

PRIYA RANGANATHAN

OBJECTIVE To contribute to research in the fields of landscape ecology and conservation, with a focus on wetland and stream ecosystems facing pressures from land cover change in high-biodiversity regions of India.

SKILLS & ABILITIES **Field Skills** – camera trapping, bird point count, mist netting, radio-collaring, mark-recapture, water quality assessment tests, pugmark identification, line transects, wetland field skills, soil surveying, hydrology tests, forest measurements, geological surveys, diet analysis utilizing scat assessment

Research Skills – GIS, Remote Sensing, cartography, STATA, R-Studio, MaxEnt, Species Distribution Modeling, STELLA for atmospheric modelling, scientific report writing, grant writing, HEC-RAS river routing, soil mapping

Wilderness First Aid and CPR (certified by the National Outdoors Leadership School (NOLS))

Project Management

Languages – English (fluent), Hindi (fluent), Marathi (fluent), Tamil (conversational, reading, writing), Kannada (conversational), Spanish (proficient)

EXPERIENCE **PH.D. CANDIDATE, ACADEMY OF CONSERVATION SCIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY STUDIES, ASHOKA TRUST FOR RESEARCH IN ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT (ATREE)**

Bangalore, Karnataka, India

Guide: Dr. Jagdish Krishnaswamy

Beginning 1 Jun 2021

MENTOR, SCHOLASTIC-INDIA YOUNG WRITERS ACADEMY

1 July 2021 – present

Mentors high school students across India in 10-day workshop series on elements of storywriting and storytelling, culminating in a published anthology of short stories by the students with a mentor's note.

Also conducts specialist workshops on Nature Writing for students, culminating in an anthology of short nature stories and poems at the end of the 10 days.

FREELANCE RESEARCH CONSULTANT

“The Secret Forest” – a project on *Myristica* swamps by Nirupa Rao, National Geographic Explorer

1 Sep 2020 – present

DANCE INSTRUCTOR AND SENIOR CHOREOGRAPHER, NANDANIK DANCE ACADEMY

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

1 Mar 2020 - present

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, ASHOKA TRUST FOR RESEARCH IN ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT (ATREE)

Bangalore, Karnataka

07 Jan 2019 – 28 Feb 2020

Projects:

Gandak Conservation Project (CHANSE)- Assessing habitat suitability for the gharial (*Gavialis gangeticus*) and the Ganges River Dolphin in the Gandak River of the Ganges River Basin and creating a river routing model to simulate flows in the Gandak River given different conditions upstream.

Review Publication on status and conservation of *Myristica* swamps of the Western Ghats

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, CENTRE FOR WILDLIFE STUDIES

Bangalore, Karnataka

01 Oct 2017 – 31 Dec 2018

Job Description: writing research grants and proposals for various projects undertaken by the team, data analysis, mapping hotspots of human-wildlife conflict, creating a conservation education programme for rural Karnataka high-conflict village schools

Project 1: “Karanth, K.K. & Ranganathan, P. (2018). Assessing human-wildlife interactions in a forest settlement in Sathyamangalam and Mudumalai Tiger Reserves. *Tropical Conservation Science.*”

Role: Research Associate, Co-author

I assessed human-wildlife interactions in a unique settlement straddling two premier tiger reserves in South India. Using statistical analysis and field surveys, I was able to suggest local management strategies for officials to use when handling human-wildlife conflict in this settlement, given tribal rights and longstanding documents giving land use rights to this community despite forest protections by the government.

Project 2: Wild Shaale (Jul 2018 – Dec 2018)

Role: Project Evaluator

Wild Shaale is a novel conservation education programme implemented by the National Geographic Society in partnership with the Centre for Wildlife Studies, Bangalore, that services government schools in villages facing high levels of human-wildlife conflict in and around Bandipur and Nagarhole Tiger Reserves, two premier parks in the South Indian state of Karnataka. Wild Shaale focuses on assessing and building empathy of children towards endemic wildlife such as elephants, tigers, and leopards, as well as imparting knowledge and awareness about these species to future generations who will continue to interact with these species.

Duties: mentoring project interns and volunteers, evaluating activities conducted in schools, preparing daily supplies, data entry, data validation, data analysis, organization of school-wide data, materials inventory and restocking

LANDSCAPE ECOLOGY AND CONNECTIVITY INTERN, PROJECT TIGER, WWF-INDIA

Western India Tiger Landscape, Sawai Madhopur, Rajasthan

May – Dec 2016

Job Description: monitoring tiger dispersal using camera trapping, range mapping, and pugmark identification; GIS mapping of wildlife corridors and land use change; managing a field team while conducting a research project

Project: “Assessing Land Use Change and Wildlife Presence in the Banas-Sewti-Chambal Habitat Block, Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve”

CONSERVATION INTERN, BIG CATS INITIATIVE, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

Supervised by Dr. Stuart Pimm, Duke University

August 2015 – May 2017

Projects: literature reviews of global cheetah and leopard presence and habitat shifts

GIS ANALYST, HYDROGEOLOGY LABORATORY, DEPT. OF GEOLOGY AND PLANETARY SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

Supervised by Dr. Daniel Bain, University of Pittsburgh

January 2015-June 2015

Project: “An Analysis of Sodic Soils and Irrigation in the Missouri River Basin”

Skills Obtained: GIS, soil surveying, soil mapping, cartography, report writing

SUSTAINS INTERN, IMANI CHRISTIAN ACADEMY, PITTSBURGH, PA

Project: taught environmental science to underprivileged school students, helped children with learning disabilities in constructing a pond ecosystem in the school compound as a hands-on learning activity

INTERN, CLEAN WATER ACTION, PITTSBURGH, PA

Project: petitioning, phone banking, and reaching out to other environmental organizations at the University and in the Greater Pittsburgh area as instructed by advisor. Attended court hearings with advisor for water pollution cases if relevant to the Pittsburgh watersheds.

September 2014- May 2014

SUSTAINABILITY COORDINATOR, KANAKADHARA FINANCIALS, PITTSBURGH, PA

Project: Green Workplace Challenge

June 2013-May 2014

EDUCATION

NICHOLAS SCHOOL OF THE ENVIRONMENT, DUKE UNIVERSITY – DURHAM, USA – MASTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT (MEM) DEGREE (MAY 2017)

Specialization: Ecosystem Science and Conservation

Thesis: The Effects of Land Use Change on Sympatric Carnivore Use of Wildlife Corridors in Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve, Rajasthan

Advisor: Dr. Dean Urban, Professor of Landscape Ecology

Relevant Coursework: Landscape ecology, Landscape analysis and management, Wetland ecology, Wetland restoration, Conservation biology, Soil Science, Conservation GIS, Ecosystem Services, Urban Ecology, Air Quality Science & Management, Ecosystem Resilience

Work Experience: Teaching Assistant, Remote Sensing of the Environment (Fall 2015); Teaching Assistant, Fundamentals of GIS (Fall 2016)

B.A. ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE, B.S. BIOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH, PITTSBURGH, USA (MAY 2015)

Certification in Geospatial Analysis, Certification in South Asian Studies, Minor in Chemistry

Honors Thesis: The Socio-ecological effects of the decline of the Indian white-rumped vulture (*Gyps bengalensis*) in India

Course in Human Security, Globalisation, and Himalayan Ecology, Woodstock School, Mussoorie, India (Summer Term 2014)

LEADERSHIP

Founder and Co-Editor, Youth for Nature Magazine (June 2020 – present)

Nature Writing Instructor, Storytrails Inc., Chennai, Tamil Nadu (July – August 2021)

Blog Editor, Conservation Optimism Blog (June 2021 – present)

Nature Writing Instructor, Logicology, Nagpur, Maharashtra (May 2021 – July 2021)

Creative Writing and Public Speaking Instructor, Bookworms Hisar, Haryana (Jan 2021 – present)

Teaching Assistant, Freshwater Ecology Course, M.Sc. Wildlife Sciences course, National Centre for Biological Sciences, Bangalore (June – Dec 2019)

Project Evaluator, Wild Shaale, Centre for Wildlife Studies (July – Dec 2018)

Project Leader, Western India Tiger Landscape Project Tiger, WWF-India (May – Dec 2016)

Teaching Assistant, Duke University (Fall 2015, Fall 2016)

Treasurer, Society for Amateur Geospatial Analysts (SAGA), Nicholas School of the Environment at Duke University, 2016-17 academic year

International Representative, Duke Conservation Society (DCS), Nicholas School of the Environment at Duke University, 2016-17 academic year

Bharatanatyam Instructor, Nandanik Dance Academy, Pittsburgh, USA (Sep 2012 – Sep 2017)

President, University of Pittsburgh Model United Nations Team (Aug 2014 – May 2015)

**AWARDS &
CERTIFICATES**

SENIOR DIPLOMA (1ST RANK WITH DISTINCTION) in BHARATANATYAM, Hindustan Arts and Music Society, Kolkata, India (Jul 2021)

COMMENDABLE MENTION (2ND PLACE), M. Krishnan Memorial Award for Nature Writing 2021, Madras Naturalists Society (11 Apr 2021)

CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION in a course on Stakeholder Engagement as a part of the Courses in Conservation Leadership 2021, Nature Conservation Foundation (NCF), Bangalore (3-24 Feb 2021)

CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION in the Duleep Matthai Nature Writing Award 2020 (Aug 2020)

JUNIOR DIPLOMA (1ST RANK WITH DISTINCTION) in BHARATANATYAM, Hindustan Arts and Music Society, Kolkata, India (Sep 2020)

CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION in a course on Species Distribution Modeling (Feb 2019)

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE, Bharatanatyam Arangetram, Nandanik Dance Academy (27 Aug 2012)

PUBLICATIONS

Scientific Publications:

Ranganathan, P., G. Ravikanth, N.A. Aravind (in review). *A review of research and conservation of Myristica swamps, a threatened freshwater swamp of the Western Ghats, India.*

Karant, K.K. & Ranganathan, P. (2018). *Assessing human-wildlife interactions in a forest settlement in Sathyamangalam and Mudumalai Tiger Reserves.* Tropical Conservation Science, 11, 1940082918802758.

Ranganathan, P. (2017). *The Effects of Land Use Change on Sympatric Carnivore Use of Wildlife Corridors in Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve, Rajasthan* – M.Sc. Thesis, Nicholas School of the Environment, Duke University

Reports/Case Studies:

Ranganathan, P. (in review). Sangai: A Deer and its Marsh Environment Dance Towards Extinction. *Jalaplavit (ISSN 2321-1881)*, 10 (3).

Ranganathan, P. (2020 Jun). Relics of the Past: Biodiversity of the Myristica Swamps of the Western Ghats. *Jalaplavit (ISSN 2321-1881)*, 10 (2): pp.4-12.

M. Nobin Raja & Ranganathan, P. (2020). Aliens in India: Invasive Fishes in our Freshwater Ecosystems. *Voice of Environment Newsletter*, 3 (1): pp. 47-53.

Contributed Works:

Jacobson, Andrew P., et al. "Leopard (*Panthera pardus*) status, distribution, and the research efforts across its range." *PeerJ* 4 (2016): e1974. – contributed to literature review and maps as a part of the Big Cats Initiative, Duke University

Durant, S. M., Mitchell, N., Groom, R., Pettorelli, N., Ipavec, A., Jacobson, A. P., ... Becker, M. S. (2016). *The global decline of cheetah Acinonyx*

jubatus and what it means for conservation. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 114(3), 528–533. doi:10.1073/pnas.1611122114

Popular Article Publications:

[“Ghosts of the Chambal”](#) – Wild Canids blog (2 Feb. 2019)

[“A Bullet to the Lungs: Mumbai Set to Lose More Forest to High-Speed Railway Line”](#) – Conservation India (9 Feb. 2019)

[“Life in the Hills: Anecdotes from the Garhwal Himalayas”](#) – Saevus (26 Mar. 2019)

“Monsoon Mountains” – Saevus (01 Jun. 2019), Print

[“Gandikota \(Travel Guide\)”](#) – Nature in Focus (11 Oct. 2019)

[“All for the perfect tiger shot: Unregulated tourism and its effects on wildlife”](#) – The News Minute (09 May 2019)

[“To skin a cat: An Amateur biologist’s first autopsy”](#) – WCS-India Blog (21 May 2019)

[“Habitat loss and poaching threaten the survival of the elusive Nilgiri langur”](#) – The News Minute (24 Jun. 2019)

[“Caging the wild: Maharashtra government approves building of zoo in Aarey Milk Colony forest land”](#) – Conservation India (03 Jul. 2019)

“One last dance: The fate of Manipur’s dancing deer” – Current Conservation (26 Oct. 2019), Print

[“Who will save the swamps?”](#) – Deccan Spectrum (26 Oct. 2019)

[“Going Green: India’s Disappearing Grasslands”](#) – Deccan Spectrum (14 Dec. 2019)

“Wetlands in a Changing Climate” – Down to Earth (31 Dec. 2019), Print.

[“Why Adding More RAMSAR Wetlands is Beneficial to a Growing India”](#) – Conservation India, (05 Feb. 2020)

[“Rooting for RAMSAR Wetlands”](#) – Deccan Spectrum (08 Feb. 2020)

[“Desert Carnival: Experiencing Rajasthan’s Annual Pushkar Fair”](#) – AYRN Blog (ATREE) (04 Apr. 2020)

[“Amphan in the Sundarbans: How mangroves protect coasts from tropical storms”](#) – The Wire Science (28 May 2020)

[“Saving Vultures”](#) – Conservation India (31 May 2020)

[“Locusts Swarms in India: Millimeters in Size yet Millions in Number”](#) – Mongabay India (co-authored with Nobin Raja M.) (02 Jun. 2020)

[“Near the Baghjan Blowout, Assam’s Critical Wetland Habitat is Burning”](#) – The Wire Science (11 Jun. 2020)

[“Reverse Zoonosis: When Humans Pass Diseases on to Animals”](#) – The Wire Science (co-authored with Nobin Raja M.) (28 Jun. 2020)

[“The Ethics of Using Drones in Wildlife Conservation and Monitoring”](#) – Conservation India (co-authored with Arjun Kannan and Sminu TV) (27 Jul. 2020)

[“Notes From a Field Ecologist”](#) – Conservation Optimism Blog (29 Jul. 2020)

[“Pawprints in Khandar Fort \[Part 1\]\(#\), \[Part 2\]\(#\), \[Part 3\]\(#\)”](#) – AYRN Blog (ATREE) (14 Oct. 2020)

[“How the worship of sacred freshwater swamps is helping preserve biodiversity in the Western Ghats”](#) – Scroll India (15 Oct. 2020)

[“Protecting Karnataka’s Myristica swamps key to survival of rare lion-tailed macaque”](#) – The News Minute (23 Oct. 2020)

[“Ranganathittu: The Kaveri’s Quiet Jewel”](#) – Current Conservation (18 Nov 2020)

[“Bandits, Badlands, and Biodiversity”](#) – Sanctuary Asia (01 Dec 2020)

[“Spotting the Whistling Hunter”](#) – Deccan Herald (07 Apr 2021)

[“Meeting the Marten”](#) – Saevus Blog (10 Apr 2021)

REFERENCES

DR. JAGDISH KRISHNASWAMY

Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment, India

jagdish@atree.org

DR. KRITHI K. KARANTH

Centre for Wildlife Studies, Bangalore, India

krithi.karanth@cwsindia.org

DR. DEAN URBAN

Professor of Landscape Ecology, Nicholas School of the Environment,
Duke University

deanu@duke.edu

DR. STUART PIMM

Doris Duke Chair for Conservation, Duke University

stuartpimm@me.com
