

TITLE: More-than-human geographies of encounter: a praxiography of human-wildlife conflict

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ABSTRACT:

In this paper I will describe working with an auto-photographic practice for exploring geographies of encounter between humans, the livestock they care for, and wild animals in a rural landscape in southwest India. This is presented through discussing a collaborative research/activist project employing the framework of photovoice to explore and trouble the concept of 'human-wildlife conflict' in a landscape where both humans and animals have the capacity to kill, and be killed, by one another, and yet a variety of kinds of animal life flourish. Drawing on photographs and text produced over the course of six months by six individuals living in close proximity to Bandipur National Park in Karnataka, India, I apply Annemarie Mol's theory of praxiography to critically explore and critique the framing of 'human-wildlife conflict' as an intra-active process which forecloses upon emergent, messy, and entangled relations between humans and other animals. This article suggests ways in which more-than-human geographies can remain critically engaged with enactments of injustice across species divides through an attention to praxis. Finally, I will use the materials produced through this project to explore forms of everyday environmentalism within communities often positioned as antagonistic towards wildlife by the state conservation apparatus.