

The Leopard adobe!

Bera- Jawai experience





Nearly a decade of relation the amazing hamlet of Bera - Jawai!

Close to my heart!

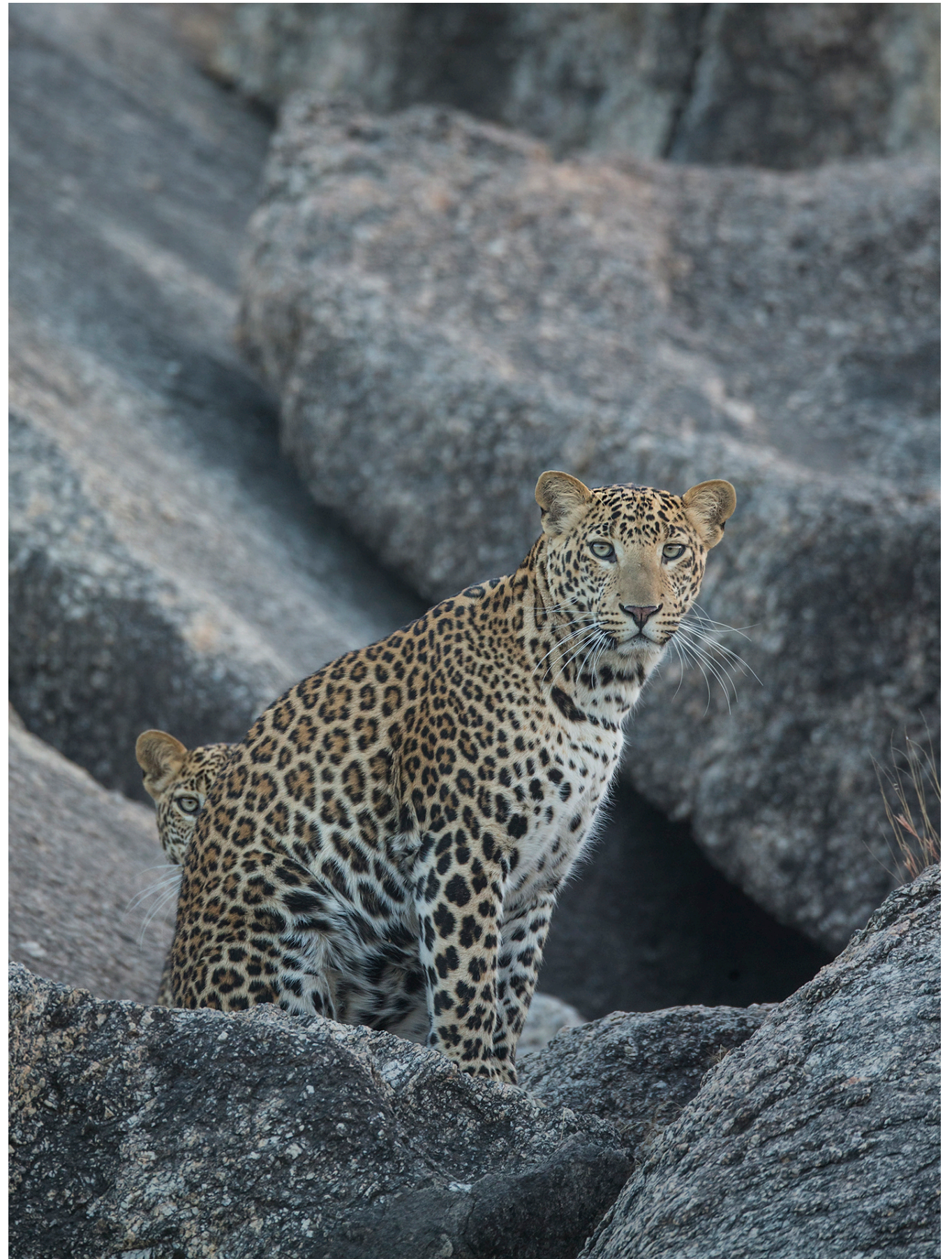
The experience that I have had in my countless trips to Bera may never be matched by any other place as there is so much to do for any passionate person, who can indulge in many different activities such as wildlife, photography, heritage, culture, conservation, traditional art, off-roading it is an endless list!

Come with an open mind!

To a nature lover, this place offers an amazing experience. Best time is in the winters which Rajasthan anyways is famous for! I personally also enjoy the monsoons as the entire region has a complete makeover!

There is no doubt that the scenic beauty of this land was always there but was generally enjoyed by the inhabitants of this area and their known people! Slowly, the word got out and many documentary companies ended up here! Even then, it took a while to be on everyone's tongue! Once it took off, many who wanted to have an off beat experience other than a national park came here, to see the ease with which the leopard and human can co-exist and give amazing images! People who were just passing by, halted a night for a safari and how they got hooked to this place!

Just imagine one day's experience for a visitor - you are given a traditional welcome, an evening safari and then a theme dinner on the Jawai reservoir! Later, people who love star gazing or night photography go for milky way or star trails! Morning, you can have your breakfast at a different location and look for leopards at the same time! Then you go to see massive crocodiles bask with their mouths open on islands emerging out of the Jawai reservoir! After that, you go to see thousands of migratory birds around the Jawai area! That is just one day! As I said, come with an open mind!





A local Rabari Shepard at peace with his panoramic view!



The peahens enjoy the morning gentle cool monsoon breeze and hoping for a good shower!

From the minute you leave the highway, the mood changes! Everything becomes slow paced! Soak it all in! One can slow down and enjoy everything that one lays eyes on! The rock formations first take over you! The awe that such dry and thorny land has so much farming and cattle amazes you! If one is naive, one wouldn't even think that most of the hills have leopards, hyenas, sloth bears, foxes and jackals! It is not like a regular sanctuary or a national park with a physical boundary but sprinkled within the farm lands and villages! Many times, you can see a Shepard and a Leopard on the same hill just metres apart!

The massive boulder rocks give away to large ponds and Jawai reservoir to show you another reason as to how all this greenery is surviving! Hundreds of goats and sheep in the middle of the road or the stubborn buffaloes hinting you to stay patient! You need to be in the mood that this is how it is here and this is how you are going to let it be! Just enjoy the ride!

Everyone is going on with their lives. The Shepard is watching his herd on the hill, the leopard is watching the goats, the leopard and hyena sometimes even share the same cave entrance, the temple on the hill is protecting them all! And yes, many times the goats are picked up and sometimes the owner is compensated and sometimes not! But no one has any animosity with the leopard! According to the locals, all sorts of life in the hills is sacred!

There is endless opportunity to photograph here! Wildlife, landscapes, habitat, night skies, people, traditional art ... your pick!

The food is another aspect of the whole trip! From traditional breakfast at your choice of location or at the resort with fresh fruits and juices, traditional lunch or sandwiches at the Jawai or theme dinner, you sure will love the food and ambience there!

My friends, guests and me on several occasions have enjoyed and shared our experiences with whoever we meet! Always telling them that no matter what, even if you wish to just go to an off beat place and relax, this is it!

Soaking in the views or waiting for an insane sighting of a leopard family, the experience that you will take back will be very unique!

Traditionally people go for safaris and roam around looking for wildlife. Here mostly, you are just patiently waiting at the favourite spots and that is how you get the sighting. Sometimes they are there even before you reach the spot and position yourself!

There are conservation designated areas mentioned which are strictly adhered to and basic rules that anyways with wildlife one must follow! Rest of the place is for you to discover and enjoy!

The stories that will be exchanged over the winter evening bon fire whether about wildlife or a great outing will definitely be a memory to cherish till you go there again and then some more. Plan soon!

