

8 Pygmy Hogs restored in Barnadi WLS



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AT Staff Reporter 30 May 2017 Updated 30 May 10700 views

Eight numbers of Pygmy Hogs (four male and four female) formally restored in the Barnadi [Wildlife](#) Sanctuary on May 29 by Khampha Borgayari, Deputy Chief of BTC in presence of Andrew Terry of Durrell [Wildlife Conservation](#) Trust, [UK](#) and Dr. Gautam Narayan, Director Pygmy Hog [Conservation](#) Programme in Assam. Several distinguished people including Jagadish Sarkar, EM, BTC; Lwmsrao Daimari, EM, BTC; Kamali Basumatari, Nerson Boro, Deputy Speaker, BTC; MLA, [Paneri](#) LAC; Robinson Mushahari, Secretary, Forest, BTC; [Hiranya](#) Kumar Sarma, Field Director, Manas [National](#) Park; Madhurjya Kumar Sarma, DFO, Dhansiri Forest Division, [Udalguri](#); Dr. Parag Deka, specialist of Pygmy Hog [Conservation](#) Programme etc. It needs mention that last year on May 21 six numbers of Pygmy Hogs (three male and three female) were restored in Barnadi WLS for the first time after more than thirty years of its extinction in Barnadi WLS. The restoration programme was supervised last year by Craig Jones, Daniel Cravan and Bex Bonea of Durrell [Wildlife Conservation](#) Trust, Channel Islands, Jersey, [UK](#). Pygmy Hog is the world's smallest and rarest extant suids which can hardly be seen in wild by people. It is 55 to 71 cm long weighs around 5 to 8 kg and stands 12 inches tall. Once Pygmy Hog was common along the foothills plains of Himalayas in [India](#), Nepal and Bhutan. By 1980 it was known to be endangered with only two isolated populations on record in Manas [National](#) Park and in Barnadi [Wildlife](#) Sanctuary in [Udalguri](#) district. Pygmy Hog featured in the first [IUCN](#)/WWF list (1984) of twelve most threatened [animal](#) species in the world. The population in Barnadi WLS was believed to have been lost by 1981 due to massive destruction of forest, burning and unauthorised human settlement. A small number was rediscovered in 1990. But no Pygmy Hog was reported there since 1994. [IUCN](#) (International Union for the [Conservation](#) of [Nature](#)) classified it [as](#) critically endangered in 1995. Organizations like Durrell [Wildlife Conservation](#) Trust of [UK](#) and Assam Forest Department and Indian government initiated the PHCP (Pygmy Hog [Conservation](#) Programme) for its captive breeding. Accordingly six Pygmy Hogs were

captured in Manas [National](#) Park in 1996,taken to Basistha breeding centre in Guwahati and then to PHCP Nameri. According to Andrew Terry of Durrell WCT,[UK](#) they have so far translocated [108](#) numbers of Pygmy Hogs to various wildlife sanctuaries and [National](#) Parks in Assam including [Orang](#) NP,Sonai-Rupai WLS,Barnadi WLS etc.Andrew Terry of Durrell WLT said that they had taken up conservation of Pygmy Hog in Assam since 1971.This has been their tenth translocation of Pygmy Hog in Assam.With special reference to Barnadi WLS he said that they had started grassland management in Barnadi WLS in during 2015 being supported by Assam government ,PHCP and BTC authority before the translocation of first batch of six Pygmy Hogs on May 21 in [2016](#)."The [animal](#) is too shy of human beings and live on mixture of insects and roots",he said.Speaking on the occasion Khampha Borgayari, Deputy Chief of BTC thanked Durrell [Wildlife Conservation](#) Trust and PHCP headed by Dr.Gautam Narayan for their excellent initiative for the [conservation](#) and revival of Pygmy Hogs in Assam.He invited Durrell WCT and PHCP to [start](#) working in Manas [National](#) Park. He also thanked MK Sarma.DFO,[Udalguri Udalguri](#) and staff for the successful restoration of Pygmy Hogs in Barnadi WLS.

AT Staff Reporter

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