



# GAZELLE



مجموعة دبي للتاريخ والطبيعي

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**Contributors —**

Thanks to the following members for their contributions this month:

- \* Binish Roobas
- \* Charles Laubach
- \* Hazelle Page
- \* James Conder
- \* Michelle Bigold
- \* Michelle Sinclair
- \* Sandi Ellis
- \* Valerie Chalmers

Ranthambore National Park in India  
.....see page 4.....



**Visits to Sharjah Museums and Galleries**

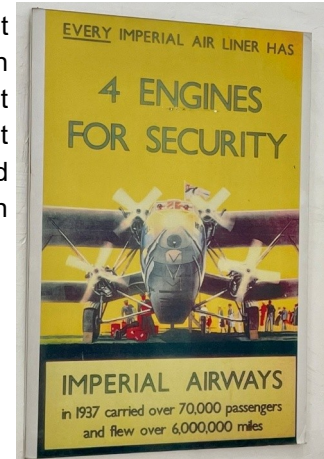


On Saturday 3rd June 2023, DNHG members visited several museums in Sharjah.

The first museum visited was Al Mahatta Airport Museum.

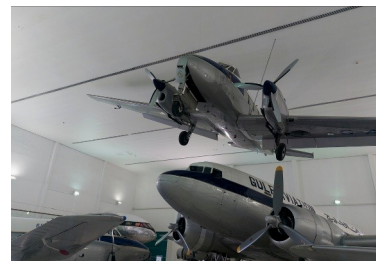
Built in 1932/33 this Imperial Airways overnight rest house and the first civilian airport in the region opened as a museum in 2000. The visitor will discover the history of flight, the development of aviation in the UAE and the Gulf and see an unrivalled collection of civilian aircrafts.

The annual temporary exhibition, which ends on 3rd September 2023, celebrates the anniversary of the first civil aviation landing in what is now the UAE on 5th October 1932 and the Emirati Civil Aviation Day that commemorates this day. It tells the story of this first landing at Sharjah on the British Imperial route that linked Britain with India and the events that led up to it more than 90 years ago.



Reference Sharjah Museums Authority Museums:

<https://www.sharjahmuseums.ae>



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## Announcements and Recordors

### Monthly Lecture

Lectures will re-commence in September. Speaker details will be circulated to members via email and in the July/August edition.

### Spotlight! Birds of Musandam - through James Conder's lens!



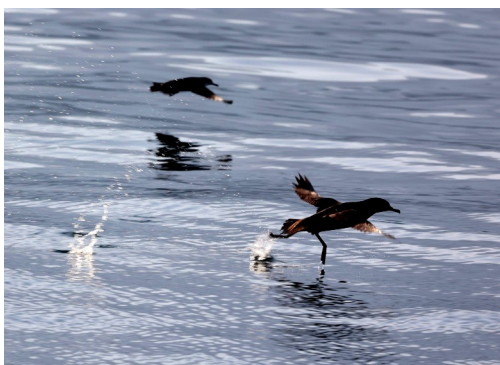
Bridled tern



Roseate tern



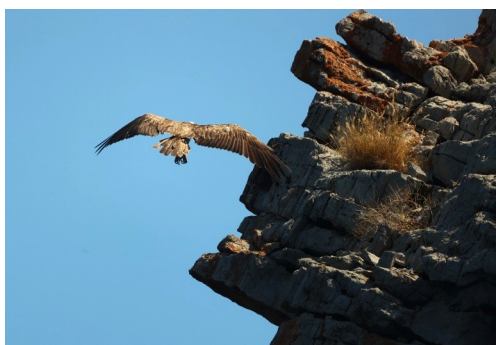
Striated heron



Shearwaters



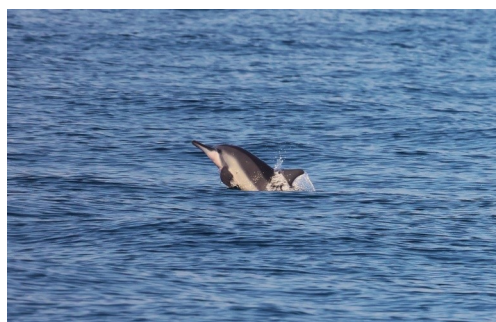
Great crested tern



Osprey



Reef heron



...and...a non-bird... the Common dolphin

### DNHG Recordors

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**Mammals—Jacky Judas**

### From the Editor:

The summer heat has hit and I am sure some of you are getting ready to travel to hopefully cooler destinations while others will still bravely weather the heat in the UAE. Either way please do share with us your experiences and memories by sending us your stories and photos to :

[gazelleeditor@gmail.com](mailto:gazelleeditor@gmail.com)

You can share anytime - no need to wait till the end of summer as I shall be in Dubai.

Have a wonderful break!



(Continued from page 1)

We then visited the Art Gallery at Al Hamriyah Studios which is one of the venues hosting:

**SHARJAH ART FOUNDATION: SHARJAH BIENNIAL 15  
THINKING HISTORICALLY IN THE PRESENT**

Conceived by the late Okwui Enwezor and curated by Hoor Al Qasimi, Director of Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah Biennial 15: *Thinking Historically in the Present* (SB15) reflects on Enwezor’s visionary work, which transformed contemporary art and established an ambitious intellectual project that has influenced the evolution of institutions and biennials around the world.

Hoor Al Qasimi interprets and re-envision the titular proposal by the late thinker to critically centre the past within the contemporary moment. Al Qasimi develops the concept of ‘thinking historically in the present’ by adopting a working methodology that privileges the role of intuition and incidence. Acknowledging the effect Enwezor’s documents (11) had in transforming her curatorial consciousness, she also builds upon her own long-term relationship with the Biennial, as visitor, artist, curator and, eventually, as director of the Foundation, an institution that came into being as a result of the Biennial, a fact Enwezor appreciably recognised.

SB15 will thus position Sharjah’s own lived past within the transcultural universe of thought furthered by over 300 works by over 150 artists and collectives, which will be installed in five cities and towns across the emirate.

Reference Sharjah Art Foundation <https://sharjahart.org>

After a guided tour of the venue we had lunch at the Fen café and then departed for the Al Mureijah Square venues (Galleries 1-6) to see more displays of Biennial 15 where we had another guided tour.

Our final museum visit to a Biennial 15 venue was to Sharjah Art Museum.

The Biennial 15 has now ended.

All four visits were very much enjoyed by everyone. Thank you very much to Hazelle Page for organizing the whole trip.

*Contribution by Valerie Chalmers based on notes from Hazelle Page  
Photos by Charles Laubach, Hazelle Page, James Conder, Michelle Bigold and Sandi Ellis*

Al Hamriyah



Al Mureijah Square venues and the Art Museum





## DNHG Trip to Ranthambore National Park in India - 19th to 23rd April 2023 - On tiger safari with Binish Roobas -



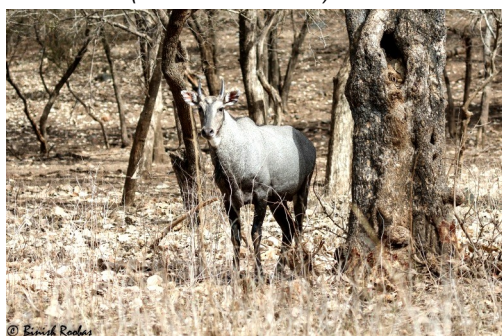
The Adventurers at Amer Fort



Royal Bengal tiger (*Panthera tigris tigris*)



© Binish Roobas  
Indian boar (*Sus scrofa cristatus*)



© Binish Roobas  
Nilgai (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*)



Sloth bear (*Melursus ursinus*)

**Ranthambore National Park** is in northern India and approximately 130km from Jaipur. The area covered by the park today was the former hunting grounds of the Maharajas of Jaipur. Initially it covered 282 km<sup>2</sup>. It was declared one of the Project Tiger reserves in 1973. Ranthambore became a national park on 1st November 1980 and today it covers an area of 1334 sq. km.

Ranthambore National Park (NP) is known for its Bengal tigers and is a popular place in India to see them in their natural jungle habitat. Tigers can be easily spotted even during the daytime.

The national park is situated in the Sawai Madhopur district of southeastern Rajasthan, about 110 km northeast of Kota and 140 km southeast of Jaipur, which is also the nearest airport.

Ranthambore National Park lies at the edge of a plateau and is bounded to the north by the Banas River and to the south by the Chambal River. It is named after the historic Ranthambore fortress which lies within the park.

The Ranthambore National Park landscape consists mainly of dry deciduous forests and open grassy meadows. These are characteristic examples of the type of jungle found in Central India. The flora of the park includes 539 species of flowering plants.

Other fauna includes the Indian leopard, nilgai, Indian boar, sambar, striped hyena, sloth bear, southern plains gray langur, rhesus macaque, mugger crocodile and chital. The sanctuary is also home to a wide variety, birds and reptiles, as well as the second largest banyan tree in India.

Binish was able to identify nearly 80 different bird species. We were treated with a few tiger sightings and were able to observe these beautiful animals for quite long periods of time. One tigress walked quite a way towards us before settling into a pool of water.

The tigers for their part totally ignored the human audience. Also seen were the elusive sloth bears.

On our first day we arrived at Jaipur International Airport and drove to the Hotel Ranthambore Regency located 4 hours away from the airport.

We then visited the Ranthambore Fort which was built in the 10th century at 210 m (700 ft) above the surrounding plain. Inside the fort are three red Karauli stone temples devoted to Ganesh, Shiva and Ramlalaji. There is also a Digamber Jain temple of Lord Sumatinath and one of Lord Sambhavanath. The temples were constructed in the 12th and 13th centuries.

On our second and third day we visited the Ranthambore National Park twice each day, from 6am till 9am and then again from 3pm till 6pm. The park is closed to visitors between 9am and 3pm. We drove through the park in very robust open 4-wheel drive vehicles which were able to carry up to nine passengers and allowed for excellent viewing of the surrounding countryside, flora and fauna.

There are 10 safari zones in the park, and we visited a different zone during each of our four visits to the park. It seems we spent most of our time in Zones 1- 5 which apparently are the best for spotting tigers.

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On our fourth day we drove to Jaipur. We spent the afternoon sightseeing and visited the Amer Fort and Jal Mahal.

Amer Fort is a good example of Rajput architecture with some of its buildings showing a strong influence of Mughal architecture. It is constructed from red sandstone and marble and was originally built by Raja Man Singh between December 1550 and July 1614. It was subsequently improved by following rulers over the next 150 years. We also visited Jahal Mahal which means "Water Palace" and is located in the middle of the Man Sagar Lake.

We drove past the Hawa Mahal which is a palace located in the city centre of Jaipur, which was built from red and pink sandstone.

On our fifth and last day we returned to Dubai having enjoyed the spectacular sights seen in Ranthambore National Park and the wonderful architecture of Jaipur. It was a truly excellent trip and so very well curated by Binish. Not a minute was wasted, and each day was filled with many wonderful sights. Our group thanks Binish for the great time had by all.

Contribution by Michelle Sinclair and photos by Binish Roobas



Royal Bengal tiger (*Panthera tigris tigris*)



Chital - Spotted deer (*Axis axis*)



Mugger or Marsh crocodile



Asian woolly necked stork (*Ciconia episcopus*)



Bengal monitor lizard (*Varanus benghalensis*)



Painted stork (*Mycteria leucocephala*)



Indian grey mongoose (*Urva edwardsii*)



Yellow-footed green pigeon (*Treron phoenicopterus*)



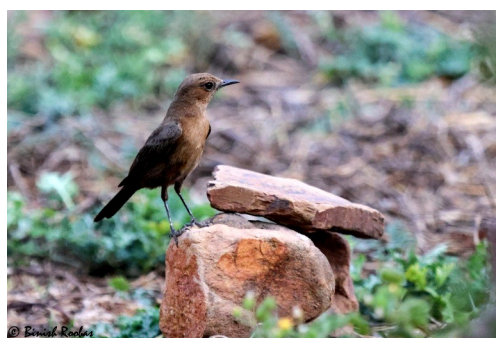
Recorder's bird sighting list



Ranthambore Fort



Amer Fort



Indian chat or Brown rock chat (*Oenanthe fusca*)





## Dubai Natural History Group (DNHG) Programme 2022/2023

### DNHG Lectures 2023

Monthly lectures will resume in September 2023 and dates will be announced in the next Gazelle

### DNHG Field Trips 2023

22 September - 1 October Discovering Slovenia

For more information on upcoming lectures, field trips and membership please refer to the DNHG website [www.dnhg.org](http://www.dnhg.org)

To sign up for field trips, please contact: Sonja Lavrenčič at [lavson@gmail.com](mailto:lavson@gmail.com)

## DNHG COMMITTEE 2022/2023

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## DNHG Membership

DNHG membership remains one of Dubai's best bargains at Dh100 for families and Dh50 for singles. Membership for the current year is valid from September 2022 to September 2023. As we have started hybrid meetings from September 2022, renewal fees can be paid at meetings or by the methods mentioned below.

New members can join by (i) sending to the Membership Secretary (see above) a completed one-page membership form, which can be downloaded from our website ([www.dnhg.org](http://www.dnhg.org)) and (ii) making payment to our Emirates NBD account by cash deposit or transfer from your bank or ATM, using our IBAN number AE640260001012012013302. However, this process does not always identify the payer. So if you wish to pay by cash deposit, please also photograph or scan a copy of your payment confirmation and send via e-mail to the Membership Secretary, so we know whose money we have received.