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Dudhwa Darling!

A dream destination!



A legend lived here, many dignitaries visit, due importance and popularity is what it deserves!

The history of Dudhwa is very unique with its amazing biodiversity and connect with the modern world! Imagine a place with a river and riverines cutting through the park, a railway line, an international border, a busy road, agricultural land all around, 100 year old trees, swamps, major town close by! It is still surviving and battling its own issues and yet providing an amazing gift to nature lovers!

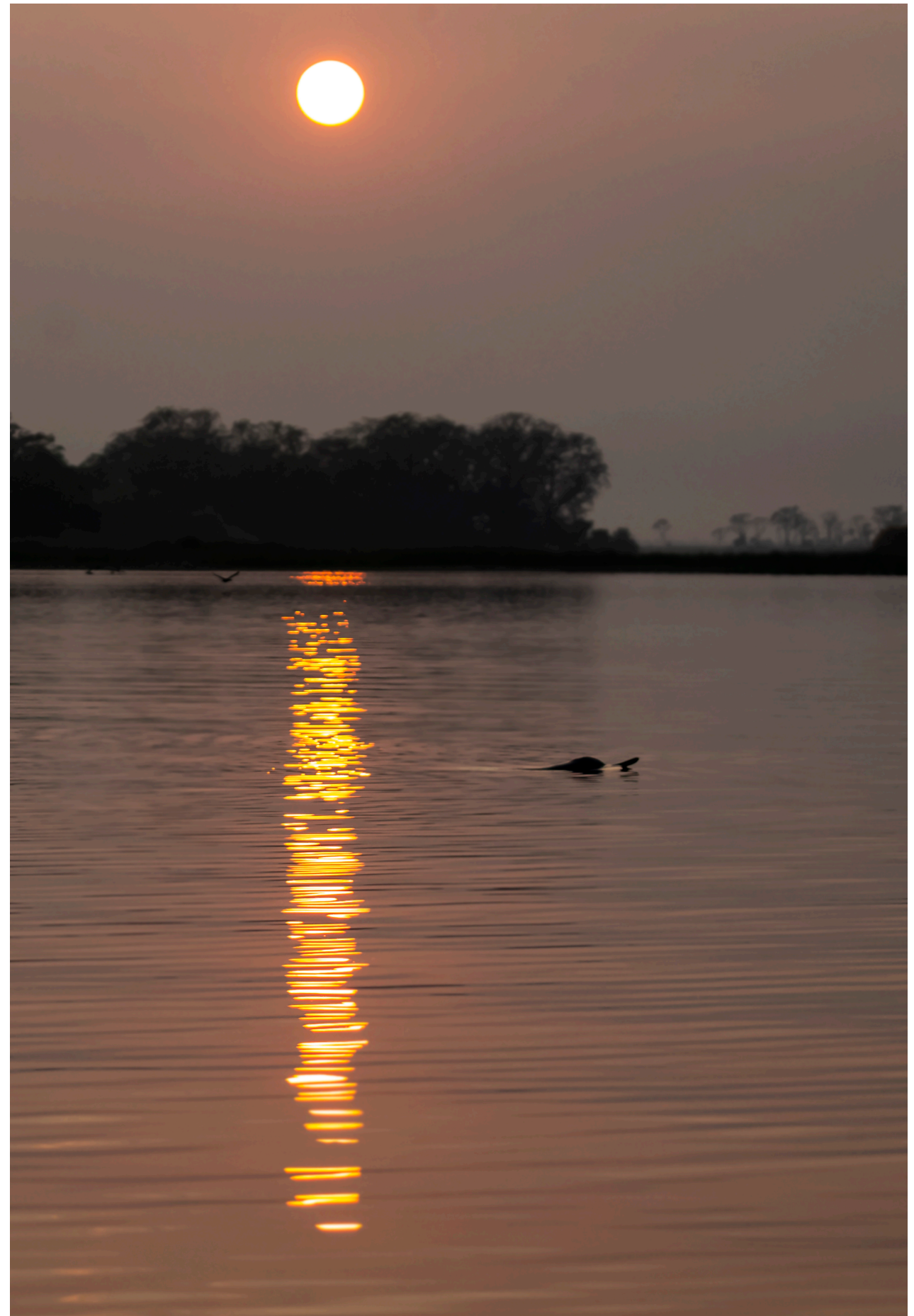
Make sure you have few days to spare!

The reason why I say to spare a few days is because Dudhwa is a vast place and one can't do justice to Dudhwa unless you go to every zone allowed! Different parts are 30 minutes to 2 hours away so one must have enough days to go stay at each location and enjoy those chirpy jungle mornings and soothing sunsets!

I have to admit that I took too long to visit this park but ever since I have gone, I now go at least once a year! The biodiversity is such that you may have a target species to go see but the miracles of wildlife will have you enjoy something different! Like once I went to see tigers and ended up enjoying the Dolphin at sunset!

From thick jungle cover with straight roads for kilometres to swamp lands and sandy banks, you name it and this park has it all! Large ponds and elephant grass are perfect habitat for cats! And the cats are big here! Many times, one gets confused from the size of the tigers if those are male or female till one gets close!

If you talk to the locals, mostly all wildlife live in their own world and hardly come disturb the agriculture and village way of life but it is we who are intruding in their territory so how can one blame these precious animals!





A famous tigress from Kishenpur Wildlife sanctuary, part of Dudhwa Tiger Reserve.



Fishing Cat from Dudhwa Tiger Reserve!

The landscape changes to thick trees, old trees, large trees, you know the jungle is not far and one's mood changes! There is still old world charm about this place! There is a large farming population and one starts seeing signs of farm houses! Tractor-trolleys and big trucks full of wood logs or sugarcane and one is reduced to a snail's pace or gets tested with one's patience! Keep a smile on your face and go with the flow.

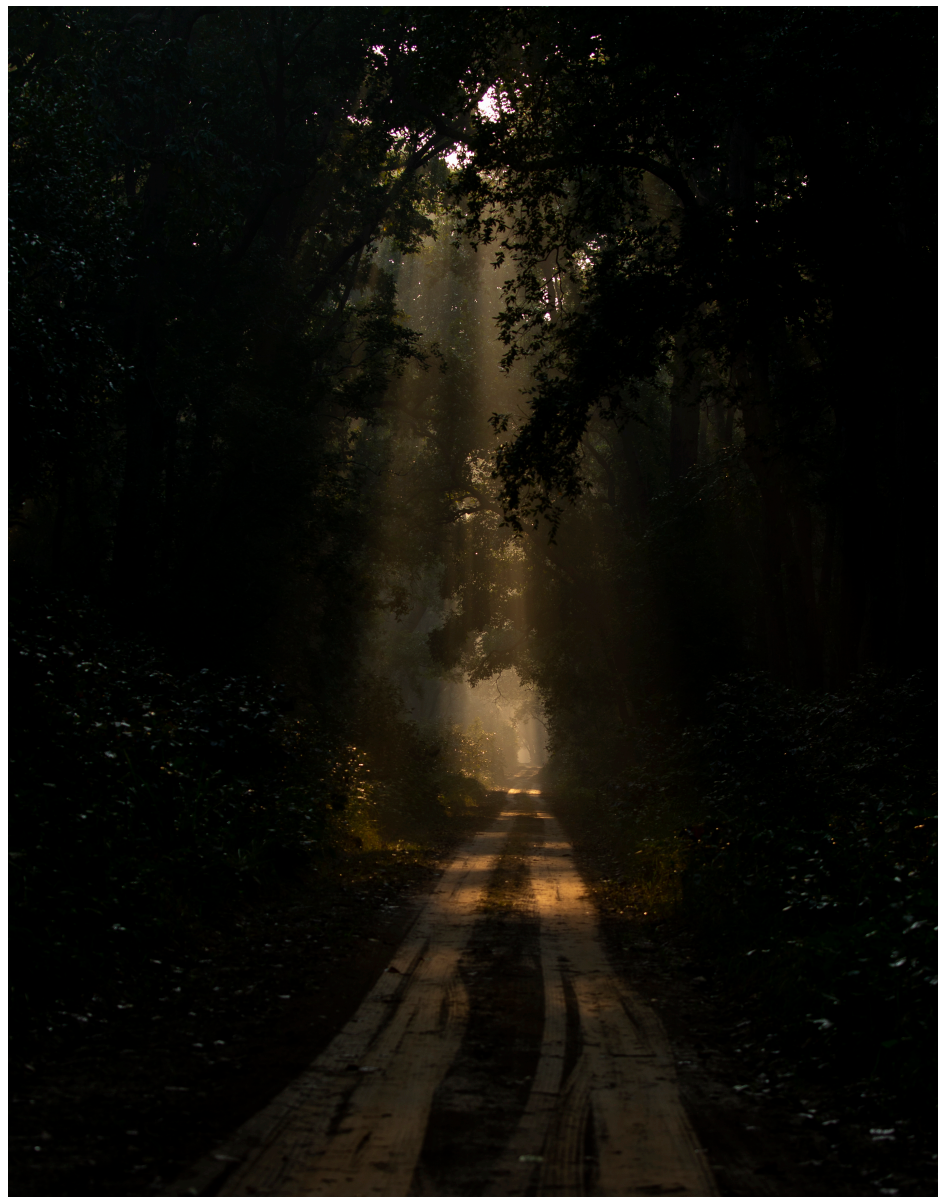
There are several guest houses around this area and my personal favourite are the Forest rest houses which are generally not easy to get permission for and also one has to arrange meals! But if one can, that is the charm as one is right inside the jungle!

There are also Government rest houses to stay! That is one option but my favourite is the old Billy Arjan's home where one can stay in a home stay! It is a jungle of its own and full of history! The place needs a day of its own to enjoy what Billy must have done during his time!

The iconic photo of Billy walking with his tiger is from Sathiana and one must make a winter morning safari trip there as the cut light from the green canopy will make one feel like he is still walking there! It is a magical experience!

Dudhwa has never disappointed me. If you have target species then go in the right season and spend some time! You will definitely be rewarded! And if not, as I said earlier, something unexpected can show up!

Mainly on agenda should be Dudhwa main zone, Kishenpur and Katarniaghat. Katarniaghat is about 2 hours away from Dudhwa and Kishenpur is about 30 minutes drive! Stay at the locations is recommended!



This is a magical experience!



The rare Bengal Florican

Whether it is a spotlight of nature's theatre or dry feel of the summer heat to pre monsoon, the jungle is just overwhelming for a nature and wildlife lover! Images will come to you and pictures taken will be fresh in your mind when you go home! This jungle is grand!

People living and working in and around face their challenges but also blessed to be in a pristine forest! I believe that one should work with the locals and encourage which ever way one can, to make them feel proud of their land! Also be stern in the correct implementation but not without reason!

There are many tribals around and it is also interesting to go visit them! One learns a lot about how the indigenous people survive there!

A week is not enough for me when I go, I need at least 10 days and we haven't even gone to Bardia National Park, the continuation of this park in to Nepal! That is a whole different story to be told soon!



Pied Hornbill enjoying the onset of monsoon!



There is common sighting of Sloth bears!



One of my favourites, Gharials!



The forest turns magical with pre-monsoon showers!



Asian Scops Owls



There is very large population of Barasinghas or Swamp deer as they are called. One can spend days watching these creatures in this habitat! They have a unique alarm call also so people who are used to Sambhar and Chital deer calls will find this interesting! Magically, a tiger came out of the back drop later making this scene very intense!

So I hope, I am right to call it
“Dudhwa Darling”!