

The Story of Machli, the World's Most Famous Tiger

(Adapted from Jason Bittel's report from National Geographic of December 11, 2017)

Machli, the Bengal tigress, which dominated a prime, 350 square mile territory within India's Ranthambore National Park, became a favorite among tourists for her tenacity in the face of incredible odds.

In addition to living much longer than most other wild tigresses, which usually top out around 15 years of age, Machli took on and killed a 14-foot full-grown crocodile twice her size. Then she raised a litter of her cubs in her older years without any canine teeth. That's incredible.

She defended her cubs from full-grown male tigers, which are significantly bigger. She won the fight over and over and over. Male tigers are regularly credited with killing cubs because, just like lions, if the cubs are killed the female will become ready for breeding. But she was able to protect all of her litters over and over again.

Many consider Machli to have been the most photographed tiger on Earth, and her image appears in innumerable magazines, newspapers, blogs, calendars, and more!