



# 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:**

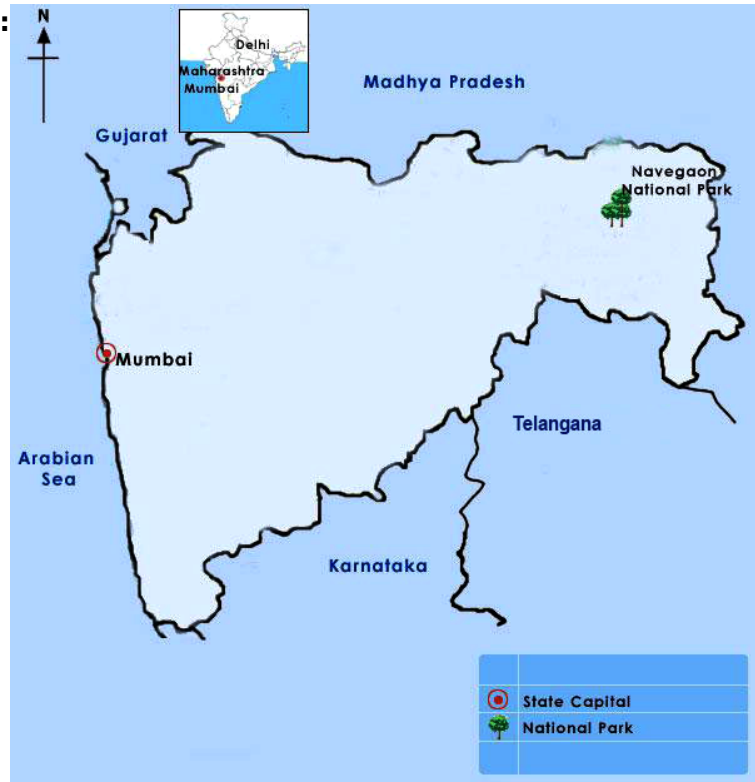
- Habitat loss.

- 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 **46<sup>th</sup> 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**

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