



GUARDAPARQUE

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Guardaparque is a bi-weekly publication prepared and issued by the International Ranger Federation (IRF), an organization of about 60 non-governmental and governmental ranger organizations 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

United States/Canada – Glacier National Park/Banff and Waterton Lakes National Parks International Team Rescues Injured Climber From Mountain

Park rangers and wardens from Canada's Banff National Park and Waterton Lakes National Park cooperated in the rescue of an injured hiker on July 3rd. The hiker, Denis Twohig, 68, from Whitefish, Montana, had taken a 15-foot pendulum fall while leading a technical rock climb on the "Gendarme" in Glacier late on the afternoon of July 2nd. Twohig's fall was stopped by his climbing partner. The uninjured partner lowered Twohig a short distance to a ledge and secured him. The partner then left Twohig and descended Little Chief Mountain. At about 11 p.m., the partner reached the Rising Sun Lodge store and reported the accident to Glacier dispatch. Recognising the extreme technical nature of the incident and Twohig's emergency medical needs, rangers held search and rescue planning sessions through the early morning hours to coordinate different rescue options. After a reconnaissance flight and a briefing by Glacier park rangers, two Canadian park wardens were each inserted via short haul from a Parks Canada helicopter to Twohig's location in the notch of the Gendarme. After Twohig was secured, he was short hauled from the ledge, then transferred to ALERT air ambulance and flown to Kalispell Regional Hospital around 9 a.m. Parks Canada utilises highly trained helicopter pilots and park wardens for technical SAR missions throughout the mountain parks of Canada. Their assistance was critical as they provided the most viable option for Twohig's immediate rescue. This rescue is an excellent example of the outstanding relationship and true partnership between Parks Canada and the National Park Service at Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park. This relationship is well documented by the Peace Park agreement and is cultivated by frequent contact and cooperation between the two park staffs. Waterton-Glacier is the world's first International Peace Park and 2007 is the 75th anniversary of the Peace Park designation.

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

United States – Yellowstone National Park Armed Confrontation Ends With Arrest Of Three Men

A patrol ranger was called to the Grant Village campground to deal with a noise complaint and a reported disturbance on the evening of September 3rd. Upon arrival, he approached and contacted three men, all of whom immediately became abusive, threatening and hostile. Two of them threatened violence against the ranger, including statements that they would kill him. The ranger called for backup and withdrew. He also drew his taser (a stun weapon) as the men followed him back toward the car. Once in a better position, he drew his gun and attempted to control the trio while awaiting arrival of backup. The park's special response team and rangers from the Grant, South, Lake and Old Faithful areas soon arrived on scene. During the initial stages of the standoff, the three men alternated between yelling obscenities and threats of violence and repeatedly entering and exiting their vehicles. One shouted that "someone is going to die tonight" all three repeatedly challenged rangers to shoot them. The rangers brought out rifles and held the men at gunpoint. On several occasions, the men approached to within 20 feet of individual rangers and appeared to be engaged in some form of attempted police-assisted suicide. The on-scene supervisory ranger developed a plan to take the men into custody. When she had a sufficient number of rangers in place, she had five of them fire tasers nearly simultaneously to incapacitate the trio, then had six other rangers swarm the men and take them into custody. One of the three suffered lacerations when he fell to the ground during the arrest. All three were taken to the jail in Jackson, Wyoming. On September 5th, NPS special agents filed a five-count criminal complaint against two of them and a six-count complaint against the third. These charges included multiple counts for 18 USC 111 violations (assaulting, resisting, opposing, intimidating and interfering with rangers). They had initial appearances before the federal magistrate and are being held by the US Marshals Service pending a detention hearing.

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

SPECIES MANAGEMENT

Kenya – Nairobi National Park Wild Animals Disappearing From Country's Oldest Reserve

Wild animals are vanishing Kenya's oldest game reserve which borders the airport at Nairobi, the Kenya Wildlife Service warned in a report unveiled on Friday. In a survey carried out in June, the state-run KWS also witnessed habitat destruction in and around the 117-square-kilometre (45-square-mile) Nairobi National Park. "This confirms the worst fear among the conservationists that wildlife is disappearing in (the) Nairobi ecosystem and recommends far reaching measures to save the remaining populations," the report said.

The study also paints a bleak picture of the future of the park that was once reputed for its annual wildebeest and zebra migration in July/August. "In Nairobi Park, zebra population has moderately declined over the years while wildebeests have almost been wiped out. It is now a matter of time and the remaining few individuals are eliminated and become locally extinct, if no appropriate action is taken to rectify the situation. "Other animals under threat include Thompson gazelles, Grant gazelles, Impalas, hartebeests, ostriches, warthogs and waterbucks. The study came three days after researchers warned that 'dysfunctional' African parks are losing species due to poor conservation and pressure on resources. Human activities – spurred by rapid population growth and the quest for higher standards of living – have undermined conservation efforts, according to wildlife activists.

"The main reason for the decline in numbers is the explosion of human population, encroachment into wildlife conservation areas and poaching," said a KWS spokesman. "But we are doing everything we can to ensure that we save the animals." Last year, a study warned that country's famed lion prides could be driven to extinction because ritual killings by tribal warriors are decimating their ranks in and around the country's protected game reserves.

[Source: *Agence France-Presse*]

Democratic Republic of Congo – Virunga National Park Fighting In Congo Forces Rangers To Flee, Threatens Gorillas

Renewed fighting inside Virunga National Park, home to endangered mountain gorillas, has forced rangers to flee for the second time in less than a week. The clashes between fighters loyal to warlord Laurent Nkunda and government soldiers took place in the park, where some of the world's last remaining mountain gorillas live on the slopes of a volcanic mountain range that straddles Congo's border with Rwanda and Uganda. Tens of thousands of people have been displaced by the fighting across North Kivu province, where the park is located, and tens of thousands more have fled into neighbouring Uganda.

About 300 people – rangers and their families – fled the park itself last Monday after skirmishes first broke out there. Wildlife groups said huge swaths of the park, including several of the rangers' patrol posts had been occupied by Nkunda's insurgents and looted. Concerned about the fate of the gorillas, a few rangers returned Friday. In the brief time they were there, they found only one five-member group outside of the park that were vulnerable to crossfire, according to the conservation organization WildlifeDirect. The rangers reported hearing shelling and gunfire on Friday and Saturday, and fled again before they were able to check on any other gorillas.

Though they typically stay high up on the mountain slopes, the gorillas can roam freely and the park is not fenced off. "We thought the situation was calming a couple of days ago, but once again the mountain gorillas are in peril and the rangers cannot do their job," the director of WildlifeDirect, Dr. Emmanuel de Merode, said in a statement. Conservation is "consistently challenging and we can only hope the mountain gorillas survive this most recent saga." Only about 700 mountain gorillas remain in the world, an estimated 380 of them in the Virunga range. About 100 of those are believed to live on the Congo side of the border, where nine gorillas have been killed since January. The other 320 live in Uganda's Bwindi Impenetrable Forest. "It is imperative that we get into the sector to check on the mountain gorillas. They have been exposed for nearly a week to fighting," said Norbert Mushenzi, director of the southern sector of the park for the Congolese Institute for the Conservation of Nature.

One park ranger was shot and killed late last month in a separate patrol post attack at Virunga, officials said. More than 150 rangers have been killed in the past decade at five national parks in eastern Congo while protecting wildlife from poachers, rebels and illegal miners. Other game reserves in the area have faced similar threats, including Kahuzi-Biega National Park farther south, which is home to endangered eastern lowland gorillas. Virunga National Park is in a lawless swath of eastern Congo that the country's government has struggled to bring under control for years. Established in 1925 as Africa's first national park, it was classified as a U.N. World Heritage Site in 1979.

Congo is still coping with the effects of a 1998-2002 war that drew in the armies of more than half a dozen African nations. Nkunda's fighters, believed to have close ties to neighbouring Rwanda, first rose up against the government after the broader war ended five years ago. In neighbouring Tanzania on Saturday, Congo's President Joseph Kabila and his Ugandan counterpart, Yoweri Museveni, signed an agreement to immediately pull back their troops 93 miles from the border to ease tensions over an oil-rich border lake north of Virunga.

[Source: *CNN*]

PARKS AND PROTECTED AREAS

East Timor – Nino Konis Santana National Park East Timor Establishes First National Park

East Timor has formally set aside 123,600 hectares of land and sea to create the nation's first national park. Nino Konis Santana National Park incorporates the entire eastern tip of East Timor, and "aims to conserve a rich and extensive natural, cultural and historical heritage." The protected area comprises 68,000 hectares of land and 55,600 hectares of sea. It covers one of the largest

remaining intact tropical lowland and monsoon rainforests in the region and extensive coral reefs. The park is to be jointly managed by the government and local communities, with assistance from Birdlife International and the New South Wales' Department of Environment and Climate Change.

Nino Konis Santana was a commander of Falantil, the armed wing of the movement that fought for independence from Indonesia, and was born in the village of Tutuala within the park. The park has been recognized by IUCN. Continuously occupied for more than 40,000 years, the area is rich in archaeological heritage and has many sites from the colonial Portuguese era and World War II Japanese occupation periods.

(Source: Sydney Morning Herald]

Canada – Nahanni National Park Reserve Major Expansion Of Park Announced

On August 8th, Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced that the federal government has moved to protect nearly 29,000 km² of land for the purposes of park expansion. Currently, Nahanni National Park Reserve – a UNESCO World Heritage Site – protects less than 5,000 km² of the watershed's approximately 39,000 km² area. A federal government park expansion process has been underway for nearly five years and is expected to be completed by October 2008. The Prime Minister's August 8th announcement means that a further 5,400 km² of land within the Nahanni watershed has been protected.

In 2003, the federal government placed about 23,000 km² in the greater Nahanni ecosystem under interim protection as part of land and self governance negotiations between the Dehcho people and the federal government. The remaining 6,000 km² of the watershed not yet protected lie within the traditional territory of the Sahtu Dene and Metis and are being considered within a separate process. According to the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, the Prime Minister's announcement "is a very significant step forward on the path toward protecting the entire Nahanni watershed. It will mean that Nahanni, once expanded, will become one of Canada's largest national parks. We are extremely encouraged by his commitment to expanding the park boundaries and to conserving our northern Boreal ecosystems, especially as pressures for industrial development increase."

The Dehcho have also been a strong voice advocating for protecting the Nahanni watershed, which largely falls within their traditional territory. The next step in the Nahanni park expansion process will be a public consultation by the government on the new park boundaries scheduled for this fall. For a map and further information on Nahanni NPR, go to the following website:

cpaws.org/news/archive/2007/08/progress-on-protecting-nahanni.php

[Source: Press release, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society]

EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

Israel – Masada National Park New Interpretive Museum Opened

A new museum, which opened this past May, is the first of its kind in the world, according to the Israel Nature and National Parks Protection Authority. Over 700 artefacts on display, revealed to the public for the first time, include a Second-Temple era talit (prayer shawl) and the famous "12 lots of Masada" – shards of pottery which each bear a single name and which may have been used as the death lots in the final moments of the Jewish rebels' last act of defiance against the Romans. The artefacts focus around three main themes: Herod, the Rebels, and the Roman Army.

The atmosphere surrounding the visitor and the artefacts is presented against a life-size backdrop, which includes the floor, walls, sculpted figures, and architectural elements – all of which have been executed meticulously and painted in shades of dark gray to black to create the feeling of an "absent presence" that fades into the dark. The visitor will move through the designed spaces with

earphones and will listen to informative explanations of what lies before them, including a dramatic presentation that will help them "see and feel" the story behind the archaeological finds. The integration and harmony between archaeological artefacts, theatrical backdrop, radio play, and audio presentation create a unique experience that invites the visitor to become one with the amazing story of Masada. The last space in the museum is dedicated to the excavator of the site, Professor Yigael Yadin, and concludes the fascinating story of Masada that has been presented between two poles – beginning with the narrator-historian Flavius Josephus and ending with the excavator and archaeologist Yigael Yadin.

[Source: Jewish Agency for Israel]

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

United States – National Parks

Government Report Documents Global Warming Threats To Parks, Public Lands

The U.S. federal government needs to do a better job addressing how climate change is transforming the hundreds of millions of acres under its watch, according to a congressional investigative report to be released this week. The 184-page report highlights the extent to which global warming already is affecting the nation's parks, forests, marine sanctuaries and monuments. Looking at agencies ranging from the U.S. Forest Service to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, officials gathered reports of dramatic changes across the nearly 30 percent of U.S. land that lies under federal control:

- Since 1850, the glaciers in Glacier National Park have declined from 150 to 26;
- Climate-triggered coral bleaching in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary is eroding the area's tourist appeal.
- Non-native grasses are fast replacing native shrubs in the Mojave Desert, where the grasses also are fuelling hotter and longer-lasting wildfires.
- Pinyon pines hundreds of years old that have survived droughts before in the Southwest are dying off.

For the most part, the men and women overseeing these 600 million acres of land and 150,000 square miles of protected waters have little direction on how to respond to these shifts, according to the report. The office said that the departments responsible for these lands have failed to give their resource managers the guidance and tools they need – computer models, temperature and precipitation data, climate projects and detailed inventories of plant and animal species – to cope with all the biological and physical effects from the warming. It states that these managers "have limited guidance about whether or how to address climate change and therefore, are uncertain about what action, if any, they should take.

Without such guidance, their ability to address climate change and effectively manage resources is constrained." In its conclusion, the report says this: "Climate change has already begun to adversely affect federal resources in a variety of ways. Most experts with whom we spoke believe that these effects will continue and likely intensify over the coming decades."

[Source: *The Washington Post*, United States]

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.