

Project Update: April 2013

Day 1 (5/10/13)

After two more days of discussing about logistics with the Chitwan Project Chief at National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC) and with the Assistant Conservation Officer of Chitwan National Park, I began the first day of my field work early morning yesterday. I was accompanied by a Senior Game Scout who had garnered expertise in wildlife tracking while working at the park office. We left Sauraha together on a DNPWC elephant steered by its mahout. We covered the eastern area of Sauraha, which includes Icharni and Padampur. We crossed the Rapti River to move from Icharni to Padampur and back. We were able to find numerous rhino tracks, even one where a mother and its calf was walking together. However, we were able to find only one tiger footprint. In total, I collected nine different trails: eight rhino trails and one of tiger.

Day 2 (5/11/13)

I had the same crew today. We left an hour early this morning so that we could start right at the brink of dawn. We covered the eastern part of Sauraha again but today we went towards the outskirts of Icharni and Padampur grasslands. We travelled along the far lands which is located south of Padampur. This area is between the grasslands and the Churia hills. We were able to find a few tiger trails. Altogether four different tiger trails were captured. Although we saw several rhino tracks, none were suitable to be photographed for data analysis later on.



Left: Senior Game Scout, Ishwari Mahato, placing a photo ID slip between the footprint and the scale. Right: A rhino footprint.



Left: A tiger footprint in the mud. Right: Our mahout, Ratan Lal and elephant, Sundar Mala.