

Play animal benefactor for as little as Rs 10,000 a year

Simit Bhagat | *STWS CM-10* | TNN

Mumbai: Rising cost of maintenance is forcing the Sanjay Gandhi National Park to put up its animals in captivity for adoption. The most expensive animal in the park is, understandably, turning out to be the white tiger. They can be adopted for Rs 3.15 lakh annually. Lion can be adopted

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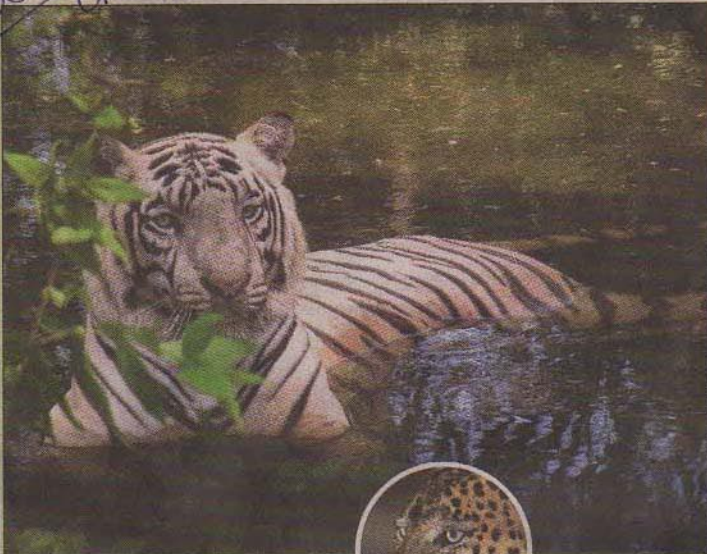
Deepak Sawant | LION & TIGER SAFARI SUPERINTENDENT, SGNP

for Rs 2.5 lakh, a leopard for Rs 1.15 lakh and the cheapest would be the barking deer at the cost of Rs 10,000 per annum.

SGNP officials said the figures have been calculated after looking at individual needs of every animal. The adoption fund would take care of the animals' food, maintenance of their enclosures as well as the medical treatment needed over the year.

Deepak Sawant, superintendent of the Lion & Tiger Safari at SGNP, said: “Those who adopt an animal will be allowed visits to the park free of cost, once a week for a year. Their names will also be put up on the cage as a token of appreciation.”

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WHITE TIGER (*Panthera tigris*):

There are two white tigers, both of them have been bred in captivity, in the park. As it is a rare species, adoption would cost Rs 3.15 lakh a year.

ROYAL BENGAL TIGER (*Panthera tigris*):

Of the current lot of four tigers in the park, two were brought in from Van Vihar in Madhya Pradesh, while the rest were bred in captivity in the park. The adoption of each would cost Rs 3.05 lakh per year.



ASIATIC LION (*Panthera leo persica*):

Of the three lions in the park, two have been brought in from Bannerghatta Zoo at Bangalore in exchange of two white tigers from the park. The adoption of each lion for a year would cost Rs 2.5 lakh.



LEOPARD (*Panthera pardus*): There are 24 leopards in captivity at SGNP, some of which had strayed outside



the park and had been rescued from forest divisions outside SGNP. The 24

leopards include two cubs that were recently rescued from Shahapur forest division. The cost of adopting this endangered species would be Rs 1.15 lakh a year.

NILGAI (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*):

The two nilgais named by park officials as Seeta and Geeta, the biggest Asian antelope, were brought to the park last year. They were found abandoned on the road and were rescued from Shahapur forest division. The cost of adopting them a nilgai is Rs 30,000 a year.

SPOTTED

DEER (*Axis axis*): The four spotted deer that are put up for adoption had been rescued from around the park as calves or were injured. The adoption of this species would cost Rs 20,000 per year.



CAN THIS BE YOUR PET PROJECT?

BARKING DEER (*Muntiacus muntjak*):

The sole barking deer in captivity was rescued from Thane forest area. The cost for adoption is Rs 10,000 per year.

RUSTY SPOTTED CAT (*Prionailurus rubiginosus*):

The national park boasts of having the country's only breeding centre of the rusty spotted cat. At present, the park has six such cats, of which only four are the offsprings of the cats named Anjali and Sachin, which were rescued from Tungareshwar and Yeoor forests respectively. The adoption of the species, which is considered to be at a high risk of extinction, would cost you Rs 36,000 a year.



How to adopt an animal

- Interested persons can write to the Director of SGNP expressing willingness to be part of the scheme
- They can then take a look at the animals select the one they'd like to support
- Once they have decided up which animal to support, they will need to draw a Demand Draft in favour of Sanjay Gandhi National Park