

Sloth Bears Celebrate their Day with Sweet As Honey Tribute to Animal Rescue, Resilience and Recovery

Friday 11 October, 2024

In the words of Winnie the Pooh, *"You can't help but love a bear that loves honey"*, and we totally agree.

On October 12th, International Animal Rescue (IAR) invites you to join us in celebrating World Sloth Bear Day! This day is not just about recognising the beauty and unique charm of sloth bears but also about honouring the incredible resilience of these magnificent creatures.

This year, we are thrilled to share the heartwarming story of Mithali, one of our beloved sloth bears, as she enjoys a sweet pot of honey to mark this special occasion.

IAR's partner in India, Wildlife SOS, delivers excellent work in collaboration with local communities and has worked with Mithali and her sibling since they were found trapped in a dry well with their deceased mother for over 48 hours. At just 20 weeks old, they were discovered wailing and clinging to their mother's mammary, overwhelmed and frightened by the tragic events they had experienced.

Despite their dire circumstances, the two orphaned cubs have emerged victorious, embodying the spirit of their namesakes: Indian cricket legends Mithali Raj and Mahendra Singh Dhoni. While Mithali Raj broke barriers as the captain of India's women's cricket team, leading it to a commendable ODI ranking of number 3, Dhoni inspired countless fans as he guided India to victory in the 2011 ICC Cricket World Cup.

Just like their namesakes, Mithali and her sibling have shown remarkable courage in overcoming adversity. Thanks to the dedicated care provided by our IAR, Wildlife SOS and the Bear Rescue Centre (BBRC) team, they are learning to thrive in a safe environment. Under the nurturing guidance of Ankita Bear, Mithali and her sibling have slowly come out of their shells, embracing life with newfound hope.

It is truly heartwarming to witness their progress and see them enjoying the little things, like indulging in honey.

On World Sloth Bear Day, we celebrate and share some unique facts about these bears, who are central to Indian mythology.

Fun Facts About World Sloth Bear Day:

- **Conservation Status:** Sloth bears are classified as vulnerable due to habitat loss and poaching. Awareness days like World Sloth Bear Day help raise awareness for their conservation needs.
- **Dietary Habits:** Sloth bears primarily feed on insects, fruits, and honey, making them crucial for seed dispersal in their habitats.
- **Unique Characteristics:** Known for their shaggy fur and long claws, sloth bears are uniquely adapted to dig for insects and honeycomb, showcasing their essential role in the ecosystem.

As we celebrate World Sloth Bear Day, we invite you to join us in supporting Mithali and Maahi's journey toward a bright future. Your support is vital in ensuring these incredible bears continue receiving the love and care they deserve.

Native to the Indian Subcontinent, even though sloth bears are legally protected through the Indian Wildlife Protection Act of 1972, the population of this bear is still decreasing, with only around 6-11,000 remaining in the wild they are on the IUCN Red List as vulnerable,

Gavin Bruce, CEO at International Animal Rescue, emphasised, "The risk of extinction faced by sloth bears underscores the urgent need for their protection. Co-existence with these magnificent creatures is imperative, and raising awareness about their plight is a shared responsibility."

Let's spread the word about the importance of conserving sloth bears and their habitats. For more information on how you can help, please visit

<https://www.internationalanimalrescue.org/projects/indian-sloth-bear>

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