

Remote control operation removes tiger's collar in India

April 4 2020



The tiger, named Walker, covered 3,000 kilometres across India in search of a mate and prey

A delicate remote control operation to remove a tracking collar from a tiger on an epic 13-month trek through India has been carried out to

avoid the device choking the animal.

The feline explorer, named Walker for the roughly 3,000 kilometres (1,800 miles) of terrain it covered, has been tracked by Indian wildlife experts through forests, farms, highways and villages.

It was fitted as a three-year-old with a radio collar and followed by GPS since February last year.

A tortuous trek in search of a mate and prey took the tiger on a winding route from one animal sanctuary in the western state of Maharashtra to another about 1,300 kilometres away, according to the Wildlife Institute of India (WII).

But the collar's battery drained and the tiger began to outgrow the device, presenting a choking hazard that prompted conservationists to remove it last week using a "remote drop-off option".

"The animal has achieved all the skills to survive and avoid humans," a report by WII said, and attempts would now be made to track the male tiger by camera.

A video of the operation, which has been widely viewed on [social media](#), shows Walker laying on the ground before jumping up in surprise as the collar suddenly pops off.

The tiger was one of three cubs born in the state's Tipeshwar wildlife sanctuary in 2016.

It has since settled in Dnyanganga sanctuary in the same state, about 1,300 kilometres away.

The animal has roamed virtually unseen by humans during its 13 months

on the move—a feat WII experts said showed how the tigers cleverly "traverse through human-dominated landscapes without any conflict".

India is estimated to be home to about 70 percent of the world's tigers, which are considered an endangered species.

The government said in July last year that since 2015 the [tiger](#) population had increased 30 percent to almost 3,000.

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