The Wildlife Watch Binocular

PO Box 562, New Paltz, NY 12561 FALL-WINTER 2025/26

DEAR WILDLIFE WATCH AND C.A.S.H. MEMBERS,

We hope you can join us for our ***2025 Annual Meeting by Zoom*** *on* ***Wednesday, December 17, 2025, at 3 pm EST.***

If you plan to join, kindly RSVP to **wildwatch@verizon.net** and please put "Annual Meeting" in the subject line. We will send you a live link prior to the meeting.

Some highlights are below:

- Discussion of certain articles in ***the Wildlife Watch Binocular*** and ***C.A.S.H. Courier*** which serve to educate the public about the heavy hand of wildlife management. The Fall-Winter issue should be in your mailbox soon!
- Review of certain calls that came in to the Wildlife Watch Hotline and its value to individual wild animals and the humane public.
- Reports by the Wildlife Watch Board of Directors.

Open for discussion/questions/ suggestions and hearing all that you would like to share. We tremendously value your support and your compassion for wildlife.

THANK YOU FOR BEING HUMANE!!

For the wildlife,

Anne & Jim

Anne Muller, *Pres., Wildlife Watch* and **Jim Robertson,** *Pres. Committee to Abolish Sport Hunting*

DONATE NOW

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION GETS A TECHNOLOGY BOOST

by Bindu Gopal Rao

Protecting wildlife is getting a tech boost that overcomes the challenges of terrain, weather, and limited manpower to study, protect, monitor, and plan strategic conservation goals.

India's wilderness is learning to speak a new language, one written in signals, sensors, and silent data.

Making a Difference

Technology is being extensively used in wildlife conservation in India through diverse and innovative tools such as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), GPS tracking collars, camera traps, AI, and geospatial technologies. These technologies enable efficient monitoring, protection, and management of wildlife and their habitats. India's wildlife conservation efforts leverage a synergistic integration of technologies to enhance wildlife monitoring, combat poaching, and manage habitats more efficiently, thus contributing to the preservation of its rich biodiversity. **The Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) has also developed** HAWK (Hostile Activity Watch Kernel)**, a cloud-based, centralized forest and wildlife crime management system, which is currently adopted by four government Forest Departments.**

(Continued on Page 3.)

THE HAWK TEAM: From (L) to (R)_ Shri. D. Jayaprasad IFS, PCCF (Wildlife) & CWLW, Kerala Forest Department, Shri. Ganga Singh IFS, CCF (HoFF), Shri. K R Jyothi | Photo courtesy of the Wildlife Trust of India (WTI)

SPIKES HURT PIGEONS

At the end of July, Wildlife Watch was contacted by two young American music students who were studying in Italy for the summer. They were shocked by the spikes that were placed above doorways to keep pigeons from landing. This one pigeon became impaled on the spikes and was left to die. They had a performance to give the following evening, and yet they spent the entire day reaching out to help the suffering pigeon who was in full view above an entry to the building. Not having lists of wildlife rehabbers in Italy, we contacted a friend who was fluent in Italian so she could talk to the management of the building. Though we didn't hear what ultimately happened, we are certain that with their perseverance, they were able to get help for the pigeon.

Despite their sometimes negative reputation, pigeons are another animal trying to survive during a difficult time for wildlife. **At least they deserve to be treated humanely and receive care when needed.**

This link shows how pigeons are impacted by just walking around in urban environments: *The Parisian woman protecting pigeons' toes.*

HUNTING IS BLATANT ANIMAL CRUELTY

A call came to the Wildlife Watch hotline from a woman in Ulster County, NY, who said that she saw a deer with an arrow in him. The unfortunate deer was outside her house in the Village of New Paltz, a densely packed university town. She reported that the arrow had a green glow at the end, and "yes," she was fortunately able to get a photo.

We don't know where he was shot, but he was found on the first day of firearms hunting. **A check revealed that crossbows can be used during the regular firearms season.** dec.ny.gov/sites/default/files/2025-08/crossbowqanda.pdf *(See the third question.)*

We gave the caller the number of a deer rehabilitator and a veterinarian who is also a wildlife rehabilitator.

The deer rehabilitator told her that there were regulations preventing her from helping adult deer; we are waiting to hear from the veterinarian.

Wildlife Watch caller sent this heartbreaking photo.

Indian Wildlife Tech *(Continued from Page 1.)*

Drone capturing a wild elephant herd in Keonjhar, Odisha | Photo © Wildlife Trust of India (WTI)

GPS tracking collars, drones, and GIS/satellite imagery are being used in the forests and wildlife corridors for monitoring animal movements and habitats. GPS tracking collars are regularly used to monitor the movements of all sorts of wildlife. Either for ecology studies or tracking potentially problematic individuals—tigers or elephants in particular—integrating GPS collar signals with GIS-integrated layer maps to understand migration patterns, home ranges, land use, and vulnerable areas that animals may be moving to improve management of wildlife and protected areas. **Thermal camera-equipped drones are used to monitor fires and human and wildlife movement in dense cover, track specific species like rhinos or elephants in flood-affected or hard-to-access country, do corridor mapping, do anti-poaching, and check on fires.** They are used as they can cover much larger areas quickly to get real-time information on water holes, habitats, fences, and wildlife, especially in open country like grasslands or trans-Himalayan desert landscapes. Many projects combine multiple technologies—drones with thermal sensors & cameras, GPS, camera traps, and alert systems—connecting these with ground teams, especially regarding poaching and wildfires.

Conservation Cues

Across Central India, **GPS collars on tigers and leopards have revealed how they move between forest patches and community lands, crossing rivers, roads, and railway lines under the cover of night. This has helped conservation planners identify corridors that might otherwise have been lost to human expansion.** Thermal drones are now used to monitor and reduce conflict by spotting elephants or tigers near village fringes during night patrols, allowing staff to respond before any damage or panic occurs. Similar drone-based monitoring has also been extended to wolves. **Technology listens as much as it sees:** Acoustic monitoring devices, small mouthpiece-style detectors, record ultrasonic calls of bats, allowing scientists to identify species purely through sound frequencies. **"It's a remarkable way of mapping hidden diversity, especially in rainforest canopies."** says **Amith Bangre,** an award-winning naturalist, conservationist, and wildlife educator. **Together, these innovations have made conservation less about guesswork and more about understanding, giving us new ways to protect old wisdom.**

Drone for Protected Area Monitoring | Photo © Wildlife Trust of India (WTI)

Tracking a sloth bear to study ecology and behaviour. | Photo © Wildlife SOS.

In 2022, to better understand the ecology and behavior of sloth bears (Melursus ursinus), **Wildlife SOS,** in collaboration with the Karnataka Forest Department, collared ten sloth bears in three districts. **The long-term study monitors how these bears navigate fragmented forests and agricultural landscapes, collecting detailed data on movement, habitat use, and interactions with human-populated areas.** Kartick Satyanarayan, co-founder and CEO of Wildlife SOS, says, "In 2023, in Sonmarg, Jammu & Kashmir, six Himalayan brown bears (Ursus arctos isabellinus) were fitted with GPS collars to study their movement across alpine terrain and proximity to human settlements. Preliminary findings highlighted brown bears frequently visiting garbage dumps in human-adjacent areas, guiding conservation planning and conflict mitigation. In 2018, in Mahasamund, Chhattisgarh, GPS-enabled collars tracked Van Devi, the matriarch of a 21-member elephant herd, forming the backbone of the Early Warning Alert System (EWAS). The system helped prevent human–elephant conflict by sending alerts to nearby villages as the herd moves through croplands and human habitations." **Across all initiatives, GPS technology provides fine-scale spatial and temporal data essential for identifying conflict hotspots, critical corridors, feeding grounds, and seasonal migration routes, enabling targeted conservation measures and safe coexistence between wildlife and local communities.**

GIS and Satellite Imagery

These layers reveal how the land changes over time: grasslands, forest cover, and river courses. Satellite mapping has guided the restoration of grasslands for swamp deer recovery. In the Anamalai–Parambikulam region, GIS mapping identified elephant corridors through plantations, helping direct mitigation measures. **Dr. Sandeep Kumar Soni, Assistant Manager and OiC (GIS Cell), Wildlife Trust of India, says, "GIS mapping technology plays a crucial role in wildlife conservation by providing powerful tools for habitat mapping, protecting habitat suitability, distribution modelling, species tracking and movement behavior, risk analysis, and conservation planning. Through spatial data integration and analysis, GIS empowers conservationists to make informed, precise decisions to protect wildlife and habitats and plan interventions on a scientific basis."**

GIS is the memory of the landscape; it layers the past and present into a single living map. GIS mapping has shown how fire patterns and vegetation cycles shift with changing rainfall. In Kanha, it guides habitat restoration, marking zones for controlled burning or grassland regeneration. **"And in the Western Ghats, GIS has traced elephant and gaur movement through fragmented tea and cardamom estates, influencing how buffer zones are planned. In simple terms, GIS helps us see what fieldwork alone cannot do—how land, water, and wildlife interact across time and space," says Bangre.** Geospatial and remote sensing platforms enable near real-time monitoring and analysis. These tools allow large-scale, high-frequency data collection, assessment of environmental changes (like deforestation and wildfires), and the early detection of risks for timely mitigation. "GIS analysis identifies spatial patterns, tracks pollution, measures event impacts, and produces maps that support policymaking, collaboration, and public communication. Such data-driven geospatial analysis has become a backbone for modern conservation decision-making and resource management. Over the years, WTI has utilized geospatial tools for markhor and

One of the rescued tortoises. | Photo © Wildlife SOS

wild buffalo habitat suitability modelling, as well as thematic mapping across six forest divisions in Odisha to support forest management planning," adds Soni.

In Ramdurga Valley, Karnataka, radio telemetry was used to track 12 repatriated Indian star tortoises released into the wild. The transmitters emit short-range radio signals, which means researchers must physically enter the habitat with specialized receivers to detect each tortoise's location. "While telemetry provides signals that allow researchers to plot movements over time, field teams still need to walk through the habitat to pick up these signals, locate each tortoise, and record observations. By tracking their positions over several weeks or months, researchers can identify preferred microhabitats, feeding zones, and dispersal ranges—valuable data that helps assess the success of reintroduction programs and refine future release protocols," says Dr. A Sha Arun, Director of Research and Veterinary Operations, Wildlife SOS.

The Eye of the Camera

Across India, over 26,000 camera traps now record millions of images each year, identifying individual tigers, leopards, and other species. The data has made India's tiger census one of the most scientifically robust in the world.

GPS data from collared tigers and leopards have directly shaped corridor conservation projects. Thermal drones have reduced human–wildlife conflict incidents by providing early warnings, especially during crop seasons and flood periods. "In Central India, GPS-enabled safari vehicles regulate speed and route adherence, ensuring low disturbance to wildlife. These systems also record sightings and tourist movement patterns, allowing authorities to plan future tourism zones more sustainably. GIS and satellite mapping have helped identify areas most prone to fire or illegal grazing, allowing targeted protection and better resource allocation, making patrolling more efficient and strategic," says Bangre. GPS tracking collars, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and GIS/satellite imagery are advanced technologies used for monitoring animal movements and their habitats, each serving specific functions in wildlife research and conservation. "Together, these technologies provide conservationists with powerful, complementary methods to collect, integrate, and analyze spatial and behavioral data, driving data-driven conservation efforts and more precise wildlife protection strategies," says Soni of the Wildlife Trust of India.

Human Connection

Technology has undeniably changed conservation, but it works best when paired with field intuition and local knowledge. A ranger's instincts, a villager's warning about elephant movement, or the naturalist's quiet observation are still irreplaceable. GPS helps track where we go; empathy helps decide why we go there. In many ways, the future of conservation in India lies in merging the two—letting technology serve intuition and allowing data to reflect care. The forest doesn't need us to outsmart it, only to understand it more deeply, with every tool at our disposal.

Bindu Gopal Rao *is a freelance writer and photographer from Bengaluu. She enjoys birdwatching and environment, as well as taking the offbeat path when traveling. You can follow her on Instagram @bindugopalrao and find her work onbindugopalrao.com*

Kashmir Markhor struggling in rough terrain.|Photo courtesy of Wildlife Trust of India (WTI)

R.O.C.K. - Rehabbers Offer Care and Kindness

The Wildlife Watch Hotline - 877-WILDHELP receives hundreds of calls every year from across the country, and a few from Canada. Police departments, conservation agencies, SPCAs, veterinary offices, and federal, state, and municipal offices have referred callers to Wildlife Watch for help. **Your contribution to Wildlife Watch will help us to expand our volunteer service by allowing us to cover phones 24/7 and update our lists as new wildlife rehabilitators come on the scene.**

DONATE NOW

A REHABILITATION CENTER TO KNOW ABOUT

D.A.W.G: *Detroit Animal Welfare Group*

Kelly LaBonty, *Ph.D., Director*

We are a large wildlife rehab rehabilitation center in Michigan that includes the rehabilitation of Whitetail fawns. The Michigan DNR requires they be released by October 1 and if they are not ready to be released, then they have to be euthanized. The picture of the fawn you saw is a fawn that we had in 2020 and the DNR ordered that the three of them be euthanized because they were too young to be released. They were born late in the year. We went to court to fight them over the euthanasia order For Healthy fawns, and by the time the judge ruled, we had already rehabilitated and released them. We frequently have issues with the DNR in Michigan ordering to kill Fawns. We just had another one that was non-releasable this year and we transferred it to a facility that can keep fawns for education and the DNR ordered it to be euthanized. There was a public outcry and we had legislators involved and thankfully the fawn's life was saved.

Contact D.A.W.G.

Tel: 586-354-8500
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Follow us on Facebook for more information.

Against all odds, a happy ending for this little one. | Photo © D.A.W.G.

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Anne Muller, *Editor*

We welcome letters/articles/
photos for consideration.

Contributions are
tax-deductible.

WILDLIFE WATCH NEEDS YOU!

Wildlife Watch needs your help more than ever to continue providing our vital wildlife hotline service to the public. We receive calls from across the country, and occasionally from Canada, from people needing help with injured and orphaned wildlife. Our easy to remember number **877WILDHELP** is recommended by veterinary offices, SPCAs, and law enforcement agencies. Additionally, we publish the **Wildlife Watch Binocular** to inform the public about environmental impacts on wild animals, to highlight people who help them, to promote wildlife watching, and to engender understanding that all animals are individuals deserving of kinder treatment.

Will you help our work? YES
wildwatch.org/join/contrib

LET'S GO WILDLIFE WATCHING

AT THE HOLBROOK ISLAND SANCTUARY ON CAPE ROSIER, MAINE

By Joseph Anderson

Photo by Hongbin on Unsplash

If you have ever been to Maine, you probably already know that it is one of the wildest frontiers left in the United States. Once you pass the southern Maine coast and Portland, Maine, you'll encounter huge areas of vast wilderness, with few towns and roads. The coast certainly has more human activity, but due to the sheer amount of shoreline, much of it is still undeveloped, and left to those who respect it the most - the wildlife!

Holbrook Island Sanctuary is situated on Cape Rosier, just north of Deer Isle, and not far from Acadia National Park. While the animals and habitats have a lot in common with those you'll see in Acadia, you will appreciate that many fewer people are exploring the smaller Holbrook Sanctuary.

Despite being a relatively small sanctuary, Holbrook has a variety of places where you can spend your time searching for wildlife. Starting on Cape Rosier, there are a few trails through the pine forests which are great places to look for woodland individuals. One animal that seems to be relatively common in this area is the porcupine. The two times when I visited the sanctuary I got great looks at these spiny mammals in broad daylight.

Among the woodland trails, the Goose Falls Trail goes along the shoreline and has the best spots to step out of the trees and gaze upon the waters of the Penobscot Bay. The bay is home to a wide variety of marine animals. Loons and cormorants can be seen regularly flying over the bay, or floating on the surface between fishing dives. Also keep an eye out for sea ducks, like Eiders and Scoters, as well as soaring raptors like Bald Eagles and Osprey. This area is one of the few places on the East Coast of the United States where you have a chance to see a species of Auk from shore. Please, check closely to see if one of the birds floating in the bay is the Black Guillemot.

Besides exploring the trails on Cape Rosier, hopefully you have the chance to explore the island that gives the sanctuary its name. If you do have access to a boat, make sure to look for seals and dolphins as you cross the bay in order to get to Holbrook Island. Once on shore, you can continue to search the bay for seabirds and marine mammals. Holbrook Island is also home to white-tailed deer that can be seen browsing in the meadows. Also, make sure to look in the grass as many garter snakes inhabit the island as well.

Holbrook Island Sanctuary is a very wild place where you can escape the crowds while searching onshore and off for many different types of animals. Getting this far up into Maine gives you the opportunity to see species that are rare or not found lower down in the United States. And while these coastal peninsulas are generally not home to Maine's largest land animal - the moose - you never know when one might wander out there.

***Joe Anderson** is an avid wildlife watcher, and enjoys sharing his favorite locations with others.*

Wildlife Watch
PO Box 562,
New Paltz, NY 12561

NEED HELP FOR INJURED OR ORPHANED WILDLIFE?

CALL THE WILDLIFE WATCH HOTLINE!

1-877-WILDHEL(P)
(1-877-945-3435)

Wildlife Watch maintains current lists of wildlife rehabilitators around the country. Our hotline helps us to help hundreds of people and animals annually.

Please help us by becoming a Wildlife Watch member for $25 annually.

You can contribute by PayPal by clicking here:
wildwatch.org/contribute

Contribute by phone with a credit card. 845-256-1400

Contribute by mail: Wildlife Watch, P.O. Box 562, New Paltz, NY 12561

THE CHICKEN: *BEFORE AND AFTER*

by Barry Kent MacKay

This is a much shortened version of what you will read if you are on Barry's email list. Be sure to contact Barry MacKay, Bird Artist, Illustrator. His contact information is below.

The Red Jungle Fowl has been domesticated for thousands of years. It is widely known as the chicken. There are between about 25 and 35 billion of them, world-wide, give or take a few billion!

Sadly, the demand for their meat and eggs coupled with greed-driven desire to maximize production of both has resulted in two things: One, the grace, color and elegance of form that contribute to what I see as the beauty of the wild progenitor has, through intensively selective breeding directed at maximum profiting, resulted in a scraggly, essentially or quite flightless all-white bird. And worse, almost all are kept under ***abysmal conditions that deny them the ability to exercise natural behavior or experience the infinitely textured richness of lives led at the tip of three billion years of past evolutionary history. It's part of what motivates my own vegan diet.***

And yet, I had enjoyed the appearance and strutting behavior of the rooster in charge of a group of most contented hens living, at the moment, under the kind of idyllic conditions featured in children's books about farm animals, and so I painted my first domestic bird, a rooster.

To be placed on Barry's email list, please contact: ***Barry Kent MacKay****, Bird Artist, Illustrator, Studio: (905) 472 9731, https://fineartamerica.com/profiles/barry-mackay mimus@sympatico.ca*