

Gaurav Vashistha from our team was awarded the WCS John Thorbjarnarson fellowship for reptile conservation in October 2022. The fellowship is to support upgradation of a captive gharial hatchery at Katarniaghat. One of our CLP project objectives is to assess whether holding the gharial hatchlings during the monsoon increase their survival and recruitment in the parent population in the Katarniaghat? The hatchery upgrade would assist in ensuring healthy and higher survival of hatchlings during the hold. The upgrades are complete now. We have constructed two large pools with the dimensions 20 ft length* 6 ft width* 4 ft depth. The pools drainage has been repaired and 3 inch exit pipes have been installed to quickly clear the pools for cleaning. The entire hatchery has been covered with greenhouse netting, to reduce solar insolation directly into the pools. Further, pool walls have been raised an additional 1 ft on each side, to give the hatchlings safe hiding space and reduce their stress.



Shantanu after completing a perception survey Shantanu and Gaurav Vashistha

Gaurav Vashistha will be presenting (oral) at Scientific Advances in River Restoration Conference at Liverpool University in September 2023. His accepted abstract for presentation is titled "Homeless in one's own home: A conservation dilemma for gharial". CLP has graciously approved to support this conference attendance with CLP alumni travel grant.



Our team (L-R: Gulam, Lakshman, Devvrat, Shantanu) finds a gharial nest on an artificial sandbank

Shantanu Ugemuge, intern under CLP project, complete his two months in the field. He helped the forest department with daily nesting surveys in Girwa River and community perception surveys in Ghaghra River. Observant, obedient and dedicated to his work, shantanu is always in for more field and smiles.



Shantanu and Gaurav Vashistha

Artificial sandbanks , first tried in 2020, were built by the state forest department for the fourth year this season and we recorded nests on some of these artificial sites. An amazing feat in gharial conservation by the Katerniaghat wildlife sanctuary, Uttar Pradesh forest department and our team. we have been able to maintain gharial nest numbers above 35 and hatching success above 90% since 2020.