



NATIONAL TIGER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY / PROJECT TIGER

Statutory Body under the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change
(Government of India)

NAMERI TIGER RESERVE

The Nameri Tiger Reserve (NTR) is situated in the northern part of the Sonitpur district of Assam, along the foothills of Arunachal Pradesh. The habitat is biologically rich and is famous for the white winged wood duck. The Nameri National Park constitutes the core of NTR, which is bound by rivers, viz. Jia-Bhoreli in the west and Bor-Dikorai in the east. The Pakke Tiger Reserve of Arunachal Pradesh is on the North and the habitat is contiguous. The reserve is one of the important conservation areas on the north bank landscape of the River Brahmaputra.

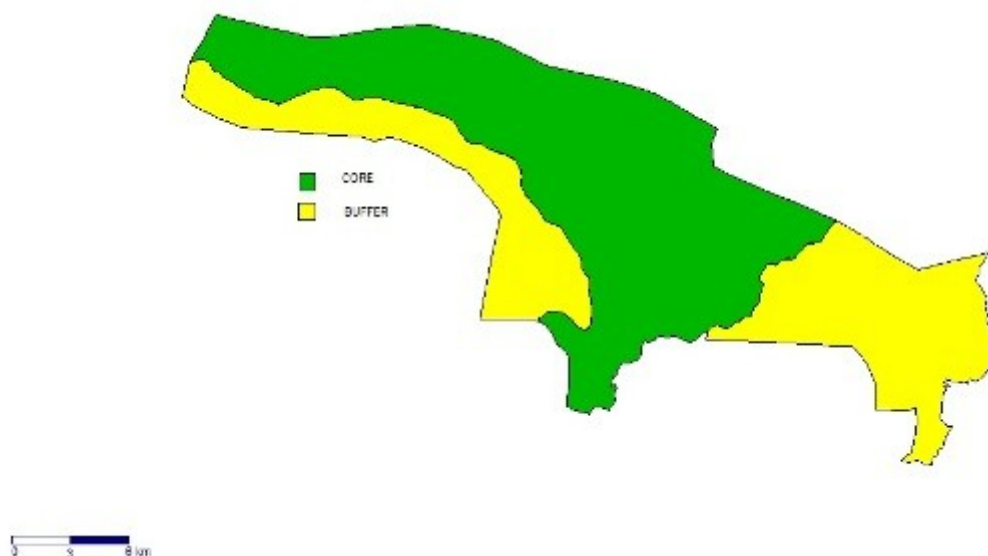
Area of the Tiger Reserve

Core/critical tiger habitat	:	200
Buffer/periphera area	:	144
Total	:	344 sq.km.

Location

Latitudes :26° 48'23"Nto27°03'43"N
Longitudes :92° 38'57"Eto93° 05'00"E

Map



Habitat Attributes

Flora:

The habitat of Nameri is made up of tropical evergreen, semi-evergreen, moist deciduous forests with cane brakes and narrow strips of open grassland along rivers. Grasslands comprise less than 10% of the total area of the park while the semi-evergreen and moist deciduous species dominate the area.

Forest types available within the reserve are: Assam Valley Tropical Evergreen Forests, Sub Himalayan Light Alluvial Semi-Ever-green Forests, Eastern Alluvial Secondary Semi Evergreen Forests, Cane Brakes, Low Alluvial Savanna Woodland, Eastern Hollock Forests, Eastern Seasonal Swamp Forests, Eastern Dillenia Swamp Forests and Eastern Wet Alluvial Grassland.

Fauna:

The tropical forests and riverine grasslands of Nameri Tiger Reserve have been acting as home to a wide variety of wildlife. The Royal Bengal tiger, the top predator of Nameri shares its habitat with leopard, clouded leopard and wild dog, whereas the mega herbivore Asian Elephant occurs in fairly good numbers within the tiger reserve. Other herbivores found in the park are the gaur, sambar, hog deer and barking deer.

The mammalian checklist of the tiger reserve includes a total of 29 species namely, sloth bear, wild boar, large Indian Civet Cat, Small Indian Civet Cat, Himalayan Crestless Porcupine, Yellow throated marten, Leopard cat, common otter, Black giant squirrel, Indian mongoose, Large clawed shrew, Indian flying fox, slow loris, Assamese macaque, Rhesus macaque and many more.

Nameri also has a varied bird diversity that includes 374 species recorded so far. Of this, eight species are globally threatened (White-winged wood Duck, Rufous-necked Hornbill, Pallash Fish Eagle, White-rumped Vulture, Slender billed Vulture, Greater Spotted Eagle, Lesser Adjutant Stork, Jerdon's Babbler) and five species are of Near Threatened category (White-cheeked Partridge, Black-bellied Tern, White-tailed Eagle, Lesser Fish Eagle and Red-headed Vulture).

River Jia-Bhoreli and other tributaries harbour a variety of species and important ones are Golden Masher, Rou, Kandhuli, Bhakua, Bato, Lasim, Ari, Borali, Xinghi, Magur, Xol, Goroi, Kawoi and Kholihiona. Amongst invertebrates, eighty species of butterflies and moths have been listed.

Tiger Status

Nameri and Pakke Tiger Reserves, by virtue of being a part of the single ecological complex spanning over a 1000 km of contiguous forest stretch, share the same tiger population.

With the introduction of Phase-IV tiger monitoring protocol by the NTCA in 2011, the NTR management has undertaken camera trap based monitoring in the core.

This monitoring exercise has conclusively proved the use of almost all of the 200 sqkm core area of habitat by tigers and co-predators. Results of 2011-12 and 2012-13 camera trap study indicate the a population of 8-15 tiger is thriving in this landscape.

Tiger density as estimated by spatially explicit capture-recapture models is 1.38 tigers/100 sq km. Apart from this, the monitoring program has also documented the presence of co-predators such as common leopard, clouded leopard, Dhole and several prey species including sambar, barking deer, hog deer, wild boar and gaur.

Core

The Nameri National Park which forms the core of NTR is criss crossed by different rivers/ streams. The river Jia-bhoreli on the western side of the core acts as a physical barrier and provides natural protection to the core. Another prominent feature of core is the bhabar formation with gravelly sub surface covered on top by entisols.

In terms of biotic interferences/ pressures the core is relatively free from such disturbances except for the southern and eastern fringes where varying degree of grazing pressure has been noticed in winter months.

The habitat predominantly comprises of evergreen and semi-evergreen forest areas with grassland patches along the riverine areas. However, these grasslands patches are being invaded by woodland species and invasive species like *Mikania* and *Eupatorium*. For securing the territorial integrity of the forest and protection of wildlife 20 anti-poaching camps have been set up at various strategic locations inside the core. In the recent years, due to the concerted efforts in patrolling duties a significant improvement in the protection scenario of the park has been noticed.

Buffer

NTR has a buffer area of 144 sq km of which the Eastern buffer is 80 sq km in extent comprising of Naduar Reserve Forest and the Western buffer of 64 sq km has been carved out from Balipara Reserve Forest. Apart from encroachers there are few forest villages in the Western part of the buffer. The thrust areas include protection, monitoring of wild animals, addressing human-wildlife interface conflicts, removal of encroachment and providing viable livelihood options to local people

for reducing their forest resource dependency.

Corridor

Functional corridor connectivity exists between the protected areas of the Northern and Southern bank landscape of River Brahmaputra. Camera trap evidence has highlighted tiger movement between Nameri and Kaziranga. These corridors require restoration and protection as envisaged for the buffer area.

Managerial Issues

Degradation and encroachment of buffer areas of Tiger Reserve:

Most of the forest of eastern and western buffer of NTR has been encroached by Boro tribal community. Presence of illegal settlements right next to the core is exerting pressure on the core.

Invasion of grasslands by weeds and trees:

Small patches of riverine grasslands are under various degrees of degradation due to invasive weeds like *Mikania* and *Eupatorium*. Further, these grasslands are also threatened by woodland encroachment thereby leading to the shrinkage of habitat for obligate grassland species like hog deer.

Volatile law and order situation:

The agitation by Boro tribal community for their political demand of a separate state has created an atmosphere of uncertainty with negative impacts on park management. Free availability of sophisticated firearms and the illegal activities like abduction, killings by certain insurgent groups has further aggravated the law and order situation around the tiger reserve.

Poaching of prey base:

NTR is situated in the tribal belt of the district and poaching of the herbivore by local tribes continues to be one of the most important threats faced by the tiger reserve.

Manifold increase in population of forest villages: Over the years the population of forest villages has multiplied several times leading to the encroachment of adjoining reserve forest land. This ever-increasing population is also exerting tremendous pressure on the natural resources of the tiger reserve.

Inadequate infrastructure and shortage of manpower:

The buffer areas of NTR do not have any presence of anti-poaching camps or the sufficient staff for controlling the illegal activities of unscrupulous elements.

Irregular and inadequate funding support.

A greater share of the funding is contributed by the Central government through centrally sponsored schemes such as Project Tiger. However, even the release of this meager fund is irregular and mostly released quite late in the financial year.

Good Practices

1. NTR is one of the first tiger reserves of the country to implement the Phase -IV monitoring of tigers, co-predators and their prey base by solely relying on in-house expertise of the park management and without involving any external agencies/NGOs.
2. Use of free software for designing and implementation of phase IV tiger monitoring exercise coupled with self reliance achieved in monitoring has significantly reduced the cost of tiger monitoring program in NTR.
3. Skills and experience gained in camera trap based monitoring of tigers / co-predators is freely shared with other tiger reserves of the country.