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Interdisciplinary Ecology

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from September 2023 to January 2024

Born in 1988 in Bengaluru, India

Studied Chemistry, Botany, and Zoology at Christ University, Wildlife Biology and Conservation at the National Centre for Biological Sciences–TIFR, and Interdisciplinary Ecology at the University of Florida

FELLOWSHIP

College for Life Sciences

### PROJECT

## The Jungle Book Reimagined: Constructing Narratives on Nature and Wildlife Using Science and Art

Popular narratives shaped by stories and folklore have profound impacts on how we interact with nature. They collectively determine our relationship with wild animals and are integral in guiding our decisions whether and how to protect species threatened with extinction. Narratives can be influenced and altered through knowledge generation (scientific exploration) and propagation (science communication). My first objective is to construct a unified conceptual framework that synergistically integrates the various components of Asiatic wild dog (“dhole”) ecology that my research has been addressing. I will use empirical data to test and validate this framework, to gain a holistic understanding of how metapopulations of socially complex species function in heterogeneous landscapes. Second, I intend to use my skills as a cartoonist and storyteller to combine science, art, humour, and popular culture to retell stories about dholes and other Indian wildlife species in the form of a fully illustrated book. This “reimagined” version of The Jungle Book will be rooted in ecological insights gained from rigorous scientific research and linked to narratives that indigenous scientists have accumulated through their lived experience. Considered together, (i) scientific investigation into how animal populations and metapopulations function and confronting theory with field data forms the basis for formulating strategies to reverse trajectories of extinction; and (ii) adopting innovative ways to communicate insights gained from such scientific research can help reconstruct narratives of human-wildlife relationships and foster public engagement in conservation.

### Recommended Reading

Srivathsa, Arjun, Ryan G. Rodrigues, Kok Ben Toh, Arun Zachariah, Ryan W. Taylor, Madan K. Oli, and Uma Ramakrishnan (2021). “The Truth about Scats and Dogs: Next-Generation Sequencing and Spatial Capture–Recapture Models Offer Opportunities for Conservation Monitoring of an Endangered Social Canid.” *Biological Conservation* 256: 109028. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2021.109028>.

Srivathsa, Arjun, Aditya Banerjee, Soumya Banerjee, Malaika Mathew Chawla, Anshita Das, Divyajyoti Ganguly, Ryan G. Rodrigues, et al. (2022). “Chasms in Charismatic Species Research: Seventy Years of Carnivore Science and Its Implications for Conservation and Policy in India.” *Biological Conservation* 273: 109694. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2022.109694>.

Srivathsa, Arjun, Divya Vasudev, Tanaya Nair, Stotra Chakrabarti, Pranav Chanchani, Ruth DeFries, Arpit Deomurari, et al. (2023). “Prioritizing India’s Landscapes for Biodiversity, Ecosystem Services and Human Well-Being.” *Nature Sustainability*. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-023-01063-2>.

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PUBLICATIONS FROM THE FELLOW LIBRARY

Srivathsa, Arjun (London,2023)

Prioritizing India's landscapes for biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1852820136>

Srivathsa, Arjun (Amsterdam [u.a.],2021)

The truth about scats and dogs : next-generation sequencing and spatial capture–recapture models offer opportunities for conservation monitoring of an endangered social canid

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1858262038>