



GUARDAPARQUE

January, 2009

Volume 3

Number 1

Guardaparque is a publication prepared monthly and issued by the International Ranger Federation (IRF), an organization of non-governmental and governmental ranger organizations from around the world.

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

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

A Note From The Editor...

It has been since last May that an issue of **Guardaparque** appeared in your email. That is because the original plan to prepare and send out an issue every two weeks proved to be too difficult.

It's a new year now and time for a new effort. With the new year, though, **Guardaparque** has become a monthly newsletter. The goal will be to send it to you around the middle of each month.

Some other changes have been made. Each story will now begin with a short summary that will tell what it is about, where it came from, and how to get more information (if available). This short summary will be in basic English so that it will be easier for non-English speakers to translate. The stories will also be in basic English wherever possible.

Please let me know if you have any thoughts, ideas or comments.

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Emergency Services And Law Enforcement

Africa – Parks and Wildlife Refuges Efforts Underway To Protect Rhinoceros From Poaching

Summary: Colleague Augusto Atturo has sent along an article about a United Nations meeting in Kenya this past November to find ways to stop the escalation of rhinoceros poaching for their horns. Such poaching intensified this past fall, threatening 20 years of conservation efforts.

Wildlife law enforcement officials met in Kenya in November as part of a United Nations-backed effort to stop the escalation of rhinoceros poaching and break up criminal networks behind the increasing illegal trade in their horns, used in traditional medicines or as dagger handles.

"The escalation of rhino poaching in recent weeks is threatening the success of conservation efforts undertaken by African and Asian countries over the last 20 years," said Willem Wijnstekers, Secretary-General of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), whose secretariat is administered by the UN Environment Program (UNEP). "Although rhinoceros populations are increasing in some areas, there is no room at all for complacency," he added before the opening of the two-day meeting of the CITES Rhinoceros Enforcement Task Force in Nairobi.

CITES banned international trade in rhino horns in 1977. After suffering greatly from poaching in the 1980s and 1990s, some rhino populations started to recover in Africa and Asia following the implementation of conservation programs. But armed conflict and political instability in parts of Africa as well as a resurgent demand in Asian markets have been undermining those efforts in some areas. At least 40 white rhinos have been reportedly poached in national parks and game reserves in South Africa this year. In Zimbabwe and Mozambique, the number of illegal killings has increased dramatically over the past few months. As for the northern white rhino found in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the situation is critical.

Countries and territories represented at the meeting include China, Hong Kong, Kenya, India, Mozambique, Nepal, South Africa, Thailand, the United States, Viet Nam, Yemen and Zimbabwe. Officials involved include customs and police officers, Interpol, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime. CITES Enforcement Task Forces have previously been established to tackle wildlife crimes related to tigers, falcons and great apes. Outcomes of such meetings have included guidance on gathering and analyzing crime information and intelligence, specialized training, identification guides and awareness-raising materials. The networking opportunities also enable enforcement officers from around the world to collaborate more effectively.

[The article comes from the World News Network website and can be found at this link:
<http://cgi.wn.com/?action=display&article=79686787&template=worldnews/paidnews.txt&index=recent>]

United States - National Park Service Man Convicted Of Wildlife And Cultural Theft Violations

Summary: A six-year-long investigation by a number of U.S. agencies led to the arrest and trial of a man for thefts of Native American artifacts and the illegal taking of wildlife. He was convicted and sentenced in October.

In early 2003, a joint investigation was begun by the U.S. National Park Service, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and the Collville Confederated Tribes into the dealing in and possession of illegal artifacts and wildlife by a man in the state of Washington.

This undercover investigation revealed that Kenneth Milette, 68, of Newport, Washington, possessed archaeological artifacts taken from Glacier National Park, Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area, Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, and the Spokane, Coeur d'Alene, and Nez Perce Indian Reservations. Milette also possessed prehistoric Native American human remains from at least one adult and several children and a variety of prohibited wildlife, including a fully mounted golden eagle.

In the fall of 2003, Milette agreed to sell his entire collection to an undercover NPS agent for \$750,000. This collection included nearly 1,500 artifacts from the federal and Indian lands listed above. Additionally, Milette agreed to sell items that violated several U.S. laws protecting Native American graves and artifacts and migratory and other birds. A BIA archaeologist working on the case wrote a damage assessment report that valued the federal and tribal archaeological resources at \$58,500. In October, Milette pled guilty to many of the charges filed against him. He was sentenced on December 17th to three years of probation and six months of home confinement with electronic monitoring, ordered to pay over \$17,000 in restitution and other costs, and directed to pay for three anti-looting ads in regional newspapers. The artifacts and human remains will be returned/repatriated to their appropriate parks and tribes.

[This report was taken from the National Park Service's Morning Report, a publication that comes out every morning with reports on all types of incidents occurring in U.S. national parks. You can see the Morning Report each day by going to: <http://home.nps.gov/applications/morningreport/>]

Species Management

Worldwide – IUCN Report

Survey Finds 'Bleak Picture' For World's Mammals

Summary: A study released at IUCN's World Conservation Congress in October reports that a quarter (25%) of the world's wild mammal species are at risk of extinction. The report covers all wild species identified in the last 500 years.

A quarter of the world's wild mammal species are at risk of extinction, according to a report made public at the quadrennial World Conservation Congress of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in October. The new assessment, which took 1,700 experts in 130 countries five years to complete, paints "a bleak picture," leaders of the project wrote in a paper being published in the journal *Science*. The study covers all 5,487 wild species identified since 1500. It is the most thorough tally of land and marine mammals since 1996.

"Mammals are definitely declining, and the driving factors are habitat destruction and over-harvesting," said Jan Schipper, the paper's lead author and the IUCN's global mammals assessment coordinator. The researchers concluded that 25 percent of the mammal species for which they had sufficient data are threatened with extinction, but Schipper added the figure could be as high as 36 percent because information on some species is so scarce.

Land and marine mammals face different threats, the scientists said, and large mammals are more vulnerable than small ones. For land species, habitat loss and hunting represent the greatest danger, while marine mammals are more threatened by accidental killing during fishing and by ship strikes and pollution. Although large species such as primates (including the Sumatran orangutan and red colobus monkeys) and ungulates (hoofed animals) might seem more physically imposing, the researchers wrote that these animals are more imperiled than small creatures such as rodents or bats because they "tend to have lower population densities, slower life histories, and larger home ranges, and are more likely to be hunted." Primates face some of the most intense pressures: According to the survey, 79 percent of primates in South and Southeast Asia -- including the Hainan gibbon -- are facing extinction.

[This story appeared in the U.S. *Washington Post*; it can be found at this link: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/10/06/AR2008100600641.html>]

Parks And Protected Areas

Worldwide – UNESCO World Heritage Committee Eight New Natural Sites Added To World Heritage List

Summary: Many newspapers carried stories about IUCN's World Heritage Committee adding eight new areas to the World Heritage List at a meeting in Quebec last summer. These new sites are 1) the Socotra Archipelago in Yemen, 2) Canada's Joggins Fossil Cliffs, 3) the French Lagoons of New Caledonia, 4) Saryarka in Northern Kazakhstan, 5) Mount Sanqingshan National Park in China, 6) Surtsey in Iceland, 7) the Swiss Tectonic Arena Sardona, and 8) the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve in Mexico.

Here are the descriptions of the eight sites added to the list:

1. Yemen's Socotra Archipelago, Yemen – It been called the Galapagos of the Indian Ocean for its exceptional biodiversity of plants and animals. About 37 percent of Socotra's plant species, 90 percent of its reptile species and 95 percent of its land snail species are found nowhere else in the world. The nature sanctuaries, national parks and areas of special botanical interest in the archipelago encompass about 75 percent of its total land area. The marine life of Socotra is also very diverse, with 253 species of reef-building corals, 730 species of coastal fish and 300 species of crab, lobster and shrimp.
2. Joggins Fossil Cliffs, Canada – The cliffs are the world reference site for the Coal Age, which is about 300 million years ago. The site contains fossils of the first reptiles in Earth's history. They are the earliest representatives of the amniotes, a group of animals that includes reptiles, dinosaurs, birds, and mammals. According to an IUCN representative: "You can actually see the remains of the first reptiles in the Earth's history (in the cliffs), as well as fossil trees, animals and plants."
3. French Lagoons, New Caledonia – The tropical lagoons and coral reefs of New Caledonia form one of the three most extensive reef systems in the world. They are inhabited by an exceptional variety of coral and fish species and have intact ecosystems with healthy populations of big fish and top predators. These lagoons provide habitat to a number of threatened fish, turtles, and marine mammals, including the third largest population of dugongs in the world.
4. Sayarka, Kazakhstan – Saryarka is an undisturbed area of Central Asian steppe and lakes in the Korgalzhyn and Naurzum State Nature Reserves. These are key stopover points for globally threatened bird species and provide feeding grounds for up to 16 million birds. This area also is inhabited by the critically endangered saiga antelope.
5. Mount Sanqingshan National Park, China – The park was recommended for its outstanding natural beauty. Its forested and fantastically shaped granite pillars and peaks can be appreciated by visitors from suspended walking trails.
6. Surtsey, Iceland – Surtsey is a new island in Iceland that was formed by volcanic eruptions from 1963 through 1967. It offers a unique scientific record of the process of colonization of land by plants and animals. Part of the evolution of Surtsey is the process of coastal erosion which has already halved the area of the island and over time is predicted to remove another two thirds, leaving only the most resistant core.
7. Swiss Tectonic Arena Sardona, Switzerland – The area shows how mountains were formed through continental collisions and has been studied since the 18th century. The clear exposure of the Glarus Overthrust, a line where older rocks overlay younger rocks, is a key feature. The exposures of the rocks below and above this feature are visible in three dimensions and, taken together, have contributed to the understanding of mountain building tectonics.

8. Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve, Mexico – The three core zones of the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve protect eight overwintering colonies of the monarch butterfly in the oyamel fir forests of central Mexico. Perhaps a billion monarch butterflies overwinter here in close-packed clusters every year after a 3,500 to 4,500 kilometer journey from points in the United States and Canada.

[The Environmental News Service has a copy of this story. It can be found at this web page:

<http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/jul2008/2008-07-08-03.asp>]

Park Management

United States – National Park System

Retired Rangers Send Letter To New Secretary On Qualifications For Park Director

Summary: As you know, the United States will have a new president on January 20th. The new president then appoints secretaries to administer government agencies. The U.S. National Park Service is under the Department of the Interior, and the new secretary will be current Senator Ken Salazar. The Coalition of National Park Service Retirees, an organization made up of nearly 700 highly-experienced retired career rangers and managers, has sent him a letter with the ideal qualifications for a director. Because so many of these qualifications are the same for parks all over the world, the letter is being included in full here.

Earlier this month, Bill Wade, chairman of the executive council of the U.S., sent the following letter to Senator Ken Salazar, who will be the next Secretary of the Interior under President Obama. Secretary Salazar will be an important person in determining who will be the next director. This letter lists all the important qualities that a director should have – whether in the U.S. or elsewhere...

“I wish to introduce you to the Coalition of National Park Service Retirees (CNPSR). The nearly 700 members of the Coalition are all former employees of the National Park Service with a combined 20,500 years of stewardship of America’s most precious natural and cultural resources. We formed in 2003 and incorporated and received IRS approval as a non-profit educational organization in 2007.

“We are gratified that President-elect Obama has nominated for the Secretary of the Interior a person whose family history includes generations of intimate relationship with the land and the fragility of the natural systems – such as those protected in national parks – upon which all life depends.

“For the past eight years we (as concerned individuals before we organized) have watched with dismay and disappointment – and sometimes anger – as your predecessors and other political leaders in the Bush Administration and the Department of the Interior carried out systematic efforts resulting in serious consequences to the National Park Service and the National Park System.

“It is now time to turn our attention to the future and we are eager to work with you and the leadership of the Department of the Interior and the National Park Service to do that.

“Many current tribulations in the NPS and the National Park System are the result of inadequate funding. We realize there are limited expectations for significant increases in funding in the near term. On the other hand, we cannot overstate that many of the problems that exist are problems that can be fixed, or at least improved, without a large infusion of money. These can be remedied by focusing on critical priorities, changing leadership emphases and meeting the American people’s desires for more effective stewardship of their National Park System.

“We urge you to give your paramount attention to the following priorities immediately upon assuming the office of Secretary of the Department of the Interior:

- Re-establish the rule of law, professional expertise and competence, and complete science – rather than ideological political interference – as the basis for restoring principled decision-making at all professional and managerial levels. Apply these criteria to the resolution of the Yellowstone NP winter use policy and other critical resource protection issues in the National Park System.
- Improve preservation and protection of park historic places and museum collections entrusted to the Service’s care and restore the National Park Service Heritage Preservation/Cultural Resources Management programs to a level of national credibility.
- Ensure a focus on key landscape and ecosystem restoration efforts in the National Park System where ecosystem failure is imminent or where the loss of keystone species threaten the future of ecosystems as we know them, such as Everglades National Park, Joshua Tree National Park, Yellowstone National Park and other similar examples.
- Embrace true transformative organizational change and preparation for a progressive second century of National Park Service through leadership in support of the National Park Service Second Century Commission.
- Apply innovative public works and economic stimulus programs to eliminating the growing maintenance backlog, while ensuring that the mission of the NPS and compliance requirements are upheld.
- Place a high emphasis on restoring the NPS Interpretive and Educational program to levels that the American public expects and deserves – especially “offsite” school programs that will educate young people about national park values.
- Require other Interior agencies to give highest priority to the values of the National Park System and to increase collaboration with the NPS in instances where their actions could impact the resources of adjacent or nearby parks.

“One of the most important decisions you soon will be making, in terms of the consequences on the National Park Service, its workforce and the National Park System, will be your selection of the Director of the National Park Service.

“We implore you to resist filling this position with someone who has minimal qualifications or who simply has significant political connections.

“The new Director must be willing and able to heal the organization, restore it to credibility, good health and pride and immediately set in motion a culture of principled decision-making and leadership. For these reasons, we urge you to select a veteran of the National Park Service, rather than an “outsider” who would have a significant “learning curve” and who would face an uphill effort to establish credibility.

“Time is critical. The new Director must be able to take immediate steps to work with you and other Interior leaders to reverse the downhill trend that has been occurring in the Service over the past several years.

“In addition to the usual competencies expected of a government senior executive, we believe that the following traits of competence and commitment are critical to the success of the Director of the NPS for the immediate future:

1. Uncompromisingly defend the mission of the National Park Service –
 - Knowledge of applicable laws and regulations of the NPS and commitment to adhere to them rather than compromise them in favor of political expediency.
 - Commitment to making sound science and scholarly research the bases for NPS management and planning.
 - Commitment to adaptive management of resources that features periodic reviews to assure that actions taken are producing desired results and the promise to modify those that are not.
 - Respect and build upon the decisions of past and current generations regarding the composition of the National Park System and the standards of care for the system.

2. Forthrightness with public –
 - Recognizing that NPS leaders are non-partisan principled experts and professionals shouldering the expectation of the American public for honesty, integrity and candor, unhesitatingly make affirmative, principled, factual arguments that call attention to what the nation cannot afford to lose—the heritage it has placed in trust for future generations.
 - Commitment to inform public about the “state of the parks.”
 - Using constructive civic engagement, and a commitment to absolute transparency in administrative and financial processes, defends the public’s right to know the truth about its National Park System—communicating facts and perspective about how the National Park System is being managed.
3. Legislative relations –
 - Demonstrated effectiveness in building sound relationships with staff and elected officials in the Congress.
 - Commitment to establish a more effective legislative program between the NPS and the Congress.
4. Accountability –
 - Commitment to hold self and other career NPS leaders accountable for principled decision-making in accordance with law, policy and science.
5. Foster inspired change and organizational renaissance –
 - Respect and develop the experience and wisdom of career professionals in the National Park Service and encourage, value and give appropriate consideration to their contributions.
 - Revitalize the senior leadership functions of the NPS in a way that restores the confidence of the Service’s employees and reestablishes the role of the Director as the principled leader and spokesperson of the Agency.
6. Commitment to re-awakening the values of parks in the American people –
 - Recognize, stimulate, and cultivate understanding of and reverence for the inherent values and purposes for which each unit of the National Park System was established, as well as for the system as a whole.
 - Recognize that this understanding and reverence should form the fundamental rationale for defining the quality of experiences provided to visitors and the importance and relevance of educating the public – both inside the parks and beyond their boundaries.
7. Commitment to uphold the National Park System as constituting an inalienable patrimony –
 - Parks belong to the nation’s present and future citizens as a whole. The programs and activities associated with the parks extend their benefits throughout the public and private sectors and to the people of all nations. Any impairment, including that resulting from commercialization or privatization of the national heritage held in the public estate is unacceptable.

“We are eager to work constructively with you, and we stand ready to provide additional information or assist you in ways you and we might find appropriate and useful.”

[The following link will take you directly to CNPSR’s letter to the secretary:

<http://www.npsretirees.org/cnpsr/2009/cnpsr-sends-letter-secretary-designate-salazar>]

News About Rangers

Democratic Republic of Congo – Virunga National Park Ranger Safari Kakule Killed By Militia

Summary: Colleague Jobogo Mirindi has sent this report about the killing of a ranger in Virunga National Park: “We are deeply sorry to announce the death of one of our ranger, Kakule Safari. He was assassinated on January 8th January. Kakule was one of our brave rangers working with the Mount Tshabirimu Project to habituate the 20 isolated gorillas group in the northern province 300 Km from Goma. Their patrol post was attacked by Mai Mai militias, and, during a heavy exchange, we lost Kakule as he was trying to save his wife. This attack happen just a week after we lost two park wardens wives in Garamba National Park. They were killed by Ugandan LRA rebels closer to the border with DRC and Sudan. We will keep remembering them.”



A picture of Safari Kakule (as the name appears in the media) appears above; a CNN International article on him follows.

Colleagues and bloggers are praising a park ranger shot dead last week in Congo's Virunga National Park as a brave and committed protector of gorillas. Federal and local authorities in the Democratic Republic of Congo continue to probe the death...of Safari Kakule, who was killed when Mai Mai rebels attacked a ranger station in the northern section of the park -- a refuge for rare gorillas.

"We are deeply saddened by the loss," said Virunga National Park Director Emmanuel de Merode. In a tribute on a blog on the park's Web site, de Merode wrote, "Safari was an exceptional ranger" who had worked with gorillas for several years.

"Recently he had trained as a para-vet, and he was expected to play a very important role in protecting the gorillas of Tshiaberimu," he said.

Mount Tshiaberimu, in the northern part of the park, is home to an isolated population of 18 endangered eastern lowland gorillas. The group is distinct from the estimated 200 mountain gorillas in the southern region of the vast park, parts of which are controlled by Laurent Nkunda's Congolese rebel movement.

Pierre Peron, a digital media producer for the park's web site, said on the blog that the first time he saw gorillas was when Kakule guided him up Mount Tshiaberimu to see them: "[Kakule] was a gentle giant. He was intelligent, committed, and knew a lot about gorillas. During the couple days I spent with him, he marked me as someone who would go on to big things and have an important contribution to conservation in Virunga. He will be greatly missed."

Mai Mai rebels are described as community-based militia groups frequently involved in banditry. Another ranger was wounded in the attack and a rebel was captured. That arrest has resulted in several leads in the investigation.

"The Mai Mai are seeking to wear down the rangers because they don't want the park to exist. They want to cultivate and poach in the park," said Samantha Newport, communications director for the refuge.

The work of the rangers in such a perilous atmosphere was lauded by people who posted their condolences on the blog. About 1,100 rangers protect the national parks of eastern Congo amid civil warfare and political instability. One blog entry said, "The willingness of Virunga's rangers to go out every day in the face of such danger is absolutely incredible." Talking about a web site video showing Kakule with gorillas in May, the blog entry said, "The video, as sad as it is to watch, really makes one feel the gravity of the situation, and drives home the fact that Safari, and all the other rangers, are real people -- not just names. I am deeply grateful for all they do." Another blog entry said, "Safari was a selfless brave man and will truly be missed by all."

Kakule, 33, is survived by his wife and three children.

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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 .

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