

Conservation of Rusty-spotted cat in Banke-Bardiya Forest Complex, West Nepal



Project title

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Project leader

Vidyaman Thapa

Project location

Banke-Bardiya Forest Complex

Project summary

The Rusty-spotted Cat (*Prionailurus rubiginosus*), renowned as the world's smallest wild feline species, is exclusively documented in the regions of Nepal, India, and Sri Lanka. However, this elusive wild cat confronts a series of existential threats stemming from various sources, including habitat loss, vehicular collisions, and sometimes retaliatory actions by local farmers.

The conservation efforts in the project site and the broader Terai Arc Landscape are predominantly directed toward larger apex predators such as tigers, leopards, and wild elephants, the Rusty-spotted cat remains largely overlooked. To bridge this gap and to address the aforementioned threats, an innovative project initiative is proposed.

The primary objectives of the project are as follows;

Roadkill Mitigation;

Habitat Protection;

Community Engagement;

Conflict Resolution

By integrating these strategic elements, the proposed project endeavors to secure the future of the Rusty-spotted cat in the Banke-Bardiya Forest Complex. Amidst a landscape often dominated by larger carnivores, this project represents a pivotal shift toward inclusive conservation, ensuring that even the smallest members of the ecosystem are afforded the protection they deserve.

