

# GIR

## Roaring Wilderness of the Asiatic Lions

Welcome to Gir, a protected area that echoes with the majestic roar of the Asiatic lions. Located in the semi-arid western region of India, Gir is the largest expanse of dry deciduous forest in the Saurashtra region of Gujarat state, boasting a rich tapestry of biodiversity. This protected area, one of India's oldest, is home to a plethora of species, including endangered and critically endangered ones. Gir is celebrated for having the only wild population of Asiatic Lions.



### A TRIUMPH OF CONSERVATION

Gir stands as a testament to successful conservation efforts. Once teetering on the brink of extinction in the early 20th century, the Asiatic lion population has made a remarkable resurgence thanks to the dedicated efforts of the Gujarat Forest Department with the local peoples' support.

Today, Gir stands tall as one of India's most sought-after wildlife destinations, drawing in countless eco-tourists year after year. The Gir's rolling hills and meandering rivers create an enigmatic and ever-changing landscape, a testament to the wonders of nature. It is not only a wildlife haven but also a cultural and religious epicentre in Gujarat's Kathiawar region.

### A RIVERINE WONDERLAND

Gir is an undulating and hilly area fringed by coastal plains. Rivers play a vital role in shaping the landscape and sustaining the rich biodiversity of Gir. It is crisscrossed by several rivers, contributing significantly to the area's ecological diversity and supporting the myriad of life forms. The important rivers are Hiran, Saraswati, Dhatardi, Shingoda, Shetrunji, Machhundari, Ghodavadi, Raval, Ardak, and Bhuvatirth. These rivers provide essential water sources for wildlife and create an ever-changing landscape, supporting diverse habitats and vegetation types. These watercourses are vital components of the delicate balance that characterizes this unique wilderness. Moreover, these rivers are lifelines for the local communities in and around Gir. Visitors to Gir often see wildlife congregating near these rivers, making them excellent locations for wildlife observations.



### GIR: AREA AND ACCESS

Spread over approximately 1,880 square kilometres, Gir encompasses Gir National Park, Gir Wildlife Sanctuary, Paniya Wildlife Sanctuary, Mitiyala Wildlife Sanctuary, and a buffer of reserved and protected forests. It spans three districts: Junagadh, Gir-Somnath, and Amreli. To safeguard the Asiatic Lions, Gir was declared a Wildlife Sanctuary on 18<sup>th</sup> September 1965.

Gir is easily accessible by road, rail, and air. Sasan village serves as the primary gateway to the wilderness of Gir, housing most ecotourism facilities. It is well-connected to nearby cities like Junagadh (60 km), Veraval (45 km), and Rajkot (160 km) via road and rail.



**AIR:** Keshod (60 km) and Diu (100 km) are the nearest airports, while Rajkot (160 km) and Ahmedabad (370 km) are the more prominent and well-connected options.

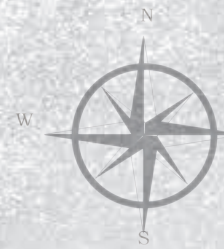


**RAIL:** The western railway station is located at Sasan and is connected to Ahmedabad by a meter-gauge railway line via Junagadh (60 km) and Rajkot (160 km).



**ROAD:** Taxi and bus services to Sasan are readily available from both Junagadh (60 km) and Veraval (45 km) train stations. GSRTC and private buses frequently ply to Sasan. Access by road is possible via multiple state highways.

### GIR MAP



### DO'S AND DON'TS FOR A MEMORABLE VISIT

#### DO'S

- ✓ Obtain a valid entry permit from Gujarat Forest Department's official website (<https://girlion.gujarat.gov.in>).
- ✓ Arrive at the reception centre at least 15 minutes before your departure time.
- ✓ Carry a valid identity card issued by the relevant authority.
- ✓ Respect the wildlife, their habits, and habitat.
- ✓ Keep a safe distance from wildlife.
- ✓ Wear dull-coloured clothes to blend in with the forest.
- ✓ Drive slowly and carefully, giving way to wildlife.
- ✓ Follow prescribed routes and time limits.
- ✓ Capture memories without disturbing the wildlife.
- ✓ Respect the sanctity of holy sites and local customs.
- ✓ Obey the laws, rules, and regulations of protected areas.
- ✓ Appreciate the forest's beauty and diverse wildlife, even if you don't spot a big cat.

#### DON'TS

- ✗ Do not litter; carry your trash out.
- ✗ Do not feed the birds and animals.
- ✗ Pets are not allowed.
- ✗ Avoid honking.
- ✗ Do not collect flora and fauna as souvenirs.
- ✗ Plastic and plastic items are prohibited.
- ✗ Stay within designated areas; no trespassing.
- ✗ Do not exit your vehicle.
- ✗ Avoid using spotlights or searchlights.
- ✗ Do not disturb or tease wildlife.
- ✗ No music; maintain silence and enjoy the sounds of nature.
- ✗ Smoking and liquor are strictly prohibited.
- ✗ Do not carry weapons or explosives inside protected areas.
- ✗ Do not carry food and plastic; these are prohibited inside protected areas.



#### ECOTOURISM CONTACT: OFFICE CONTACT:

Office of the Range Forest Officer, Reception Range, Sinh Sadan, Sasan-Gir, Junagadh, Gujarat-362135  
02877285621;  
gslcsgir@yahoo.com

Deputy Conservator of Forests, Wildlife Division, Sasan-Gir, Junagadh, Gujarat-362135  
02877285541;  
dcfwildlife@gmail.com



## ECOTOURISM

Ecotourism is pivotal in increasing awareness about forest and wildlife conservation while contributing to the local economy. Gir is one of the oldest ecotourism destinations in India, offering three distinct attractions: Gir Jungle Safari, Gir Interpretation Zone (Devaliya), and Ambari Interpretation Zone (Dhari). These destinations attract numerous visitors each year. Most ecotourism facilities are centralized in Sasan village, encompassing booking centres, souvenir shops, orientation centres, guest houses, and more.

## JUNGLE SAFARI

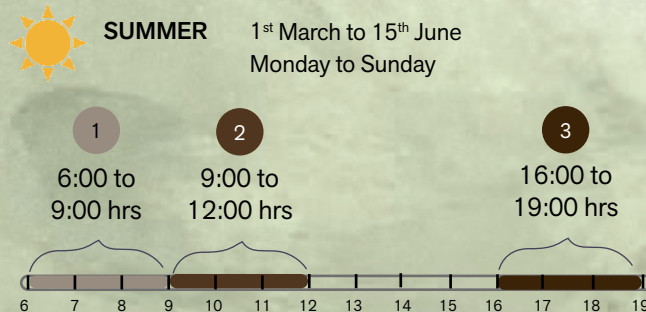
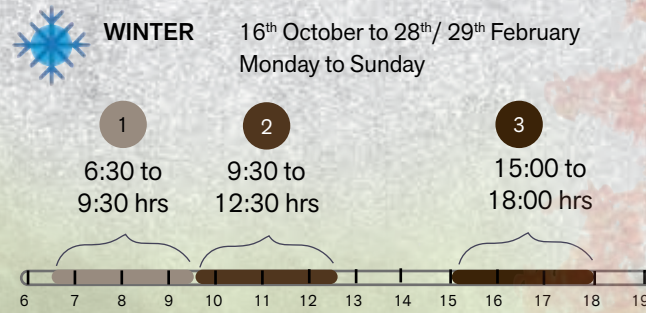


Gir Jungle Safaris operate from Sinh Sadan in Sasan village, offering visitors a chance to immerse themselves in the enchanting wilderness of Gir. With 13 different routes showcasing the forest's diversity, guided safaris provide interpretive insights. Visitors must book online through the official website to secure a safari permit. Permit bookings open three months in advance and close two hours before the scheduled visit.

For safari bookings and permit charges, please visit the website or scan the QR code <https://gir.lion.gujarat.gov.in>



## TIME SCHEDULE



**Please Note:** Gir Jungle Safari remains closed from 16<sup>th</sup> June to 15<sup>th</sup> October every year.

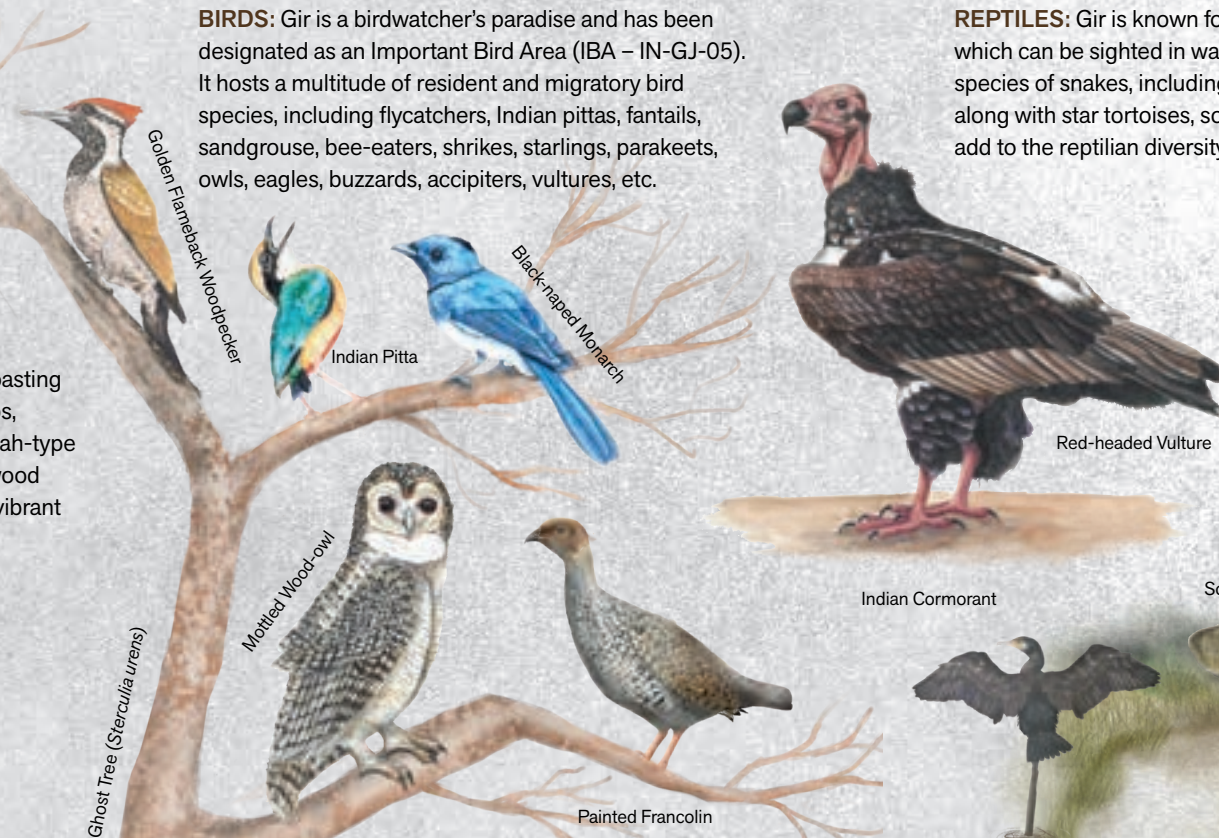
## BIODIVERSITY IN GIR

Gir is celebrated for its rich and diverse flora and fauna in the Saurashtra region. It is renowned as the last natural stronghold of the awe-inspiring Asiatic lions. The forest showcases a stunning variety of flora, fauna, and landscapes, with 41 species of mammals, 47 species of reptiles, 338 species of birds, and numerous amphibians and insects.

**FLORA:** Gir is home to a remarkable diversity of flora, boasting 631 recorded plant species, including trees, shrubs, herbs, climbers, and grasses. Dry deciduous forests and savannah-type grasslands define the vegetation, with species like axle wood and teak dominating different regions. Wild flowers add vibrant colours to the landscape in different seasons.



**BIRDS:** Gir is a birdwatcher's paradise and has been designated as an Important Bird Area (IBA – IN-GJ-05). It hosts a multitude of resident and migratory bird species, including flycatchers, Indian pittas, fantails, sandgrouse, bee-eaters, shrikes, starlings, parakeets, owls, eagles, buzzards, accipiters, vultures, etc.



**REPTILES:** Gir is known for its population of marsh crocodiles, which can be sighted in water bodies and riverine areas. Various species of snakes, including the Indian rock python and cobras, along with star tortoises, soft-shelled turtles, and monitor lizards, add to the reptilian diversity.



**MAMMALS:** The forest is inhabited by a diverse array of mammals, including Asiatic lions, Indian leopards, spotted deer, nilgai, sambar, four-horned antelope, chinkara, and more. Hanuman langur is the only primate found in Gir, while other mammals like jungle cats, rusty-spotted cats, civets, honey badgers, and wild pigs also call this habitat home.



Prepare for a journey into the Gir forest, where the wild reigns supreme, and nature's wonders await your discovery.

Be a part of the conservation story and experience the thrill of witnessing the majestic Asiatic lions in their natural habitat.

Teak Tree (*Tectona grandis*)



# GIR

National Park & Sanctuary

