

#SCREEN TIME

Is it true that the blue light from night-time scrolling can stop you from sleeping?

We often blame our phone's glare for finding it difficult to fall asleep. But our expert thinks things are more complicated.



Struggling to nod off? It's easy to blame the phone that's just inches from your face and the never-ending newsfeed that your thumb is busy scrolling, as you lie in bed. But the idea that it's the blue light emitted by your smartphone, that's disturbing you, isn't quite right. While blue or short-wavelength light (such as daylight or that emitted by tech) does affect our circadian rhythm, things are less clear cut than we often think.

"Sleep is a complex process," says Stuart Peirson, professor of Circadian Neuroscience at Oxford University. He explains that while the receptors in our eyes, that tell our brain when it's time to be awake, are triggered by cells that absorb blue light, they're also triggered by those that absorb longer wavelengths of light (such as red), which means it's not the colour of the glow that's the problem, it's the brightness and length of time we're exposed to it, and the



Limit naps during the day
Stick to a consistent sleep schedule
Avoid screen time before bed



The Whispering Woods Of Jim Corbett

PART 1



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I was eagerly awaiting the advent of a new year and new hopes. I also make new resolutions for the year. New resolutions help to set new goals and keep you alive and vibrant for the coming year. Therefore, I believe in weaving new resolutions every year, but one commitment remains unchanged, and that is, to visit nature reserves, wherever they are.

One such resolution, made in the beginning of 2018, took me on a journey to the world famous Tiger Reserve of Uttarakhand. The reserve in 1956 was named after the famous British Indian, Mr. Edward James Corbett (popularly known as Jim Corbett), who was born in Nainital in the year 1875 and enjoyed the rank of the colonel in the British Indian Army. He spent the major part of his life in the jungles here, now falling under the Corbett Tiger Reserve. He was a hunter-tracker-turned-conservationist. It is really difficult to ascertain whether it was his attachment with Nainital, being his birth place and the winter capital of the then United Province under British rule, or the fascination for the natural beauty of the landscape of these Sal-dominated forests, situated in the Himalayan foothills of Kumaon.

But one thing is for sure that he combated every inch of these luxuriant forests and knew them like the back of his palm. It is believed that in his lifetime, he must have



Tiger at Jim Corbett National Park.

killed more than hundred tigers/leopards in these and adjoining forests of Kumaon and Garhwal regions. He has not denied this fact, rather has vividly described many of these shikar expeditions. But he claims that these were not killings for the game. He justifies that these killings were done with the high purpose of saving people of the region from man-eaters. It is a debatable issue whether he was honest in his statement or it was only a cover-up by a famous hunter.

Padma Shri recipient and wild life expert, late Shri Kailash Sankhla, never agreed with this justification. Sankhla, belongs to Jodhpur and had done intensive research on tiger behaviour and therefore, his statement cannot be taken lightly. Having an experience of decades of managing various wildlife reserves, and especially, monitoring tiger behaviour, I too vouch for what the legendary Sankhla had stated, "If Corbett was right, then why barring rare cases, man-eater tigers and leopards seized their terror in this region after Mr. Corbett's era? Moreover, these forests are full of prey base with about 50 mammal spp. Then, why a shy animal, like tiger, should run the risk of life by entering villages? They are not known to kill people and cattle for adventure's sake."

Proving Jim Corbett to be a hunter or a Robinhood is an unending exercise, but surely, he deserves all the credit for creation of the first National Park of India to save the rich flora, fauna of these moist deciduous forests. After sal (Shorea robusta), other tree species like *haldu* (Adina cordifolia), *pipal* (Ficus religiosa), *rohini* (Mallotus philippensis) and mango are present in abundance in the entire reserve and neighbouring forests. Overall, more than 480 floral spp. have enriched this reserve. Initially in 1936,

#THE WILDS OF WILD



Winter fog in Corbett.

merely 520 sq. kilometer area was declared as Hailey National Park. In 1957, it was renamed as Jim Corbett to honour Mr. Corbett after his death in 1955. Later on, the reserve was extended to about 1318 sq. kilometer by merging of the entire Kalagarh Forest Division as buffer area.

Richness of this reserve, in terms of flora and fauna, may be appreciated by the fact that not only it became one of the eleven wildlife reserves included in the first phase of the Government of India's prestigious Tiger Project Scheme in 1973, but it also enjoyed the top status by hosting the inauguration of this scheme.

Geographically, this Tiger Reserve is located between lesser Himalayas in the north and Shivaliks in the south (towards Rajaji National Park, Dehradun).

This was my third visit to this nature's paradise. First time, I visited in 1972, with officer trainees of the famous Northern Forest Ranger's college, Dehradun and then in the summer of 1983, as Field Director of Sariska. This time I was accompanied by an old friend, Pushp Jain, a wildlife expert, who, too, has immense passion for wandering in such reserves. Reaching Ram Nagar, we had a brief meeting with the Field Director of the reserve. He generously made our stay at the legendary old forest rest house at Dhikala, located in the heart of the core area of the reserve. Hiring a gypsy, we drove on the tar road towards the north of Ram Nagar, keeping the Kosi river on our right. This road marks the eastern boundary of the reserve. On our left was a lush green jungle. A drive, worth twenty minutes, took

us to Dhangarh, the eastern gateway to Corbett. It was impressive to see that the entry to every tourist was being given after thorough checking of the vehicles and relevant entries in the record. The taxi drivers also seemed pretty cooperative unlike the reserves of Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. Formalities were done without any kind of hustle-bustle. Tourists seemed careful not to disturb the serenity of the place. From here, Dhikala is about 30 kilometers and in this stretch, a ten-foot wide tar road passes through the richest part of this tiger reserve. After a place called Sultan, for the first time, river Ramganga, the lifeline of Corbett, became visible. The river was on our right. On the left hand, we passed through several dry water streams, which contribute to Ramganga during rainy season. The rich riverine forests, on both sides of the river, support huge wild fauna. That is the reason this reserve is world famous for its avi-



World Pianist Day

World Pianist Day, celebrated on November 8, is a special occasion that honours pianists and their contributions to music. This day recognizes the skill and dedication of pianists who bring the piano to life. It's a time to appreciate the classical and contemporary talents that have shaped how we experience piano music today. The day emphasizes pianists' diverse styles and creativity. World Pianist Day also encourages people to explore piano music by attending live performances, listening to piano tracks, or even starting to play piano themselves.

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benefit of the tourists. Our driver had gathered information about movement of a tiger pair this side. He was hurriedly running towards this point, but in fact, I was particularly keen on meeting more and more elephant herds than tigers. Of course, we could spot two elephants but at quite a distance. There was no point in waiting on them to come close. Therefore, we allowed the driver to reach the possible location of the tiger pair.

On the dirt track, we found a day's old pugmark of a tiger. We followed these marks but they disappeared after a while. In this pursuit, we reached a point where a broken old sal tree was standing. Gypsy drivers and elephant mahouts use this tree as a milestone while exchanging information on animal sightings and other happenings in the jungle. On other tracks, we found few more pugmarks but these had been spoiled by gypsy tyres and animal hooves. Of course, we saw few small herds of barking deer. They barked *Kharr! Kharr! Kharr!* for which they have been named barking deer. Of course, in entire Corbett, at any time of the year, one can see sizeable herds of spotted deer. We saw sambar also but they were either loners or in groups of two to three animals only, unlike Sariska and Bandhanbhora, where they may easily be spotted in big numbers.

The sun was about to set. We were planning to return to our camp, when suddenly a panic call from a chital echoed, piercing through the serenity of the jungle. Seconds later, it was followed by few more chital. We got alert. There could be some predator in the vicinity. Three chital ran awhile and then stopped and started gazing at our left side.

To be continued...

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Bengal Tiger, Corbett, Uttarakhand.

#TRAVEL TECH

Phone Photography

Take the best pics anytime, anywhere.

Looking for some smartphone photography hacks to up your content creation game? Look no further. Here are some quick mobile photography tips and tricks to wow your friends and make even serious photographers jealous. By now, we're all familiar with the basics of smartphone photography. You pull out your phone and push a button. But if you really plan to preserve those memories for posterity, then, you'll want your phone snaps to look their best. So, up your phone photo game with these tips and tricks.



Use Gridlines

One of the easiest and best ways to improve your mobile photos is to turn on the camera's gridlines. That superimposes a series of lines on the screen of your smartphone's camera, that are based on the 'rule of thirds,' a photographic composition principle that says an image should

be broken down into thirds, both horizontally and vertically, so that you have nine parts in total. According to this theory, if you place points of interest in these intersections or along the lines, your photo will be more balanced, level, and allow viewers to interact with it more naturally.

Use Dark Material

Playing with exposure isn't something that amateur photographers will probably mess around with, but it's a useful technique once you have a handle on things. While you can undoubtedly adjust ISO in your phone's 'Pro Mode,' you can do a quick-and-dirty exposure hack with any dark material. Take your materi-

al, a piece of paper or dark clothing work tremendously, and put it in front of the camera. Allow the phone to automatically adjust, wait a few seconds or tap the screen, then remove it and snap the picture. You'll likely get a slightly different effect than merely manipulating settings. So, experiment with it!

Use Polarized Sunglasses

You might have done this one already if you were trying to be artsy for Instagram, but it's a legitimate technique. Camera photographers often carry around polarized filters to place over their lenses. They serve to darken bright skies, reduce glares, or manage reflections. It's a

pretty valuable tool, especially if you're shooting during the sunny part of the day. Chances are you've got your shades on you. If they're polarized, you can use them just like a camera filter! That's what smartphone photography is all about, convenience!

Balloons, Instead of Drones

One of the best mobile photography tricks is to introduce a drone into your content. Drones are a badass tool for the modern photographer. While pictures from an elevated vantage point have long been some of the most striking, the ease and accessibility of real aerial photography has influenced a renaissance of 21st-century photography.

There are a few problems with drones, though. They're expensive as hell. They're, kind of, hard to operate with destroying them. And, worst of all, it's usually illegal to fly them in pretty much any place you would want to fly a drone.

But you know what the DGCA doesn't regulate? Balloons.

It sounds dumb, but hear us out. You can use a bunch of party balloons with helium, or one weather balloon. Some tips for making this happen include:

- Secure your phone to the balloon, excessively (eliminates camera shake and peace of mind, simultaneously).
- Set your phone to take 5-10 second time lapses.
- Try sport or burst mode.
- Make sure to position your phone at a downward angle.
- Be wary of leading lines when choosing where to launch your smartphone balloon drone.
- Hold onto the string of the balloon for dear life.



Take Advantage Of Natural Light

It's all about the light. It's what helps make a good image a great image. Check out the shadows that the sun makes on subjects. Notice the reflective light off buildings. Practice during the 'golden hour,' the period shortly after sunrise or just before sunset. Watch how the light from a window falls inside a room at different moments.

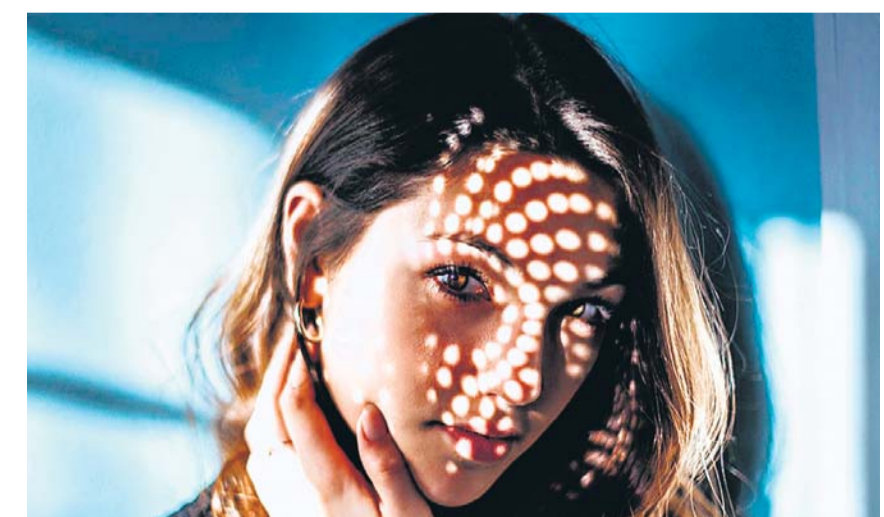
Stabilise Your Shots

Camera shake when taking pictures is a factor on all cameras. The key to fixing this is to practice how you hold your phone.

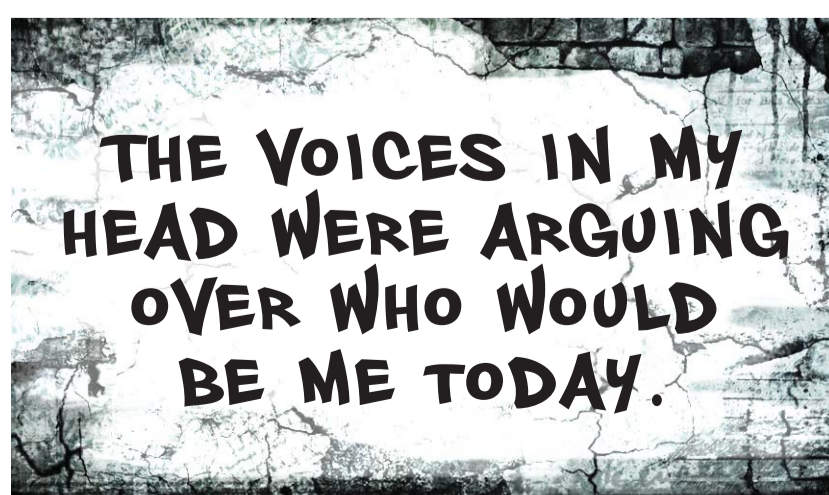
- Hold it horizontally at all times, instead of vertically, to get a wider image.
- Try burst mode when snapping pictures of moving objects.
- Know what you will use for the shutter (the button assigned, a software shutter button, a timer, or the volume on your headphones). The idea is to get to where you take clear images with no camera shake.
- Use a tripod for stability. This frees you up to focus on better pictures.

Mix Up Your Angles

Change your perspective on things. Trying different angles gives you better shots and shows how you see the subject. So, get down on the ground, climb to a high vantage point, or move to the side to change your point of view. Try as many angles on your subject as possible.



THE WALL



BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

