



drishti

Black Panther Spotted in Navegaon-Nagzira Tiger Reserve

 drishtias.com/printpdf/black-panther-spotted-in-navegaon-nagzira-tiger-reserve

Why in News

Recently, a rare **Melanistic Leopard** (commonly known as **Black Panther**) has been recorded in **Navegaon-Nagzira Tiger Reserve** (NNTR) of **Maharashtra**.

Key Points

- **Melanistic Leopard/Black Panther:**



- **About:**

- **Leopards (*Panthera Pardus*)** are either light colored (pale yellow to deep gold or tawny) with black rosettes or with black fur.
- The **melanistic leopards, which are either all-black or very dark in coloration**, are known as black panthers. It is a **color variant of spotted Indian leopards**, reported from densely **forested areas of south India**.
- Black coat coloration is **attributed to the expression of recessive alleles** in leopards and dominant alleles in jaguars. In each species, a certain combination of alleles stimulates the **production of large amounts of the dark pigment melanin (Melanism) in the animal's fur and skin**.

The appearance of a black coat **may be influenced by other factors, such as the angle of incident light** and the animal's life stage.

- It is as shy as a normal leopard and very **difficult to detect**.

- **Habitat:**

- They are mainly in **Southwestern China, Burma, Nepal, Southern India, Indonesia**, and the southern part of **Malaysia**.
- In India they can be spotted in the states of **Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Maharashtra etc.**

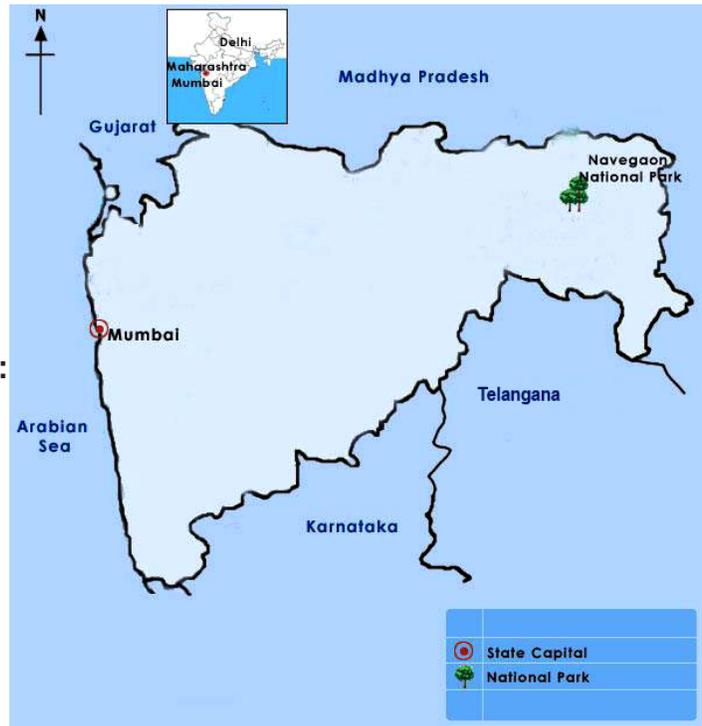
- **Threats:**

- Habitat loss.
- Collision with vehicles.
- Diseases.
- Human encroachment.
- Poaching.

- **Protection Status:**

- **IUCN Red List: Vulnerable.**
- **CITES: Appendix I.**
- **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972: Schedule I.**

- **Navegaon-Nagzira Tiger Reserve:**



- **About:**
 - It is situated in **Gondia and Bhandara districts of Maharashtra.**
 - Strategically, the **Tiger Reserve is located in the heart of central Indian Tiger landscape** which contributes almost one sixth of the total tiger population of the country.
- **Formation:**
 - It was designated as the **46th Tiger Reserve of India** in December 2013.
 - It comprises the notified area of Navegaon National Park, Navegaon Wildlife Sanctuary, Nagzira Wildlife Sanctuary, New Nagzira Wildlife Sanctuary and Koka Wildlife Sanctuary.
- **Connectivity:**
 - NNTR has connectivity with the major tiger reserves in Central India like,
 - **Kanha** and **Pench** tiger reserve in Madhya Pradesh,
 - **Tadoba-Andhari Tiger reserve** in Maharashtra,
 - Indravati Tiger Reserve in Chhattisgarh,
 - Indirectly with the **Kawal** and **Nagarjuna Sagar** in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh and, Achanakmar Tiger reserve in Chhattisgarh.
 - It is also connected to important tiger bearing areas like **Umred-Karhandla sanctuary** and Brahampuri Division (Maharashtra).
- **Flora:**
 - The major forest type is "**Southern Tropical Dry Deciduous Forest**".
 - Few thorny plants are also found and Bamboo occurs in abundance.

- **Fauna:**
 - **Carnivores** such as leopards and smaller carnivores like wild dogs, wolf jackals, jungle cats and also the good population of **sloth bears** are seen.
 - **Herbivore** includes Cheetal, Sambar, Nilgai, Chousingha, Barking deer, Wild pig, **Indian gaur** and Mouse deer.
 - More than **300 species of birds** have been reported from the area.
- **Other Protected Areas in Maharashtra:**
 - Sahyadri Tiger Reserve.
 - **Melghat Tiger reserve.**
 - Great Indian Bustard Sanctuary.
 - Karnala Bird Sanctuary.
 - Sanjay Gandhi National Park.
 - Pench National Park.

Source: IE