

First announcement- PIT VIPER EXPEDITION 2016 Northern Western Ghats of India.

This is the 7th consecutive year of the now acclaimed PIT VIPER EXPEDITION of Herpactive. The last 6 years have seen teams gather vital data, compile popular articles and research notes and help collate baseline data on pit vipers as well as other Herpetofauna of the 3 states of Goa- Karnataka and Maharashtra.

This year the expedition broadens its scope and plans to set up long term monitoring data at a new field site and contribute to the existing knowledge of these highly evolved snakes. Study of their niche habitats through systematic photo, ecological documentation will be another objective and so will be conservation education to a selected target community target group.

The Expedition-

The Pit Viper Expedition 2016 (NWG) will target 3 species for data collection on habitat, taxonomy, color morphs and abundance besides collection of habitat preference data and photo documentation of other Herpetofauna. The 3 species of Pit vipers are the Hump Nosed Pit viper (*Hypnale hypnale*), Malabar Pit viper (*Trimeresurus malabaricus*) and Bamboo pit viper (*Trimeresurus gramineus*).

Besides this, the team will document any and all other forms of lesser forms of biodiversity that is intrinsic to the habitats of these charismatic species. We will also learn field data collection techniques, snakebite protocol and basic taxonomy amongst other aspects of ophiology and basic herpetology.

The Region-

We will work in the Northern Western Ghats of India including the Herpetofauna hotspots of Chorla, Mollem, Castle Rock, Dandeli and surrounding areas.

Who should join -

For those who wish to contribute to a one of its annual expedition through Northern Western Ghats canopy forests, cross the seasonal monsoon waters at picturesque locales and can brave high humidity and excessive rainfall, this trip is meant for you. Our expedition will take us through pristine Western Ghats forests in the states of Maharashtra, Goa and Karnataka over a period of 5 days.

What we will do

We will conduct opportunistic and systematic searches and surveys using state of the art field equipment and employ techniques under the guidance of herpetologists and field experts.

Our aim will be to document and collect baseline data on the 3 target species and their prey species in a span of 5 days. We will also catalogue other Herpetofauna as well as other lesser-known fauna as we traverse through unchartered forests, connect with a local school and a local NGO and help prepare a database for these forests.

Team strength will be restricted so join up soon.

Date- 29th June to 3rd July 2016. (29th June, 30th June, 1st July, 2nd July and 3rd July)

Fees- **Rs 15,500/-** only including transportation and basic camp meals. This does not include stay on day prior to the expedition and day after the expedition is over. Meeting point is at Panjim on 29th June 2016 at 9.00 am at Heera petrol pump. We do not look at stay arrangement before or after the expedition.

To book a seat one has to pay entire amount as advance to the following account. This amount is non refundable so please be cent percent sure that you are attending the expedition.

HERPACTIVE- 611401010050078.

Account type- Current account.

The IFSC Code is UBIN0561142.

Union Bank of India, Dhuler Mapusa Branch, North Goa.

For details contact ophidian_nirmal@yahoo.co.in

