

Project Update: April 2021

I contracted the COVID-19 virus sometime in mid-November 2020. As a result, I was under home quarantine for 17 days (23 November to 9 December 2020), and even after that, I was not back to being fully normal for over 2 months. Moreover, as schools/colleges were closed due to the pandemic, I was unable to carry out snake awareness programmes - an integral component of this project - as per the original plan and schedule. However, I instead conducted several such programmes for various forest department staff (also a key stakeholder) and for an NGO to date. As most schools in and around my study site have re-opened now, I hope to get a chance to conduct these programmes in at least some of them, provided I get an opportunity to do so.

Also, due to the pandemic and associated travel restrictions in 2020, some of the equipment that I had ordered from USA as part of this project (e.g., data loggers, infrared thermometer, weather meter etc.) could not reach me on time for me to be able to use them during last year's fieldwork. However, I safely received the same in early 2021 and wish to use them in the coming field season (June-September 2021).

Also, please find attached a short natural history note authored by me, which was published in Herpetological Review magazine in 2020. I have acknowledged the Rufford Foundation's support in the same.

<https://www.wildlifeconservationtrust.org/the-little-known-king-of-kumaon/>