CHAPTER 1
THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

(i) Jungle Literature as a genre

It is universally accepted that literature is a record of human experience. The human experience is vast and varied. It includes the urban life as well as the tribal and wild life in the jungle. The dense forests, the wild life and the natural life of the tribal communities in remote jungles are very romantic to urban readers owing to the strangeness and unusual setting. It arouses curiosity to know the thrilling experience of man-animal encounter in the jungle and the man-nature and man-animal relationship. Therefore, the literature in the form of jungle myths and legends is in abundance from the very primitive age. For example, the *Panchtantra* from Sanskrit and *Aesop’s Fables* have a high place in the realm of immortal classic literature.

The children stories also create fascination for stories of the jungle life. The story of *Tarzan* as a companion of wild beasts and *Mowgli’s* story are a great attraction not only to the children but also to the grown ups. Gradually such stories cultivated the need and liking for the accounts of men and beast in the jungle, and that perhaps culminated in the rise of the jungle literature. The study of animals behaviour began with early man’s first attempts to understand the creatures around him. Today it is still one of the most complex and challenging tasks. In fact, at present we seem closer to understanding the secrets of wild life. But this understanding does not depend on delicate instruments or on computers. A person having experience of jungle life, armed with binoculars, camera and hidden in a blind can acquire enough facts about wild life; to keep him thinking for a year. Some biologists experiment with animals in the laboratory others prefer to watch them undisturbed in their natural surroundings,
because they believe that the animal’s behavior has helped the species to survive and evolve under the conditions of the environment. The author who writes on wild life and about jungles should have wide experience of the jungle life and needs deep insight to create a fascinating collection of real-life jungle stories. As the name implies, Jungle Literature is a literature about jungle life, wild and tribal life, which is an inseparable part of human life. The writer carefully records wild animals, birds, flowers and trees, the scent of the jungle by day time and the secrete calls of wild animals in the night. His encounters with wild animals in the jungle are very exciting and thrilling adventures. Jungle stories portrays many wild animals, birds and jungle men distinctly. Jungle literature reveal many interesting aspects of wild life in the jungles. Usually the writer of jungle literature has natural inclination for the observation of the wild life and its environment with subjective interpretation. Tracking the wild animals is an interesting jungle activity. One needs long experience to obtain this skill. Another interesting feature of jungle literature is that the occult is always associated with hunting experiences and forest lore. Therefore author also writes on the supernatural experiences and comments on the common beliefs on the occult. The writer of jungle literature comments on the superstitions of the aborigines who live in the jungle areas.

The author depicts wild life and the tribal life in the forest. His chief interest is to focus on the behavior of wild animals in their natural surrounding. The writer of jungle literature records scenes, sights and phenomenon’s of the Nature. The writer reconstructs jungle events from the signs and sounds in the jungle. Therefore jungle stories are very interesting for the common readers. The literature based on facts is often called as ‘Literature of Knowledge’ after De Quiency,
because it is informative. In that sense majority of jungle literature is an informative source of jungle life.

The Game hunters wrote most of our early natural history literature. Their experiences of hunting wild animals in the jungles of different localities of the country are varied; and therefore there is always great variety in their narratives. ‘Shikar’ has left a mixed legacy in our country. In the bygone era, there was no naturalist as ardent as the hunter in pursuit of his quarry. He was well-versed in jungle lore, was a keen observer and kept meticulous records of the wild life. Hunting stories have special place and they are very outstanding in the annals of natural history. They occupy an important place in the record of natural history. They are the chronicles of our vanishing natural heritage. Shikar stories of the early age are the imprinted proof of a lost world.

The 18th and 19th centuries were great centuries of explorations by the Europeans which resulted in the discoveries of remote new lands with strange information. The explorers wrote down their accounts of voyages consisting of new lands with different kinds of climate, nature and wild and tribal life. *The Gulliver’s Travels* by Jonathan Swift is the best example of such literary work where we meet very tiny race of the height of a small pin in Lilliput, or a strange huge cat in Brobdignag or the land of Yahoos.

The European explorers were responsible for the creation of jungle literature of the different distinct lands. For example, W.C.Bryant and J.F.Cooper dealt with jungle life belonging to newly discovered America and Jim Corbett concentrated on jungle experience at the foothills of Himalaya in India in his works.

The environmentalists like Dian Fossey and Dr. Jane Goodall wrote on the jungles and animal behaviour. Dr. Dian Fossey, a scientist spent nearly twenty years living among and studying mountain gorillas
in Africa. Her writing has uncovered many details about how gorillas live. Her famous book is *Gorillas In The Mist*.


Dr. Jane Goodall has written books for children also. They are: *The Bush Baby, My life with Chimpanzees, The Chimpanzee Family Book, Jane Goodall’s Animal World* etc.

Farley Mowat of Canada has earned world-wide reputation by writing books such as *Never Cry Wolf (1963)* and *People of the Deer (1952)*. He has travelled throughout Canada and to many remote places in the world. He studies nature closely and his writing is based on his personal experiences. His *People of the Deer* is the story of hunters and deer’s hunting. *Never Cry Wolf* is the outcome of his expedition sponsored by the Department of Wild Life Protection, Canada.

Kenneth Anderson has written stories on Indian wild life. His stories are exciting, sensational and are based on his personal experience. Joy Adamson’s books on ‘Elsa’, the lioness and her cubs, *Born Free, Living Free, Forever Free* have captured the hearts of wild life lovers. Her other book *Queen of Shaba* is the most exciting story of the African Leopard. In *Pipa’s Challange (1976)* she describes life of a cheetah. Joy Adamson’s books and the films based on it *Born Free* became popular throughout the world because of live experience of the jungle life. Richard Burton, a nature scientist has written *Nature’s Night Life* in which he depicts the life in the jungles of Africa. Similarly Bill Wodely’s *Elephant People* is the most outstanding book on African
jungle life. The East African writer John Taylor is known for his two outstanding books on African Jungles, *Man eaters and Marauders* and *Big Game and Big Game Rifles*.

The recent growing awareness and the significance of ecological perspective on jungle literature in the 21st century is not an abrupt phenomenon. It is the dawn of new creed of life created by untiring efforts of the visionary writer Jim Corbett in the utter darkness of the night of ignorance about reciprocal relationship of the civilized urban man and the man-wild relationship in the cradle of the nature for peaceful and happy human life. In that sense Jim Corbett is a foreseer, great philosopher and theologian to whom the mankind will pay everlasting tribute. Kenneth Anderson continued the tradition of Jim Corbett more intensely. Like Jim Corbett, he is a ‘hunter-turned-conservator’. His love for the denizens of the Indian jungle led him to big game hunting and eventually to writing real-life adventure stories. His jungle stories reflect his genuine concern for Indian wild life which is in danger of extinction by the encroachment of a ‘developing’ population.

Jim Corbett’s pioneering work in jungle literature in India is so influencing that it has started a trend of writing jungle literature in different Indian regional languages, dealing with the wild and human life in the provincial jungles in the nook and corner of India and the jungle literature has come in such a vogue that it claims prominent place alongwith other types of literature in India.

It is very difficult here to take survey of the Indian jungle literature in all Indian regional languages. So a brief rapid survey of jungle literature in Hindi, the national language of India and Marathi, is taken here.

Shri. Udayvir ‘Veeraj’ is one of the leading writers of jungle literature in Hindi. He has recorded vivid accounts of his jungle
experiences in his books viz. बनराज के राज में (i.e. In the Kingdom of the 
Lion), हाथियों की लोज में (In search of the Elephants) जंगल के रहस्य, (i.e. 
Secrets of the Jungle) हाथियों का खेड़ा (i.e. The trenches for Elephants) 
These books contain exceptionally thrilling experiences about the wild 
animals witnessed by the author in his fascinating narrative. In 
addition, Pradeep Sharma, and such other popular Hindi writers have 
produced ample jungle literature in Hindi. Shriram Sharma and 
Manohardas Chaturvedi are the two eminent writers in Hindi who 
wrote on wild life. Shriram Shama’s book “शिकार” (Shikar) contains 
fascinating accounts of his hunting experiences. Manohardas 
Chaturvedi provides very valuable information of the panther in his 
book “पुतलदार का शिकार” (The Panther on the Prowl.)

The scenario of jungle literature in Marathi is rather different. 
Occasionally a few but devoted writers have spent their maximum life 
time in the exploration of the jungles and they recorded the life style of 
the wild life and its surrounding nature. Their works may be 
comparatively small in number but their merit as jungle literature is 
very noteworthy and of great excellence. Maruti Chittampalli, 
Vyankatesh Madgulkar, Ranjeet Desai, Atul Dhamankar, 
Krishnamegh Kunthe and such others are popular Marathi writers of 
the jungle literature. Among them Maruthi Chittampalli and V. 
Madgulkar are the writers of the forefront. Vyankatesh Madgulkar 
wrote a few stray jungle stories occurring in the collection of stories but 
his (Nagzira) नागजिर is highly acclaimed work on Nagzira Sanctury 
recording the life conditions of the wild life of that region. His highly 
debated ‘सत्तांतर’ (Sattantar) is a book on the study of jungle apes. 

However, the prominent Marathi writer on jungle literature is 
Maruthi Chittampalli of Solapur. Being associated with the 
Department of Forest as the Forest Officer, Maruthi Chittampalli has 
spent all his career in the close study of wild and tribal life in various
jungles in Maharashtra. He has thoroughly depicted, in its real sense, the beasts and birds of the jungles with exceptional skill. The list of his works include the following titles,

1) अरण्य व्यापन (The Jungle Reading)
2) जंगलाचूं देण (Gifts of the Jungle)
3) सन्नाटा (Passages through the forest)
4) रातवा (Ratva)
5) निसर्ग व्यापन (Nature Reading)
6) चैत्र फूलवी (Blossom in Chaitra)

It may not be an exaggeration to state that Maruthi Chittampalli is ‘Jim Corbett of Marathi Literature’ owing to his passion for, keen observation of jungle life as well as for his creed of jungle life. The entire credit of giving recognition and significant place to jungle literature in Marathi at par with other literary forms goes to Maruthi Chittampalli.

The Jungle Literature in and outside India display broadly the use of the ecological study approach. It records the writer’s observations about interaction between the wild life and its environment. Jim Corbett is not an exception to this. Unknowingly, he used the same method with a sense of curiosity and deep interest in the environment. He showed concern for natural interaction between the species and their environment and hated the imbalance in the ecosystem. Jim Corbett was a lover of jungle and jungle life, and recorded his observations on the interaction between the life in jungle and its environment. Jim Corbett and Kenneth Anderson had natural inclination to and aptitude for observation and maintaining the record of jungle life with their subjective interpretation.
Shikar Lore:

Shikar Stories are very popular since ancient age. Shikar Lore is almost synonymous with Jim Corbett an exceptionally fine writer. Corbett was worried about the finding fortunes of the tiger. But his *The Man-Eaters of Kumaon* continues to be a best seller today. Actually Corbett took pains to stress that it was circumstances that made a tiger a man-eater. However it seems that the readers are more interested in the thrilling accounts of hunting. The theme of ‘hunting and chasing’ dominates narrative of shikar lore. Therefore shikar stories continue to be best seller even today. Hunting was and is an unequal sport. But in the era of ecological enlightenment the appreciation of hunting tales is very odd. Shikar literature was a concomitant of the British imperial class obsession with hunting as a sport. S. Theodore Bhaskaran, wild life conservationist, says that,

“Before the British came to India, hunting of wild animals as a sport was done by the royalty. It was only after the British came to India from lands where there were no tigers and other animals found in the Indian forests that wide spread hunting of wild animals began in India - First by the white ruling class and then by the Brown Sahib”.

Bhaskaran is skeptical of Shikar literature and feels that all hunting tales are exaggerated accounts.

Shikar literature became popular in those days because hunting was considered a fairly common activity. It was a time when being known as a hunter was a matter of prestige and was common among a certain class. But many readers accept that their love for the forests was mainly sparked by their readings of Shikar stories. The Shikar literature can be seen as one way of knowing the country. Hunting stories have special place and they are very outstanding in the annals of natural history. They occupy an important place in the record of natural history. They are the chronicles of our vanishing natural
heritage. Shikar stories of the early age are the imprinted proof of a lost world.

A brief survey of writers of jungle literature

James Herriot: (1916-1995)

James Herriot was an English veterinary surgeon and writer. He is best known for his semi-autobiographical works which is referred as All Creatures Great and Small. The Harriot books are described often as “animal stories”. He referred to them as his “little cat and dog stories”. They are about the life of a country veterinarian and animals play a significant role in most of the stories. The overall theme of his stories is Yorkshire country life, with its people and their animals that provide its distinct character.

Gerald Durrell (1925-1995):

Durrell was a famous naturalist, author zookeeper and conservationist. Durrell shows a surprising diversity and skill in a wide variety of writing. Most of his works are autobiographical accounts characterized by a love of nature and animals. The New Noah is a collection of encounters with animals from his jungle expeditions. His works have been translated into thirty one languages and made into TV serials and feature films.

George Schaller (1933):

George Schaller is an American naturalist and author. Schaller has written more than fifteen books on his jungle experiences and observation of animals in Africa and Asian jungles. His books The Deer and the Tiger, The Last Panda, Tibet’s Hidden Wilderness are based on his own studies and supported by long-term observations of animals in their natural habitat. He spent three years to study the wild life in Kanha Sanctuary in India. The outcome of the study is his most
fascinating book *The deer and the Tiger*. Schaller’s books are popular throughout the world.

**John Muir (1838-1914):**

John Muir was a Scottish born American naturalist, author and pioneer conservationist of wilderness in America. His essays and books of adventure stories have been read by millions. His book “*First Summer in the Sierra*” (1911) depicts his experience of wilderness of Yosemite Creek.

**Peter Matthiessen (1927):**

Matthiessen is a two time National Book Award Winning American novelist and non fiction writer. He received his first National Book Award for *The Snow Leopard* in 1980. His fiction includes his triology of florida novels published in the 1990s. His popular non-fictional books on environment, nature and wild life are *The Cloud Forest: A Chronicle of the South American Wilderness, The Shorebirds of North America, The Snow Leopard*.

**Jack London (1876-1916):**

Jack London is an eminent American author. London’s most famous novels are *The Call of the Wild, White Fang, The Sea Wolf, The Iron Heel*.

His *The Call of the Wild* is considered as the masterpiece. It has animal protagonist.

**Joy Adamson (1910-1980):**

Joy Adamson was a naturalist, artist and an author. She was born in Austria, but in her later life shifted to Africa. Her husband, George Adamson was game warden of the Northern Frontier District in Kenya. Once he killed a lioness in the forest when she charged on him while performing his duty. Joy and her husband found cubs of the same lioness. Taking them home, she decided to raise the cubs of the lioness. She named the cubs. After few months two cubs were sent to a zoo but
one cub namely Elsa remained with her. Joy Adamson wanted to set her free in the jungle. Elsa became the first lioness that successfully released back into the wild. Joy Adamson wrote a story of Elsa, *Born Free*. It became a best seller. *Born Free* received largely favourable reviews from critics. The success of book was due to the captivating story of Elsa. Then she rehabilitated a cheetah and an African leopard. Pippa the cheetah was raised by her as a pet. Adamson wrote about cheetah Pippa in *The Spotted Sphink and Pippa’s Challenge*. She wrote another interesting story of leopard, *Queen of Shaba*, which was published posthumously. *Born Free: A Lioness of Two Worlds* is Adamson’s touching and remarkable true story of lion cub in transition between the captivity and the wild. Adamson shows that even wild animals are individuals, capable of great trust, understanding and affection.

**Jane Goodall (1934)**

Jane Goodall is well known personality throughout the world, as U.N. messenger of peace. She is best known for her 45 years study of social and family interactions of wild chimpanzees in Gombe National park, Tanzania. She has worked extensively on conservation and animal welfare issues.


**Henry David Thoreau (1817 – 62)**

By the mid-nineteenth century Henry Thoreau and other writers in America and England were already drawing attention to the threats to the environment by urbanization and industrialization. Thoreau was
active member of transcendental club. He believed that there is oneness of God, man and Nature. He loved nature. Thoreau wanted to establish harmonious relationship with nature. He therefore decided to live in the wilderness and moved into his cabin at Walden Pond. He attempted to reduce his needs to the barest essentials of life and to establish an intimate, spiritual relationship with nature. Thoreau wrote about his experience in the wilderness in his famous book *Walden*. He writes about winter Animals and birds in it.

**Iain Douglas – Hamilton (1942)**

Iain Douglas – Hamilton is a zoologist known for his study of elephants. He is author of two book on elephants. *Among the Elephants* and *Battle for the elephants*. His books reveal life of elephants and their behavior.

**Farley Mowat (1921)**

Farley Mowat is a conservationist and one of Canada's most widely-read authors. Mowat achieved fame with the publication of his books, *People of the Deer* (1952) and *Never Cry Wolf* (1963). He has twenty two books to his name which have been published in translations in over fifty two languages in more than forty countries. His advocacy for environmental causes, his passion for wilderness and wild life is reflected in all his works. They include such internationally known works as *People of the Deer*, *The Dog Who Wouldn’t Be*, *Never Cry Wolf*, *A Whale For Killing*, *Sibir and West* – Viking.

**A brief survey of writers of jungle literature in Indian English Literature**

**F. W. Champion: (1893-1970)**

Frederick Walter Champion was an English forester, who worked in British India and East Africa. He became famous in the 1920s as the first wild life photographer and conservationist. Champion wrote
exclusively on wild life in his books, *With a Camera in Tiger Land* and *The Jungle in Sunlight and Shadow*. His contribution as a writer on jungle life is very outstanding for the growth of jungle literature in India.

**Edward Pritchard Gee (1904-1968):**

Edward Pritchard Gee was an amateur dedicated naturalist. He is better known as an early wild life conservationist and writer of informative books on Indian jungles. Because of his great experience of Indian wild life and his superb photography he could write the most enthralling books on natural history.

**Salim Ali (1896-1987)**

Salim Ali was a world famous ornithologist. He started his writing career with *The Book of Indian Birds* (1941) which is very important for the specialist as well as the bird watching amateur. His autobiography, *The Fall of a Sparrow* (1985) is a classic of fine prose in its own right. His major works are: *The Book of Indian Birds, Handbook of the Birds of India and Pakistan, Indian Hill Birds, The Fall of a sparrow.*

**Kailash Sankhala (1925-94):**

Kailash Sankhala is another major writer who contributed to Indian Jungle Literature in English. He was never a hunter but a preservationist and the architect of India’s wild life preservation projects. Sankhala wrote two books on tiger – *Wild Beauty* (1973) and *Tiger Land* (1974). These are the writings of an animal lover for whom the blackbuck and the bird colonies of Bharatpur, the dry Deccan plateau and its wild life, as also big wild animals everywhere, make up the splendour and riches of India. The canvas of wild life is broadened in his writing beyond the tiger. He has given account of the activities of beasts and birds from the smallest to the largest, from the quail to the tiger.
M. Krishnan (1913-96):

M. Krishnan is notable person for both the outstanding quality of his writing and his black and white photographs. He is regarded as the most widely read Indian naturalist of this century. His works shows his ecological patriotism.

Valmik Thapar:

Valmik Thapar is an Indian natural historian and foremost among tiger conservationists. He is the author of fourteen books on tigers and jungle life. He is India’s most respected wild life expert. His prominent books are *Tigres, My life Ranthanbor and Beyond, The Tiger: Soul of India, The Secret life of Tigers, An African Diary.*

A. A. Dunbar Brander:

A.A.Dunbar Brander is one more important writer of wild life of India. His book *Wild Animals in Central India* was published in 1923.

Ruskin Bond:

Ruskin Bond is an eminent writer who writes stories, poetry and essays. He has written interesting animal stories. His stories like “The Tiger in the Tunnel”, “The Leopard” and “The Regimental Myna” deals with the animal world. He is the editor of great animal stories, shikar stories and travelers’ tales.

Billy Arjan Singh : (1917 – 2010)

E. R. C. Davidar:

E. R. C. Davidar is known for his book, *The Chital Walk: Living in the Wilderness*. It is a collection of delightful stories on his experiences in the forest on the periphery of the Madumalai Wild life sanctuary. He has collected a lot of local stories. Davidar’s main contribution to the Jungle literature is his writing for children. His books like, *Adventures of the Wild life Warden* and *Fables from the Jungle* are very popular among children. E. R. C. Davidar was an archetypical ‘hunting – shooting – fishing’ planter of the Nilgiris. He became interested in wild life through hunting.

Rudyard Kipling (1865 – 1936):

Kipling was one of the most popular writers in England, in both prose and verse, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Kipling received Nobel Prize for literature in 1907. Kipling is best known for his works of fiction, including *The Jungle Book* (1984).

*The Jungle Book* is a collection of stories. These tales are fables, using animals in an anthropomorphic manners to give more lessons. Kipling put in his stories everything he knew or heard or dreamed about the Indian jungle. These stories depicts adventures of an abandoned ‘man cub’ Mowgli who is raised by wolves in the Indian jungles. There is story of a heroic mongoose and a young elephant handless. The main characters are the bear-Baloo, Bagheera the blank panther and the tiger Sher Khan. The Father Wolf raised Mowgli as his own cub. There are all animals belonging to Indian Jungles. Kipling’s *The Jungle Book* brought into focus, wild life of India.

(ii) Man, Nature and Wild life:

Nature is regarded as a part and parcel of divinity. Cordial man-nature relationship has been advised throughout literature. The Pre-romantic and romantic poets of the 19th century England expressed
their sincere affinity to Nature. William Cowper wrote, “God made the country and man made the town.” William Wordsworth states that the Nature is the teacher of man and he advocates the company of and communion with the Nature for solace. The great ancient Indian sages erected their hermit – cottages in the penance groves and established the Gurukuls. The co-existence of man and nature was an ideal life style for Indians. Their rituals, festivals and life-style were based on this thought.

There was a time when men roamed on the earth in smaller numbers than they do today. They were hunters who killed for food or in self-defense. Sometimes they were hunted, falling prey to wild animals that had the advantage of unlimited forest cover and swampland. Apart from that, the weapons used by early man were not very sophisticated.

Barely four centuries ago, majority of the people in the world lived in country side, often on the edge of jungles, and they had to protect themselves from herds of wild elephants, packs of wolves and large numbers of tigers, reptiles and other carnivores.

Slowly, as human “civilization” evolved and population increased, villages became towns and towns became cities. The forest cover diminished and the animal world began retreating. Men began to hunt for recreation and trophies rather than just for food or self protection. Most of the writers presented the jungle stories of the early and middle years of the last century. At that time man and beast met each other almost on equal footing. Animals, wild or domestic were living in partnership with humans. The wild creatures are not always natural enemies of man. It is also true that animals, wild or domestic had maintained great partnerships with humans. But both have become competitors in the struggle for survival.
In Nature, the diverse plants and animal species do not exist in isolation. The survival of each type depends upon the presence of others. But man has destroyed forests and has turned vast territories into cultivation and industrialization. But in this process he has broken up the natural harmony. This has affected self-regulation of the population of species and therefore man has taken up himself the concern for balancing the relationship between animals and their environment. In spite of the use of all technical means, environmental conditions are worsening day by day. There are many endangered species on the verge of extinction. It is high time for utilizing all opportunities for saving wild life and avoiding man-beast conflicts.

The origin of Indian Civilization dates back much before the advent of the Aryans. It is a remarkable fact that the causes of the extinction of the Indus Valley Civilization are unknown. There is no clear evidence if it perished because of the wars with the foreign invaders or internal conflicts or because of the break-down of the eco-system they sustained upon. Many sociologists and environmentalists believe that the tribal people have lived in harmony with forests for thousands of years. This harmony was maintained by their small population. Their requirements were less or equal to the annual yield of forests.

Various types of forests exist in India. Dense forests are found in the heavy rainfall areas comprising the ranges of the Himalaya, their foothills and the North-Eastern hills. In these forests trees like Rosewood, Ebony, Sheesham, Bamboo, Cane etc. are found.

Evergreen forests are found at the foothills of Himalayas. The deciduous forests grow well in the areas of low rainfall (200 cm). In the dry season, when the humidity of air decreases, the trees shed their leaves. Trees such as Sal, Teak, Palash, Arjun, Moha, Peepal, Bamboo etc. are found in these forests.
Several thousand species of plants are found in India. Diversity of fauna in the country is also remarkable. The country has about three hundred fifty species of mammals, twelve hundred species of birds and more than twenty thousand species of insects. The tropical forests are rich in plants and animal species. Each species has to perform its specific role, which is integrated in the ecological system.

The existing forest cover in India is twenty four percent. The existence of rich variety of jungle and also flora, fauna in the country provides ample scope for the writers to produce jungle literature. Therefore many writers have written stories on the jungle life and wild life in India. There is dire need to explore the ways in which contemporary literature depicts the wild life and Man-Nature relationship.