

## Project Update: June 2018

The breeding season for 2018 is over with all the laid nests successfully hatching.

We had used IR camera traps for monitoring the nesting and hatching stages for data on number of nests laid, predation and hatching mortality. We monitored three nesting sites with the cameras. The nesting activities were communal and up to seven females were recorded either digging trial nests or laying eggs at one time. Still we were able to locate up to 80% of laid nest based on camera trap images and videos.

It proved helpful to record the individual nest's incubation period, average time spent on egg laying as well as the competition among gharial mothers as well as with mugger crocodile.

No predation was found on the nests before hatching. However we observed monitor lizards and crows feeding on egg shells, remnant egg membranes and both dead and live hatchlings.

Based on the current results, we were able to provide valuable information to the forest department and initiated a dialogue on how to monitor the breeding cycle and predation for the nest season i.e. 2019 using better techniques.



Mother gharial opening their nest to assist in egg hatching.



Mugger crocodile on gharial nesting site.



Two female gharials fence using their snout while protecting their nesting spaces.



Crow feeding on a dead hatchling.