



GUARDAPARQUE

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Guardaparque is a bi-weekly publication prepared and issued by the International Ranger Federation (IRF), a federation of about 60 ranger organisations from around the world.

Guardaparque carries reports on emergency service and law enforcement incidents, reports on protection of parks and the natural and cultural resources within them, reports on programs to educate visitors and communities on the values of parks and protected areas, and reports on the people who are responsible for all these activities.

Guardaparque contains information from rangers in the field on operations conducted in the field. From time to time, it also reports on political issues affecting those operations. It is supplemented by a quarterly newsletter, **The Thin Green Line**, which focuses on IRF activities.

If you have a submission for **Guardaparque**, please send it to the editor, Bill Halainen, at Bill.Halainen@nps.gov.

EMERGENCY SERVICES AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

Chad – Zakouma National Park Three Rangers Killed By Ivory Poachers

Zakouma National Park, in the far south of Chad, has 3,000 square kilometres of truly wild territory. In the rainy season, when elephants begin to leave the park to avoid the muddy terrain, it is possible to see massive herds, sometimes up to 1,000 elephants at a time. But in the past 12 months, more than 200 elephants have been killed in and around the park, many gunned down in large groups by poachers who attack on horse and camelback.

The park employs 80 anti-poaching rangers to deal with the attackers, but it is a bloody and never-ending challenge. Recently, three of the rangers were killed in a shoot-out with poachers. "It's a dangerous life but one we've accepted," says Nicolai Taloua, head of Zakouma's anti-poaching team. "We've chosen this fight and will continue to the end." The reason for the recent upsurge in elephant killings is that some African countries; Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia; can now legally sell ivory, mainly to Japan, despite a worldwide ban elsewhere. Chad enforces the ivory ban, but as long as an ivory trade exists, demand in the region continues. Dotted around the park is evidence of the poachers' handiwork: carcasses of elephants lie rotting, with faces brutally hacked off in a bid to remove their tusks. Recently other animals such as giraffes and buffalos have been targeted too. Poachers have begun to kill giraffes, as people like to make bracelets out of giraffe tails to give to their wives. To help in the battle against the ivory trade, the park is trying to keep local villagers onside, not only to better relations but also to encourage people to report sightings of poachers.

[Source: *BBC News*, submitted by Roger Cole, CMA]

Kenya – Tsavo West National Park Seven Hunters And Guide Arrested For Illegal Hunting

Seven professional Tanzanian hunters and their Kenyan guide were arrested on Sunday, 8th July, after they were found hunting illegally in Tsavo West National Park. According to Paul Udoto of Kenya Wildlife, an ambush laid by rangers at Koranze in Taita Taveta District also recovered three powerful sporting firearms, 43 rounds of ammunition and two powerful spotlights. The suspects are being held at Voi Police Station. KWS is concerned over the rising number of hunters who cross over from Mkomazi Reserve in Tanzania, where hunting is legal, into Koranze area in Taita Taveta District. Kenyan officials believe that these incursions could be as a result of a dwindling wildlife stock in many parts of Tanzania caused by abused licensed hunting. On Saturday, police at Athi River, along the Nairobi - Mombasa highway, arrested four people as they attempted to ferry 213 kilograms of zebra and wildebeest meat to Nairobi.

[Source: *Capital FM*, Kenya]

Greece – Mount Parnitha National Park Wildfire May Have Been Set By Arsonist

A fire that raged for four days and burned 6,200 acres of a park near Athens, Greece, was brought under control on Saturday. A prosecutor is investigating whether the fire in the 64,000-acre Mount Parnitha National Park was set to clear land for development after an incendiary device was found on the site. The fire burned through areas left dry by a weeklong heat wave that saw temperatures of up to 45°C, a national record that has been blamed for 15 heat related deaths. In the wake of the fire, President Carolos Papoulias lamented the loss of one of the last green spaces left near the Greek capital and called for the government to commit to a national environmental strategy.

[Source: *Greenwire*]

Australia – Murramarang National Park Four Arrested In Kangaroo Mutilation Case

In the last issue of *Guardaparque*, we reported on the killing and mutilation of three kangaroos in this Australian park. Here's a follow-up report:

Police have charged four youths in the deaths of the kangaroos. Three 17-year-olds and one 16-year-old boy, all from Goulburn, were charged in late June with the national parks' offence of harming protected fauna. There may be additional charges once interviews, with the youths taken by Goulburn detectives, are examined by Batemans Bay Police who are investigating the matter. Each of the kangaroos had been brutally killed – one decapitated, another beaten and a third had its eyes poked out. The youths are expected to appear in court in August.

[Source: *ABC Online*, Australia]

United States – Valley Forge National Historical Park Ranger Shoots Assailant Wielding Gun

On the evening of Saturday, 23rd June, a ranger shot and wounded a 43-year-old man in response to threats he was making with a large calibre revolver. The man's vehicle was first noticed at the Wayne statue parking area around 3:30 pm. When the vehicle was still parked at the area at 7:25 pm, the ranger stopped in the parking area to check it. As he got out of his patrol car, a man entered the parking lot from an area of the woods that is closed to the public. The ranger talked to the man, checked his identification, and found that there was a warrant for his arrest for a failure to appear in court regarding a prior offence. The ranger called for assistance; when a second ranger arrived, the man moved to his vehicle and retrieved the large calibre revolver. The rangers ordered the man to drop the gun, but he instead began yelling at them. The rangers continued to issue orders to drop the gun but the man threatened them with the gun and a ranger shot him once. Still the man did not drop the gun. Following furtive movements and continued threats to shoot rangers with the gun, the ranger shot him twice more. The rangers were then able to place him under arrest and provide emergency medical aid. The man was flown to the University of Pennsylvania Hospital. He has been identified as Daniel John McColgan, 43, of Havertown, Pennsylvania. Neither ranger was injured in the incident. An investigation is being conducted.

[Source: *National Park Service Morning Report*, United States]

**Ecuador – Galapagos National Park
Endangered Giant Tortoises Killed By Poachers**

In early July, rangers found the shells of eight endangered giant tortoises believed to have been killed by poachers. Poachers have killed the protected tortoises in the past, using the meat for consumption or sale on the black market. Of the remains discovered, five were only up to 15 years old, and three were adult females, possibly more than 80 years old. The park called their deaths a great loss, saying some had been hatched from artificially incubated eggs and raised for seven years by scientists before being released into their natural habitat. Galapagos Islands authorities estimate there are only about 7,000 of the species left.

[Source: *The Associated Press*]

**Costa Rica – National Parks
German Tourists Fined For Attempting To Smuggle Insects**

A Costa Rican judge has fined five German tourists for attempting to smuggle insects out of the country. Since the insects are part of the country's natural heritage, this is similar to attempting to steal and smuggle archaeological artefacts. The Germans did not have the permits needed to be able to collect specimens for scientific research. Such smuggling has been increasingly common in recent years, particularly by European visitors.

[Source: Mauricio Arias, Costa Rican Park Rangers Association]

SPECIES MANAGEMENT

**United States – Wind Cave National Park
Black-footed Ferrets Return To Park**

Seven endangered black-footed ferrets were released back into the 28,000-acre Wind Cave National Park last week. "It's been thirty years since the last sighting of a black-footed ferret in the park," acting superintendent Rick Mossman said. "We hope this is the start of a self-sustaining population that will restore a missing link to our mixed-grass ecosystem." The ferret release follows the completion of an environmental assessment that calls for the release of 20 to 25 black-footed ferrets in to the park each year for the next three to five years. The ferrets, which eat prairie dogs, will fit in with the prairie-dog management plan in the park. The seven ferrets released in the park were captured in the Conata Basin near Wall and transported to Wind Cave.

[Source: *Rapid City Journal*, USA]

PARKS AND PROTECTED AREAS

**Denmark – National Parks
Five New National Parks Created**

A 55-kilometre stretch of coastal area around the west Jutland town of Thy was chosen as Denmark's first national park Friday through an agreement involving all political parties except the Red Green Alliance.

Four other areas were also approved to be eligible for the designation, two of which – Skjern Island and the undulating terrain of Mols Bjerger – are expected to be certified by the end of the year. The agreement took nearly five years to complete and the government, together with the National Federation of Outdoor Recreation, has now set aside DKK 40 million for the national park projects.

Connie Hedegaard, the environment minister, said she was happy so many parties could come to an agreement during the selection process.

'We've succeeded in getting a broad majority behind us and at the same time I'm glad that there are so many different nature types among the selections,' she said.

Denmark had been the only European Union country without a national park until the Thy dunes were selected. The area is a sub-Atlantic coastal heath where the dunes leap out towards the North Sea and the land is populated by a vast number of tree and other plant species.

Johannes Poulsen, the Social Liberal municipal spokesperson, said the choices were right along his party's line.

'Now the local discussions about how we can develop and get the most out of the new national parks can get underway,' said Poulsen.

The Red-Green Alliance said they were against the establishment of national parks because 'it can justify paying less attention to the rest of the country's natural areas'.

Along with Thy, Mols and Skjern, the lakes, streams and close forests of Kings' Northern Zealand and the Wadden Sea on Jutland's southwest coast were also selected by legislators as future national park candidates.

[Source: *The Copenhagen Post*, Denmark]



One hundred people join together to spell the words "Live Yasuni" in the heart of the national park.

Ecuador – Yasuni National Park Efforts Underway To Protect Park From Oil Extraction

Indigenous communities from Yasuni National Park, home to some of the most biodiverse primary tropical rainforest on the planet, are pleading to save the park from devastation by the oil industry. Led by Ecuador's Vice President Lenin Moreno Garces, nearly 100 people joined together to spell the words "Live Yasuni" in the heart of this pristine national park as a helicopter carrying photographers hovered overhead. The images were sent to the world feed for the Live Earth event this past weekend. The Yasuni images formed part of several Live Earth events focusing attention on the plight of the Ecuadorian Amazon.

The Yasuni event was organized to highlight the Ecuadorian government's proposal to keep that nation's largest oil reserve in the ground forever, saving the park and avoiding an estimated 436 million tonnes of carbon emissions. Yasuni, home to several indigenous groups, including some of the last still living in isolation anywhere in the Amazon, sits atop the Ishpingo-Tambococha-Tiputini (ITT) oilfields. In a bid to avoid drilling in the park, Ecuador President Rafael Correa has proposed to the international community that the oil could be left in the ground in exchange for US \$2 - \$3.5 billion financial commitments to offset the lost oil revenue. The government plans to invest the funds in sustainable social development programs. Quito and international environmental groups

are now working to meet this challenge, exploring a variety of financial mechanisms including debt relief, carbon credits, and traditional fundraising.

The presence of Vice President Moreno Garces in Yasuni, where he met members of the Waorani, Quichua and Cofan indigenous groups that live there, was a signal of the Ecuadorian government's intent.

[Source: *People and the Planet* web page, United Kingdom]

EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

United States – Nationwide Web-Based Training On Interpretation

The U.S. National Park Service and the Eppley Institute for Parks and Public Lands at Indiana University are creating several related web-based training courses on interpretation. The first course, entitled “Foundations of Interpretation,” is available at no charge at: interptraining.org. This two hour introductory course answers four fundamental questions about interpretation:

- What is interpretation?
- Why do we do interpretation?
- What skills do interpreters need?
- How do you do interpretation?

Designed to provide a basic understanding of the theory and practice of interpretation, this course is ideal for those new to the field or anyone interested in a refresher on interpretation concepts.

The eight-hour course on “Informal Visitor Contacts” and the eight-hour “Interpretive Talk” are both available for a charge. A course on “Coaching and Training Interpreters” will be released for field-testing shortly. The course charge is used to help maintain and update the courses and web site. The courses are part of a certificate program that includes assessment and work with an interpretive coach. Indiana University offers a continuing education unit (CEU) credit and is also considering offering one university credit for successful completion of each course.

[Source: Deanne Adams, Vice-President, IRF]

NOTES AND NOTICES

WCPA Offering Protected Area Sustainability Award

WCPA, IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas, in cooperation with the World Resources Institute, is offering the Kenton R. Miller Award for Innovation in Protected Area Sustainability. The deadline for submitting nominations is 15th July 2007. For additional information visit their web site: <http://www.iucn.org/themes/wcpa/wcpa/kenton/award.html>

Ranger Web Site Being Established

A website called “Far Ranging: Dispatches From International Protected Areas” is currently under development, and the author is seeking daily, weekly, or monthly updates from park rangers, game wardens, and other protected area staff members from around the world on aspects of their jobs, the culture of national parks, the struggle to keep them safe and secure, and the necessity of maintaining protected areas for our world. The website seeks to be a forum and resource for the general public to look inside the world of protected wildlife, nature, and cultural areas and see both how important and how vulnerable they can be. Anyone interested in contributing periodic updates for the site, please contact: Matt Hansen at far.ranging@gmail.com.

Prepared and published by the International Ranger Federation as a service to rangers around the world. Submissions should be sent to Bill Halainen at Bill.Halainen@nps.gov.