

Rajaji National Park

February 4, 2021

A brief note on Rajaji National Park

- The Rajaji National Park & Tiger reserve spans over an area of 820sq. Km which includes Rajaji, Motichur and Chilla wildlife sanctuaries, parts of Dehradun, Shivalik and Lansdowne Forest Divisions.
- These three sanctuaries were amalgamated in 1983 to Rajaji National Park, named after the Late Rajagopalachari Rajaji National Park is situated along the hills and foothills of Shivalik ranges in the Himalayan foothills and represent the Shivalik ecosystem.
- Combining three sanctuaries, namely Chilla, Motichur and Rajaji – Rajaji National Park is spread over the Pauri Garhwal, Dehradun and Saharanpur districts of Uttarakhand.
- The Motichur and Rajaji sanctuaries are contiguous, and are separated from the Chilla Sanctuary to the south-east by the Ganges River and the Chilla River.

Forest type:

- The area is covered with diverse forest types ranging from semi-evergreen to deciduous and from mixed broad-leaved to terai grassland and has been classified as Indus-Ganges Monsoon Forest type.
- Rajaji is thickly foliated predominantly by the **Sal Forest** and a number of other forest types which include the **Western Gangetic Moist and Northern dry Deciduous** and **Khair-Sissoo forests**.
- **Low Alluvial Savannah Woodlands** cover the drier southern margins of the park, in contrast to the Shivalik Chir-Pine on the high reaches of the hills.

Fauna:

- The park is home to the Cheetal, Barking deer, Sambar deer, Wild Boar, antelopes such as the Nilgai, Goral and of course the Asian Elephant for which this park is the Northern and Western most boundary protecting it under Project Elephant
- The primates include the Rhesus Macaque and the Hanuman Langur.
- The Indian Hare and the Indian Porcupine are among some of the small mammals found in the park.
- The park houses over four hundred bird species. The Oriental Pied Hornbill, Crested Kingfisher and Crimson sunbird are some of the residents of our retreat.
- It also protects carnivores such as the Royal Bengal Tiger under Project Tiger and the Leopard and the lesser carnivores like the Jackal, Hyena, Jungle Cat, Leopard Cat, Civets, Himalayan Yellow-Throated Marten Himalayan Black and Sloth Bears.

Tiger reserve status

- The Union government has given the nod to a proposal to grant the Rajaji National Park in Uttarakhand the status of a tiger reserve in 2015.
- It is the second tiger reserve in the state after the Corbett Tiger Reserve and 48th Tiger Reserve of India.
- The Rajaji National Park is the core area of the Rajaji Tiger Reserve, while about 300 km². of Shyampur range of the Haridwar forest division and parts of Kotdwar and Laldhang forest division, which function as a buffer zone, will also be included in the Tiger Project, augmented area to 1150 km².

Project Elephant

- Project Elephant was launched in 1992 by the Government of India Ministry of Environment and Forests to provide financial and technical support to wildlife management efforts by states for their free-ranging populations of

wild Asian Elephants.

- The project aims to ensure the long-term survival to the populations of elephants in their natural habitats by protecting the elephants, their habitats and migration corridors.
- Other goals of Project Elephant are supporting the research of the ecology and management of elephants, creating awareness of conservation among local people, providing improved veterinary care for captive elephants

Project Tiger

- Project Tiger is a tiger conservation programme launched in April 1973 by the Government of India during Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's tenure.
- As the Bengal Tiger is the national animal of India, this project aims to stem the dwindling population of the big cats and work to increase their numbers.

The project aims at ensuring a viable population of Bengal tigers in their natural habitats, protecting them from extinction, and preserving areas of biological importance as a natural heritage forever represented as close as possible the diversity of ecosystems across the distribution of tigers in the country.