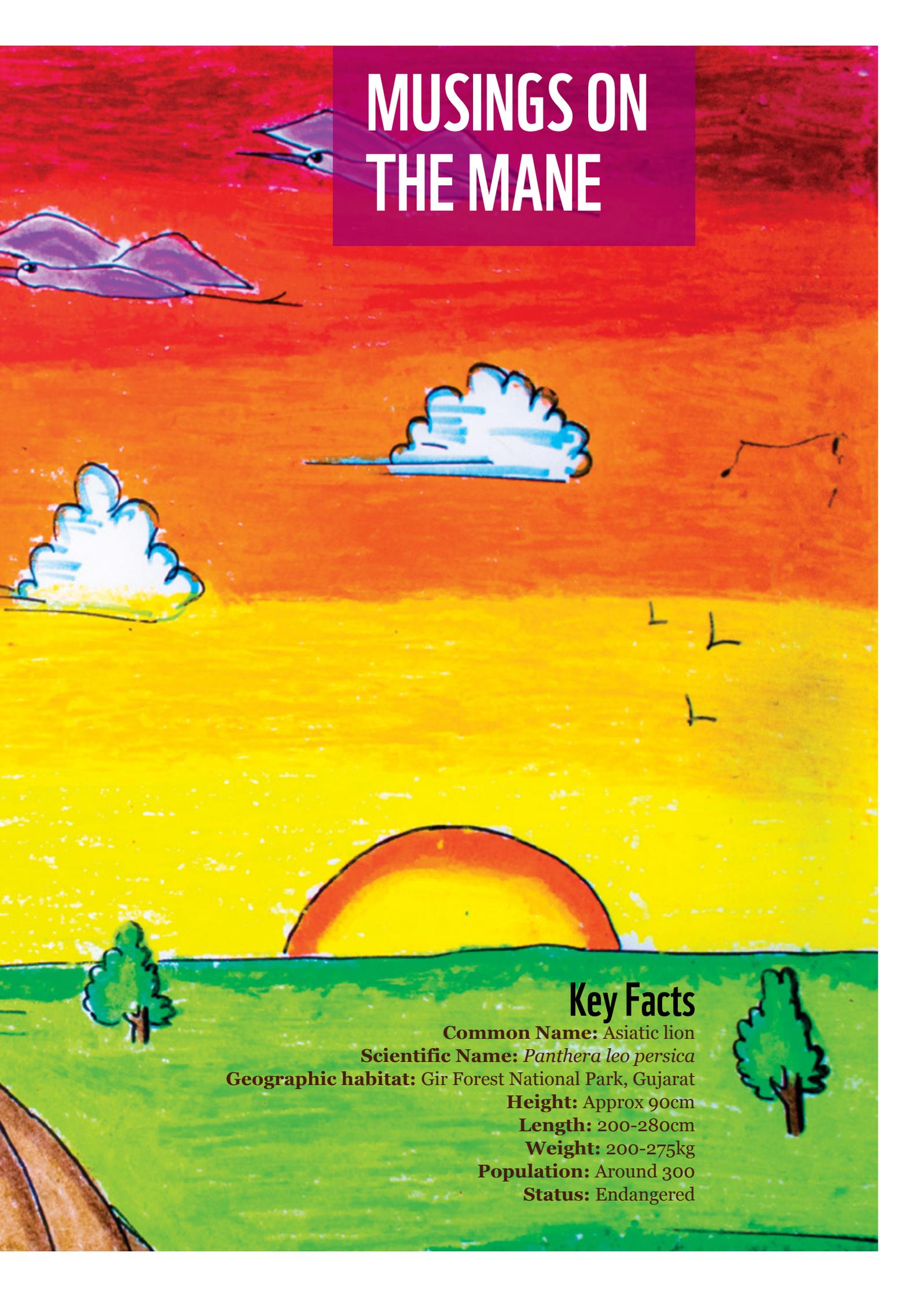
We took away the pride of the jungle,
killed him for our own selfish greed.
How anyone mightier than us,
dared to live?
So we got out our guns,
and shot him down.

But that sorrowful evening,
gunshots ringing in the air,
marked not only the death of the tigers,
but also, our humanity.





S. Swetha
Class: VII
School: Sri Sankara Vidhyashramam
Mat. Hr. Sec. School, Chennai



MUSINGS ON THE MANE

Key Facts

Common Name: Asiatic lion

Scientific Name: *Panthera leo persica*

Geographic habitat: Gir Forest National Park, Gujarat

Height: Approx 90cm

Length: 200-280cm

Weight: 200-275kg

Population: Around 300

Status: Endangered

FOREVER INVINCIBLE

By: Alankrita Goswami

Class: X

School: Delhi Public
School, Vasant Kunj

I'm the king of the jungle,
royal, powerful, and fierce,
roaring like a wild beast,
with an aura so majestic.

I appear to be beautiful,
with a thick mane and tawny skin,
distinct and sleek in a handsome coat,
But a scheming mind lies deep within.

I have a killer instinct,
I stalk my prey without a sound,
tearing it apart with my merciless claws,
ecstatic, seeing it lying lifeless on the ground.

I'm the king of the jungle,
Unbreakable and indestructible,
I'm the mightiest of all,
Forever the ruler, forever invincible.



K.R. Theerthana
Class: VIII
School: Sri Sankara Vidhyashramam
Mat. Hr. Sec. School, Chennai

MY VISIT TO THE KING

By: Kainat Pundir

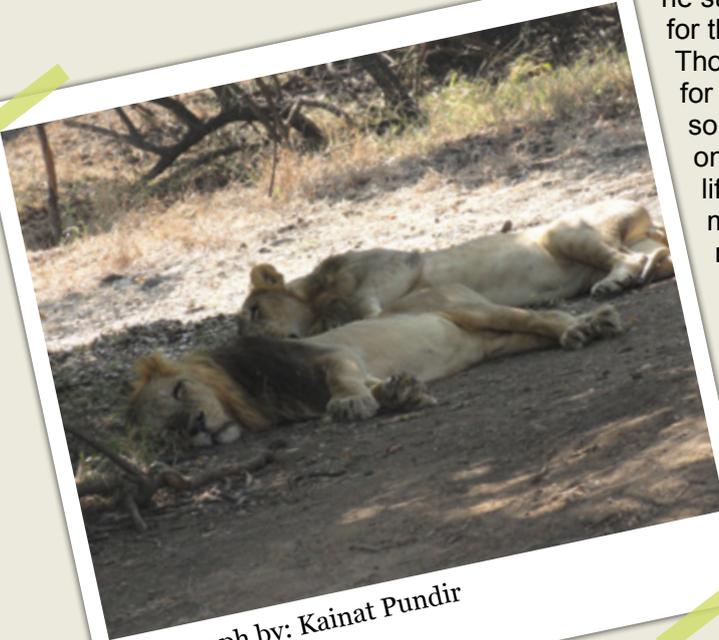
Class:IX

School: Sanskriti school,
New Delhi

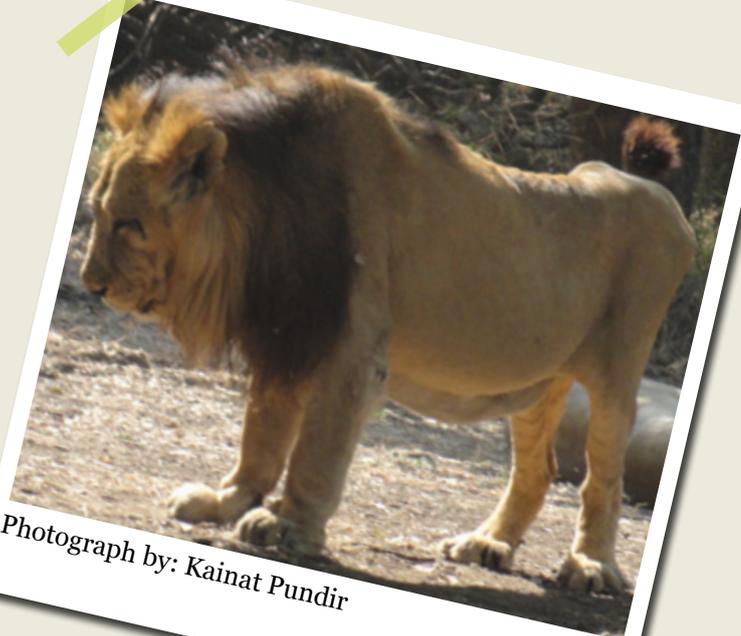
Traveling through Gir Forest National Park, while I was lost in deep thought—something happened. We saw a whole family of lions resting peacefully. It was truly an unforgettable sight. There were two old lions (male and female) and a young one who was supposed to be their son. The three looked so cute together that I could keep them as pets. I was imagining these lions tied to a leash and how I would order them to scare my enemies away. Then, the old lion was awakened by the sounds made by us—mere humans. What followed was something out of the world. The predator started moving towards us with such grace that you couldn't even blink your eye for the fear of

missing just one move of his. The lion took a few steps towards us posing for photographs and he sure was picture perfect!. Then he retired for the afternoon and lay beside his mistress. Those few minutes when the lion was posing for us and flaunting his fabulous muscles were something which neither I nor any other person on the bus at that time could forget in his/her lifetime. Anyone who saw it could never stop marvelling at the beauty and grace of the royal Asiatic lion.

We went around the national park for some 10 kms spotting a wild animal here and there but, none was as eye-catching as the lion. I'm sure just like me all the others on the bus could not stop thinking about those few minutes for the next 24 hours at least.



Photograph by: Kainat Pundir



Photograph by: Kainat Pundir

DON'T KILL

Key Facts

Common Name: Leopard

Scientific Name: *Panthera pardus*

Geographic Habitat: Found across India

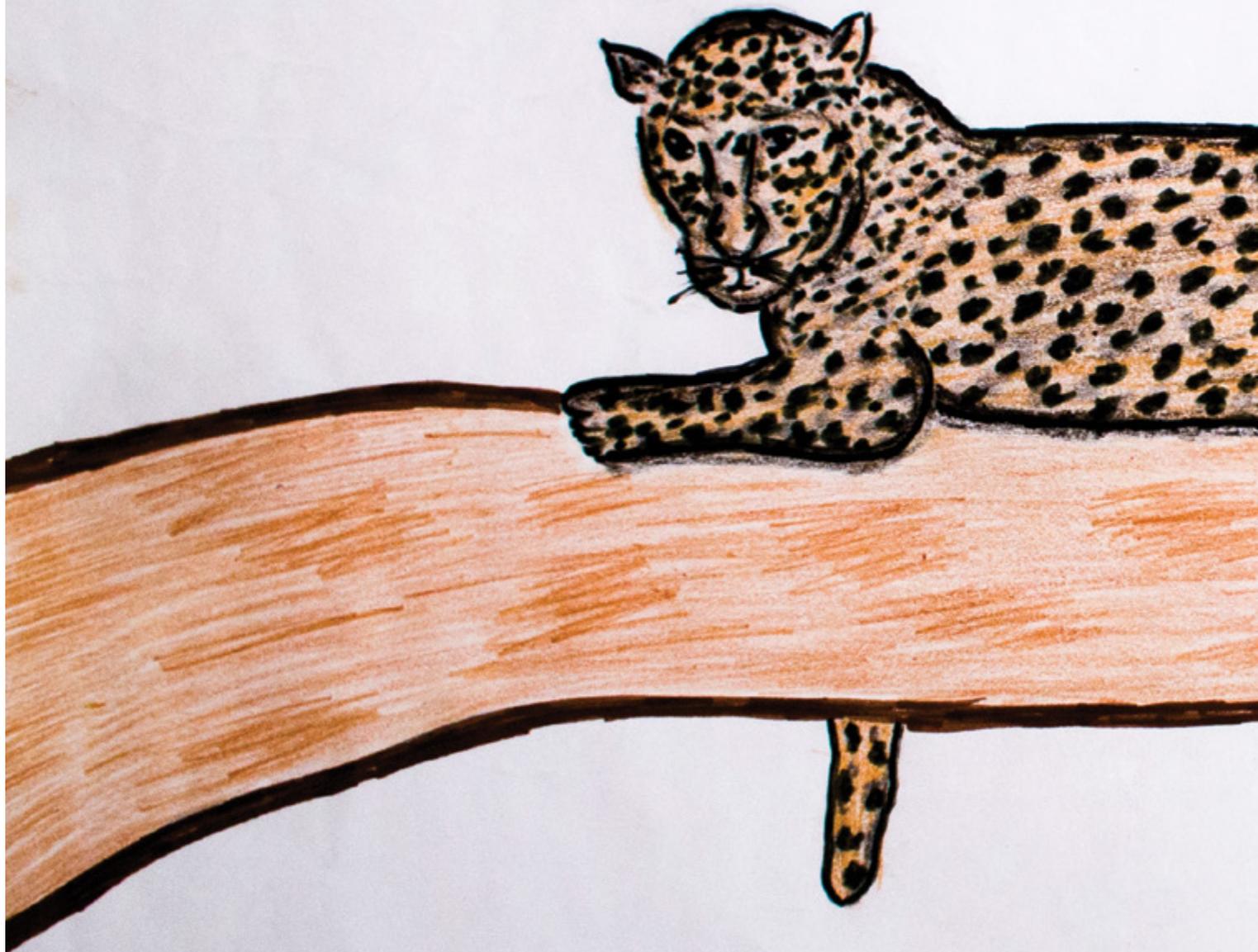
Height: 45-80 cm

Length: 185-215cm

Weight: 39-68kg

Status: Near Threatened

SAY



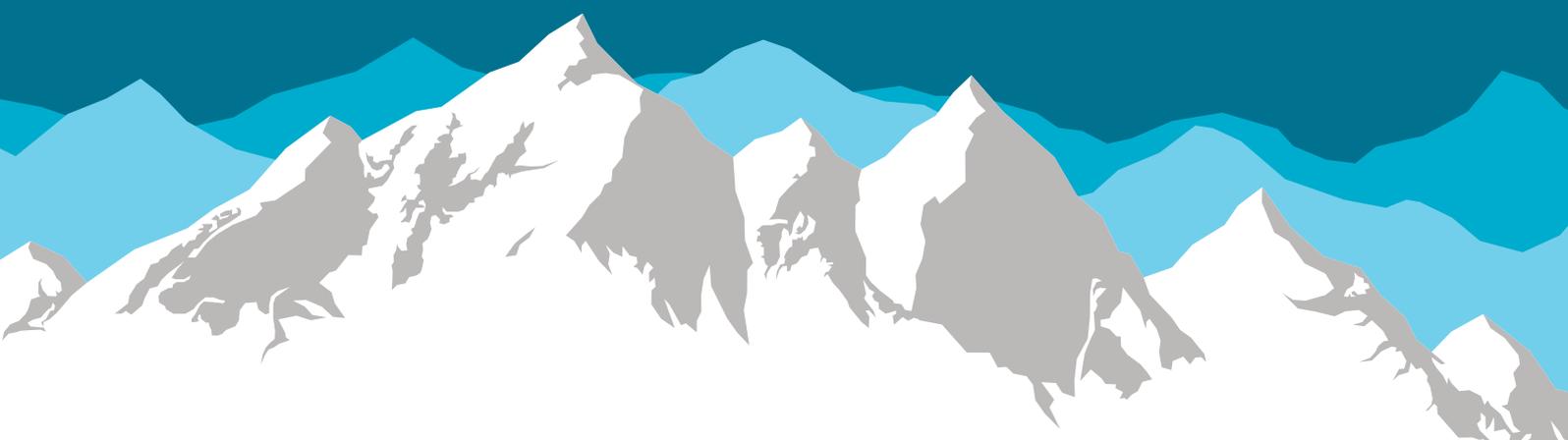
SONG OF THE SPOTS

T.R. Shruthi
Class:VI
school: Sri Sankara Vidhyashramam
Mat. Hr. Sec. School, Chennai

LEOPARDS

E THEM





SNOW LEOPARD IN JEOPARDY

By: Aditi Kumar

Class: VIII

School: Deccan International
School, Bangalore

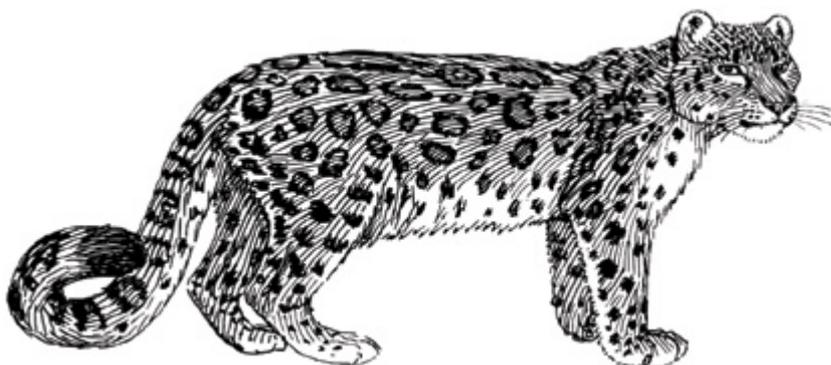
I took my furry blanket of a tail off my face. It was a brand new day. I slowly walked outside my lair, stretched my limbs and yawned a mighty yawn. I surveyed my kingdom—my snow-clad, beautiful, serene kingdom with barely a bush or two as its chief vegetation. My next thought were my subjects: The blue sheep or bharal (who are not really blue), the devil-horned mountain ibex, cousins of the beaver, the marmots, the cute yet senile hares and the hard-to-catch, but easy-to-kill game birds. I just stood there and wondered how long my kingdom would actually be mine, and how long my snow-clad, beautiful and serene kingdom would actually remain my snow-clad, beautiful and serene kingdom. I wished I was the White Witch of Narnia, for although she was cruel and vain, at least she got unlimited years of winter!

Thinking these thoughts got me really hungry. So I went out to look for my next subject to eat. I set out to find myself some not-so-blue sheep and found a herd not too far away. It had everything—senior citizens, males, females, adolescents and, hello!—a baby! A meaty, tender baby! Unfortunately, my luck was a little low. The herd sensed me and ran away. I scouted around for any kind of animal, but for the life of me, I could not find anything. I wish I was not born in this generation. I decided to diet for the rest of the day. I was really bored, desperate for even the smallest form of entertainment. I heard a racket a little distance away. I was weary of the situation, so I walked on broad, soft paws as slowly and quietly as I could, hoping for an adventure.

As I mentioned before, my luck was a little down that day. The noise was being made by a bunch of tourists who did not know the first thing about mountaineering. I pretended I hadn't noticed them and moved gracefully around, knowing that my moves would make for some great photos. It was already getting dark, so I decided to go back to my lair.

I was very tired, but, try as I might, I could not fall asleep—not on an empty stomach. So, I lay awake and summed up my day:

I got up, looked at my kingdom and subjects, scouted for food, scared away my food, made some tourists happy and remained very, very hungry.



What has the world come to? Just a few years ago, if I failed in one of my hunting expeditions, I would have had a hundred chances to win my food back. If thirsty, I could have eaten a mouthful of snow. Now, there was no snow to eat, no food to eat, no prey to hunt, or friends to hang out with, and no family to support.

I figured that I shouldn't have helped those tourists. After all, it is they who ruined this place, they who left us helpless, they who left me hungry and they who left me alone.

Key Facts

Common Name: Snow leopard

Scientific Name: *Panthera uncia*

Geographic Habitat: Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh

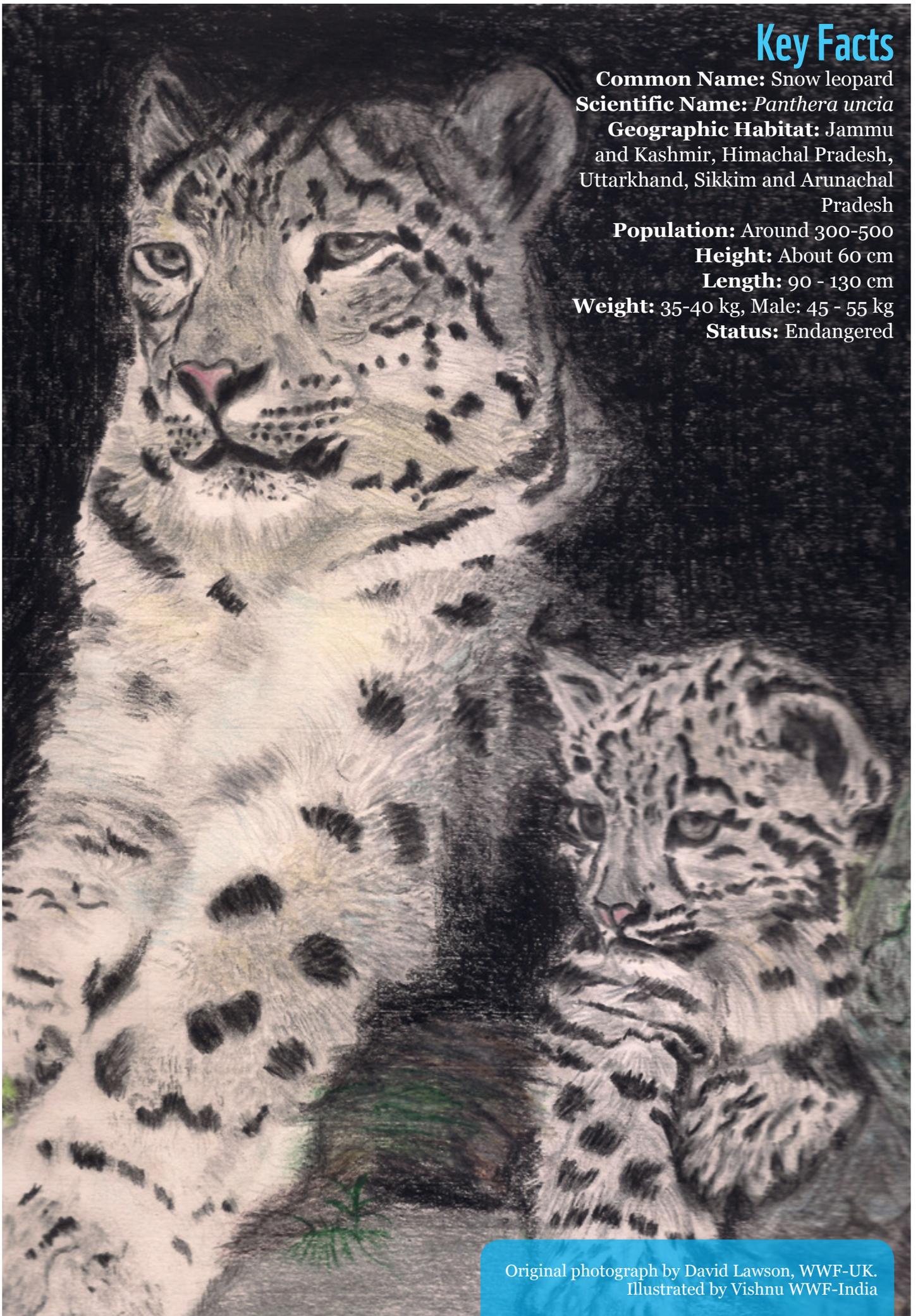
Population: Around 300-500

Height: About 60 cm

Length: 90 - 130 cm

Weight: 35-40 kg, Male: 45 - 55 kg

Status: Endangered



Original photograph by David Lawson, WWF-UK.
Illustrated by Vishnu WWF-India

DON'T LET ME FADE AWAY....

By: Pratishtha Sharma

Class: VIII

School: DPS,
Greater Noida

I'm a leopard—considered one of the fastest animals on this planet. I live in the jungle. Or at least I used to...

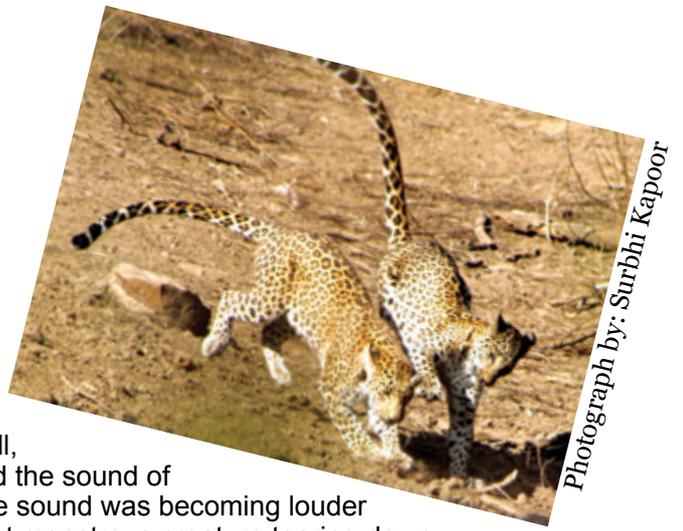
One day, while savouring our kill, my friends and I suddenly heard the sound of something big approaching. The sound was becoming louder and louder and then we saw that monstrous creature tearing down everything in its path. Upon it, sat seven armed men. We knew we were no match for them, for they could kill us with just one gunshot each. But it is not in a leopard's nature to back away from a fight especially when it comes to protecting its prowl. If I was going to be killed today, I was going to go down fighting.

I leaped on them, bringing one of them down with my weight. One of them shot at me. Of course I am not a superhero who does not get hurt when shot. This made me angry and I thought: "How dare this puny human shoot at me?" I growled with all my might and advanced towards him. I killed him with one blow. Two down, now only five were left. Everything was going fine, but then all of a sudden I realized that they had killed two members of my prowl. I became angrier. No one, and I mean no one, hurts my friends. I wanted to take revenge. They all surrounded me and started firing at my legs. Even after being shot three or four times, I didn't give up. It was only when a bullet pierced my chest that I fell. Blood was flowing very quickly and I was losing consciousness. Everything faded into oblivion.

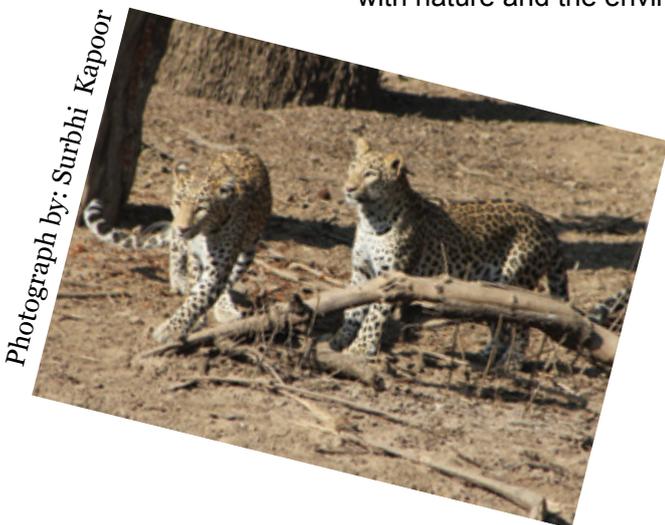
I woke up after what I think was five to six hours. I found myself lying chained in a cage. I saw them talking about what price they would get for my hide. I tried to escape the cage, but to no avail.

They will kill me soon. I hope it won't be very painful. I hope that I will be remembered as a hero. I hope that my people don't suffer a fate like mine.

Good bye, folks—hope you all learn from me and stop poaching and hunting animals. Stop disturbing nature or a day will dawn when you won't be able to see the Almighty's wondrous creations. Live in harmony with nature and the environment!



Photograph by: Surbhi Kapoor



Photograph by: Surbhi Kapoor

The leopard (*Panthera pardus*) is a carnivorous mammal that is poached extensively for its beautiful, spotted coat. It is listed as Near Threatened in the IUCN Red List because its declining numbers are due to habitat loss and hunting for trade.



CAT TALK

Uttara Nanda
Class: X
School: Sprindales School,
New Delhi

Captured

By: Pallavi Rawla

Class: VIII

School: Delhi Public
School, Greater Noida

From blue bulls to alligators, 14 year old Dhruv Wadkar has seen more wilderness than your average teenager. This budding wildlife photographer is passionate about conserving nature and believes that photography is crucial in bringing about awareness. Our student editor, Pallavi Rawla speaks to Dhruv and brings you the story of this young conservationist.

Once while taking photographs near a well, this young photographer saw a stunning paradise flycatcher swoop down. The beautiful bird had made a nest but surrounding it was nothing but garbage and litter. Dhruv was horrified by the sight and the entire incident boosted his growing passion to conserve wildlife. He feels that littering and destroying natural habitats is an extremely bad habit. He follows the belief that it is important to at the least try our best to save these creatures.

“I believe that it is important to, at the least, try our best to save our fellow creatures.”

Dhruv looks up to his uncle who took him to his first wildlife park and also handed him his first camera. Now, he is his uncle's pseudo- apprentice.

When asked how he envisions himself 20 years from now, he replied that at the current point in his life he was quite unsure of the future. However, he was certain that photography would always be a part of him. Being a photographer isn't a dream to him, it is a reality.

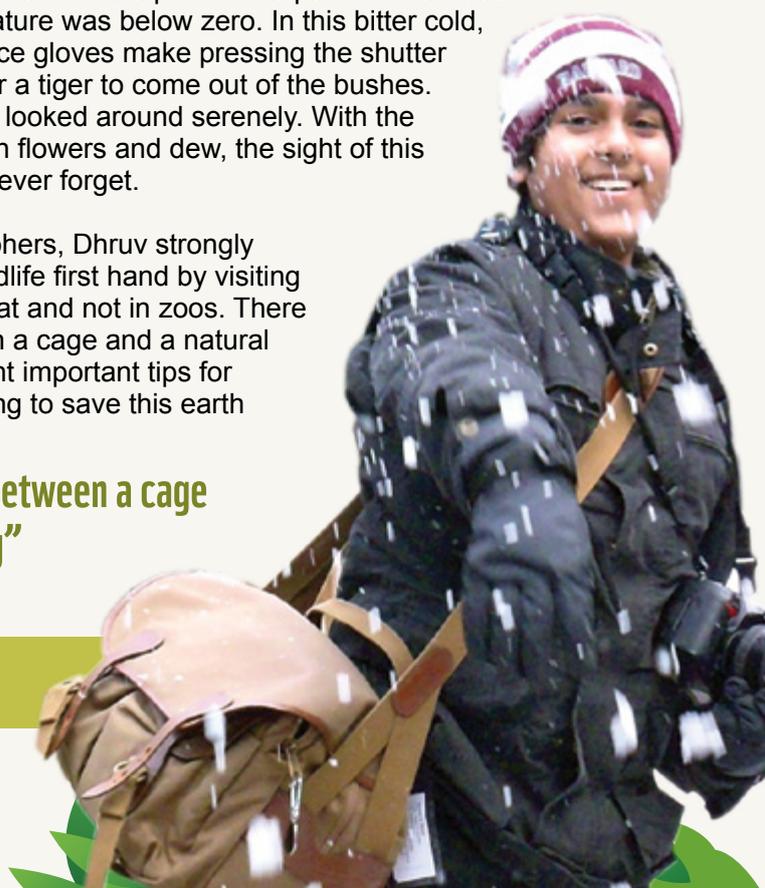
“Photography isn't a dream for me, it is a reality” His most memorable experience of all time occurred while he visited his fifth

wildlife park. At this time, Dhruv was going to move to Shanghai and was really going to miss the Indian wildlife parks. The park was Corbett National Park and the temperature was below zero. In this bitter cold, Dhruv was without gloves (since gloves make pressing the shutter impossible) while he waited for a tiger to come out of the bushes. When the tiger did come out it looked around serenely. With the backdrop of the bush filled with flowers and dew, the sight of this tiger is something Dhruv will never forget.

To all other aspiring photographers, Dhruv strongly recommends experiencing wildlife first hand by visiting creatures in their natural habitat and not in zoos. There is no real comparison between a cage and a natural setting. He has also given eight important tips for everyone out there who is trying to save this earth one photograph at a time!

“There is no comparison between a cage and a natural setting”

Dhruv Wadkar





Dhruv's eight edicts for Wildlife Photography:

1. Always be prepared; a good shot might await you anytime.
2. Bring your own supplies; don't depend on anyone.
3. Don't throw anything out; it litters the park.
4. Drink plenty of water. This is very important because you wouldn't want to feel faint in the middle of a wildlife park!
5. Bring company on photography expeditions. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, there is no entertainment available either in or outside the park. Secondly, it is good to have someone with you while in the park because there is a risk of being attacked by an animal.
6. Make sure your batteries are always charged.
7. Keep an eye on all your belongings. Monkeys are notorious thieves!
8. Have a laptop to save the pictures.





WWF

Green Calendar

October

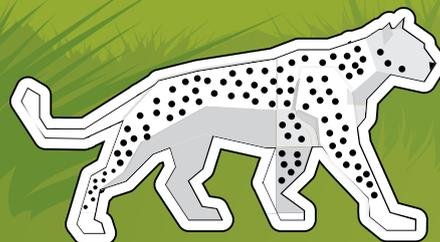
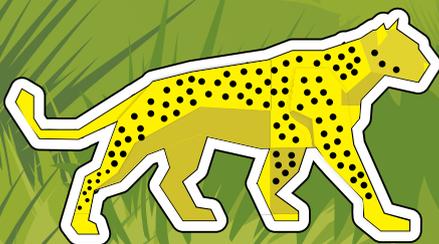
- 1st-7th World Wildlife Week
- 4th World Animal Day/ (4th) World Habitat Day
- 5th National Dolphin Conservation Day

November

- 1st World Ecology Day
- 14th Children's Day
- 17th International Student Day
- 21st World Fisheries Day

December

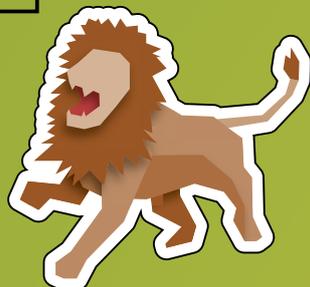
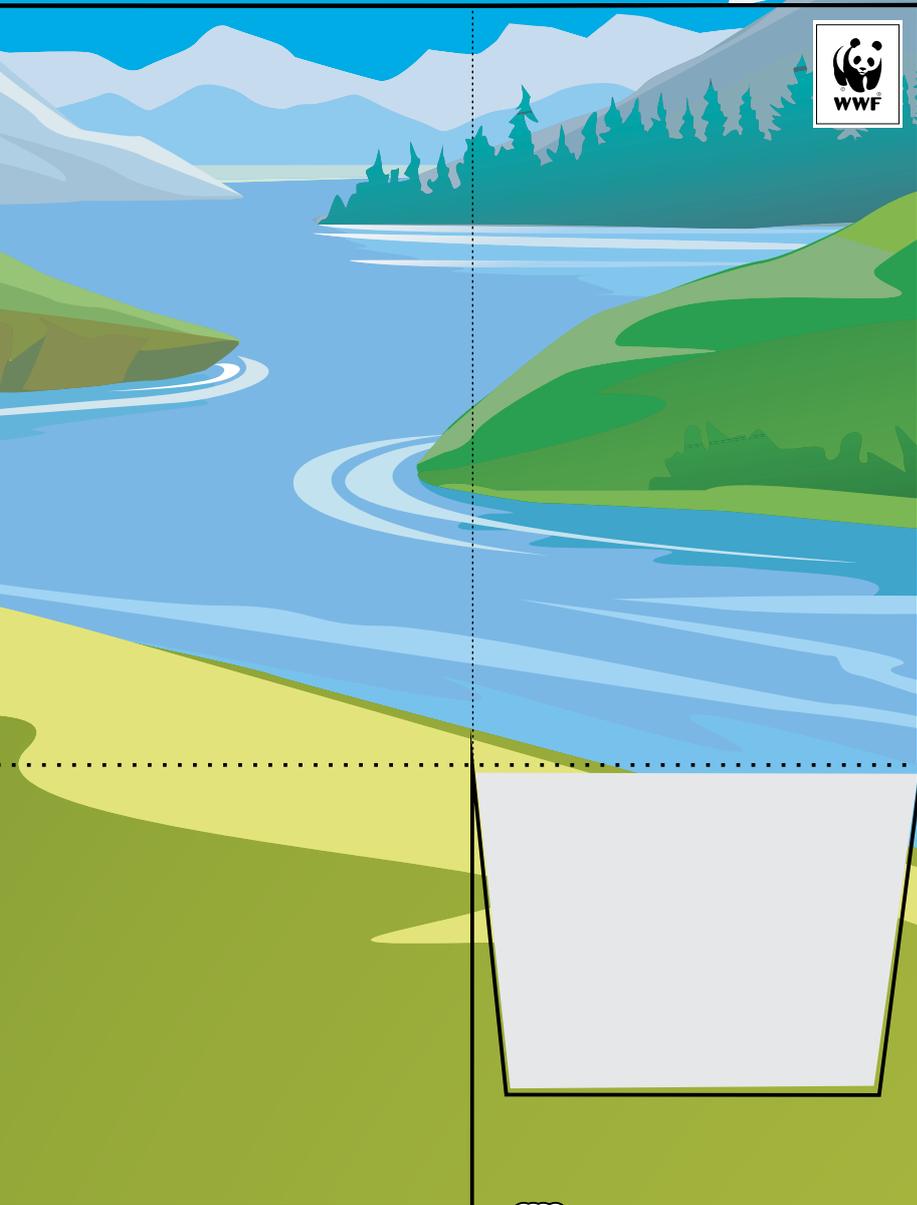
- 1st Ocean Care Day
- 10th International Animal Rights Day
- 11th International Mountain Day



Instructions for making a pen stand

-  Cut along the solid line
-  Fold along the dotted line
-  Paste the grey area
-  Cut the animals and paste it on the pen stand

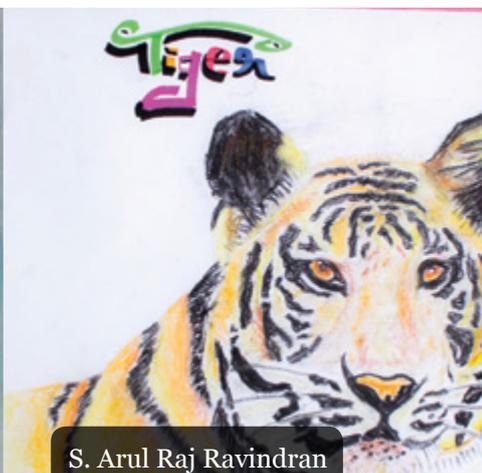
Note: you can stick it on cardboard to make it strong



100%
RECYCLED



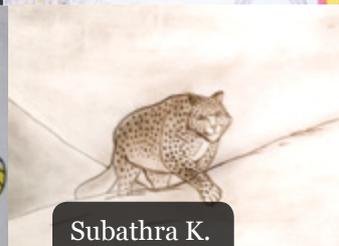
Ahvi Goel



S. Arul Raj Ravindran



Esaan Ghose



Subathra K.



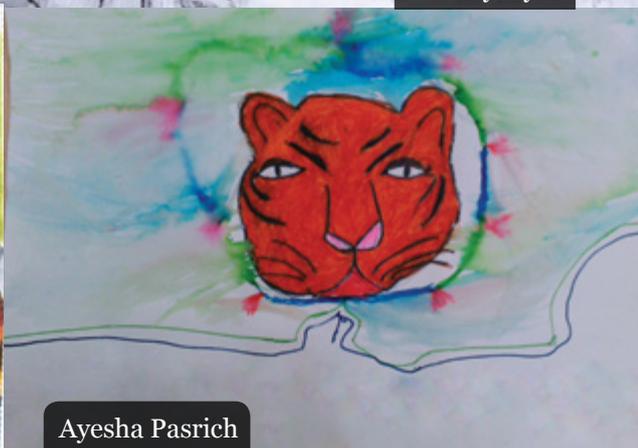
V. Vedha Valli



A. Vayshya



Ravia Ohri



Ayesha Pasrich



Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

www.wfindia.org

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