

Technical Report No. PR-200

Training workshop for updating the Rusty-spotted Cat captive breeding facility at Sanjay Gandhi National Park, Mumbai.



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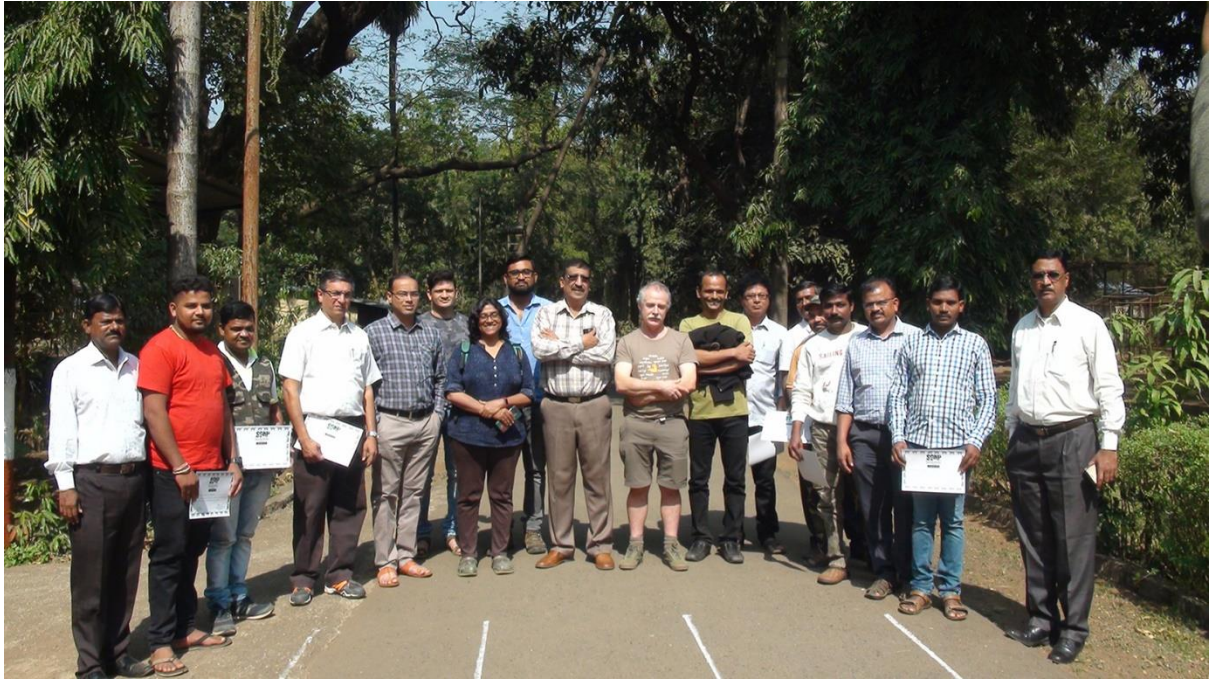


Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	i
SUMMARY.....	ii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
OBJECTIVES.....	2
SELECTION OF NEW SITE.....	3
TRAINING IN HANDLING AND CARE OF RUSTY-SPOTTED CAT.....	6
HEALTH MONITORING OF CAPTIVE RUSTY-SPOTTED CATS.....	11
DIET OF CAPTIVE RUSTY-SPOTTED CATS.....	12
DESIGN OF ENCLOSURE FOR RUSTY-SPOTTED CAT.....	14
PLANNING THE CAPTIVE BREEDING PROGRAM.....	16
APPENDIX-I: SMALL CAT ENCLOSURE DESIGN.....	18
APPENDIX-II: SMALL CAT CARE.....	29
APPENDIX-III: ARCHITECTURAL REPORT.....	49

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SUMMARY

The Rusty-spotted Cat is the smallest cat in the world and endemic to India, Sri Lanka and the region of Nepal bordering India. The species is placed under Schedule I of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act of 1972 and is listed as Vulnerable in the IUCN Red List. Little is known of the ecology of the cat but its populations throughout India are under severe threat of fragmentation and degradation. The species also exists outside Protected Areas in the country, and several kittens are found during the crop harvesting season. Its ability to persist in such extreme disturbance to its habitat is not known and it is feared that the species may lose substantial parts of its habitat and population in the future. Since India perhaps holds the largest population of this species, it is necessary to safeguard the future of the species here. There are no formal captive breeding programs aimed at small cats in India. Sanjay Gandhi National Park, Mumbai has a captive breeding facility for Rusty-spotted Cat which needs to be updated following International standards and Central Zoo Authority of India guidelines. This would pave the way for updating small cat captive conditions and captive breeding facilities in the country.

The aim of the training workshop was to update the captive breeding facility of this species at Sanjay Gandhi National Park, Mumbai. Over the five-day training workshop, participants from the Forest Department were taught skills in handling and caring for the cats, a diet and health plan was outlined, a new site was selected to relocate the breeding program, new enclosures were designed and a future plan for the breeding program was charted. The report provides details of the training and discussions that were held during the workshop.