

next morning on a number of occasions. She observed also the family frolicking on the lawn during clear weather on more than one occasion. I showed her plates of civets. She picked out the plate of the Masked Palm Civet (*Paguma larvata larvata*).

The civets can either be the Tenasserim white whiskered Palm Civet *Paguma larvata janetta* Thomas or the Himalayan Palm Civet *Paguma larvata neglecta* Pocock.

The caretaker of the International Medi-

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tation Centre informed me that there are two species of Civets in their Centre. On one occasion, the two fought and one was killed. He identified the dead civet as *Kyaung-na-ga*. Malayan Palm Civet (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus pallasi* Gray).

As regards the second species he said the civets he saw are similar to the Common Palm Civet or Toddy Cat (*Paradoxurus hermaphroditus*).

TUN YIN

4. AN INSTANCE OF WILD DOGS SCAVENGING ON A TIGER'S KILL

On the morning of 24th July 1978 Keechanna, my tribal boy, came across Jungle crows calling near a forest road two kilometres from Bandipur campus. As he walked along the road looking at the crows he failed to see a tiger lying 3 metres from the road. The tiger was also looking at the crows and so it did not see Keechanna who had gone as close as ten metres to it. When he saw the tiger he silently retreated for 60 metres climbed a small *Butea frondosa* tree and observed. Once the crows 15-20 in number alighted on the kill, a prime adult sambar stag with 48 cm velvet antlers, which was 8-10 metres from the tiger. The tiger with a whoop ran to, chased the crows and returned to its 'bed'. Tigers are intolerant of vultures also and on occasions they may even kill them (Schaller 1967).

I had gone to another part of my study area and when Keechanna informed me of this around 1000 hrs, in his company I hurried to the spot. When we were 50 metres

from the spot, at 10.30, I saw the tiger walking to the road from the kill. Hurriedly and silently we moved to the cover of the *Butea* tree trunk and watched. The tiger remained on the road for 3 minutes. Three times it flexed its tail arching over its back and once it lay down for a few seconds. At 1033 the tiger went back to the kill. We were in an active elephant country close to a much used pool. Since there was no suitable tree we left the place.

In the evening my wild dog pack was seen 500 metres from Bandipur but it eluded us and went to the kill. We did not hear any altercation between the tiger and the wild dog but repeated sambar belling was heard. Next morning around 1000 hrs we went to check the kill. This time we were accompanied by S. N. Prasad one of the students of Dr. Madhav Gadgil. The wild dogs had eaten a good amount of meat from the kill but on the wet muddy road there was no sign of either excited running or of struggle. The

tiger, most probably before the arrival of the dogs, while dragging the kill had severed a portion of the carcass with the head, neck and anterior part of thoracic region with 3 ribs and had dragged it nearly 80 metres from the major part of the carcass. While looking for the missing part I saw a pit with some water where the sambar had been killed. After killing, the tiger had eviscerated and removed the rumen contents. Then it had dragged the kill for 20 metres and left it under a stand of *Kydia calycina*.

Meanwhile Keechanna found the drag mark and while we followed and found it the tiger from the cover coughed three times. On the throat of the sambar there were four canine marks. Here it would be pertinent to record that the tiger and the lion while killing large prey prefer to bite on the throat (Schaller 1967, 1972) though Krishnan (1972) has found an adult Gaur cow with two sets of two deep punctured wounds, inflicted by the canines of a tiger on either side of a nape. After removing the jaw we returned to the road, and the tiger remained hidden and growled two times from a distance of 50 metres. Since coughs and growls are the early warning signals of a tiger which wants to discourage people disturbing it (Corbett 1957) we went away.

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In the evening Keechanna was taken by the local Forest staff to show the kill and he found that the tiger had eaten most of the meat from the major part of the carcass. He did not take them to the other spot. Next morning we saw the pugmarks on the tracks of the van and the remains close to the road were licked clean. As the crows were calling from trees around the other area we did not venture to check.

I was not able to deduce the exact cause which prevented the wild dogs from following the drag marks of the smaller portion of the kill. May be they had sufficient meat on the major part of the kill or were reluctant to face an irritated tiger in the scrub. When there was sufficient meat left on a kill the wild dogs most often revisited the kill. In this case, however, the wild dogs did not do so. The presence of the tiger did not permit us to weigh the remains so as to calculate the amount of meat eaten by the tiger and the wild dog. From the above incident, with certainty one can infer, that wild dogs can scavenge on tiger's kills and a tiger may amiably withdraw in the presence of 15-16 dogs. This withdrawal may only be temporary and a tiger can operate in an area frequented by wild dogs.

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