



GUARDAPARQUE

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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 editor Bill Halainen (Bill_Halainen@nps.gov). Summaries in Spanish for each article were prepared by Rick Smith (rsmith0921@earthlink.net).

Emergency Services And Law Enforcement

Madagascar – Marojejy/Masoala National Parks Park And Other Sanctuaries Pillaged By Gangs Following Coup

Summary/Resumen: Because of a recent coup, the country's government has become 'paralyzed.' Conservation areas are being invaded by gangs illegally harvesting trees and threatening species. Rangers are abandoning their posts due to the danger./Debido a un reciente golpe, el gobierno del país está paralizado. Las áreas de conservación han sido invadidas por bandas que ilegalmente están cortando árboles y amenazando varias especies. Los guardaparques, por el peligro de la situación, están abandonando sus puestos.

With Madagascar's government paralyzed after a recent coup, looters are invading the African island country's protected wildlife sanctuaries, harvesting trees and threatening critically endangered lemurs and other species, conservationists said this week. Marojejy National Park in northern Madagascar has been closed to tourism. In other parks, rangers are abandoning their posts, according to reports. The trouble is linked to turmoil that culminated in the coup d'etat that ousted President Marc Ravalomanana last week. Some protected conservation areas are being invaded by organized criminals intent on cutting down valuable rosewood trees and extracting other resources, according to conservationists in Madagascar.

The closure of Marojejy National Park was "deemed necessary by park management due to the lawlessness that has descended over the ... region during this time of political unrest in Madagascar, and the resultant looting and destruction which is currently occurring within the park," according to the park's Web site. "In particular, gangs of armed men (led primarily by foreign profiteers in conjunction with the rich local mafia) are plundering the rainforests of Marojejy for the extremely valuable rosewood that grows there," the site continues. Most worrisome is the well-being of the highly endangered silky sifaka, a lemur found only in the rainforests of Marojejy and the surrounding area."

The silky sifaka is listed as critically endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List, meaning the animal is "considered to be facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild."

Cornell University Ph.D. candidate Erik Patel has been studying the silky sifaka since 2001. "Illegal logging of precious wood has emerged as one of the most severe threats to Madagascar's dwindling northeastern rainforests," Patel said in an email. Over the past few years, thousands of logs, worth millions of U.S. dollars, have been confiscated at the Madagascar ports of Vohémar, Antalaha, and Toamasina, he said. Most of this critically endangered rosewood and ebony is known to have come from Marojejy National Park and Masoala National Park," Patel said. In the face of rich, armed, and politically connected criminals, the parks simply lack the resources to stop this, Patel added. "The impacts of such selective logging include violating local taboos as well as ecological consequences such as increased likelihood of fire, invasive species, impaired habitat, and loss in genetic diversity." Patel said the January 2009 termination of the law prohibiting the export of rosewood and ebony is a key cause of the increased logging. "The laws prohibiting such exportation must be reinstated as soon as possible," he said. "It is unprecedented for a national park in Madagascar to be closed to tourism because of illegal logging." Primatologist Mireya Mayor, who has done fieldwork in Marojejy, said, "I'm gutted and at a loss to describe how bad this situation is."

[Article taken from the National Geographic Society web page:

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2009/03/090324-lemurs-looting-madagascar.html>]

Kenya – National Parks Firefighters Battle Huge Fires, Arsonists Arrested

Summary/Resumen: Major fires are burning in four national parks and other areas in Kenya. Animals are threatened and crops have been destroyed. Ten people have been arrested, as arson is suspected. So far, more than 46 square kilometers have burned./Cuatro incendios significativos están quemando porciones de cuatro parques nacionales y otras áreas de Kenia. Los incendios amanecen los animales y han destruido cultivos. Fueron detenidas 10 personas sospechadas del delito de incendio premeditado. Hasta ahora, los incendios han quemado 46 kilómetros cuadrados.

Kenya's most famous animals are fleeing as thousands of firefighters battle flames in four national parks, but some animals may be trapped in the crater of a dormant volcano, a government official said this past Tuesday. The fires have also destroyed more than US \$800,000 worth of crops such as maize, Kenya's staple food, at a time when 3.2 million Kenyans are at risk of hunger and the government has appealed for international food aid.

The fires in central Kenya might have been started by arsonists, including squatters illegally occupying forest that the government has been trying to evict, said Kenya Wildlife Service spokesman Paul Udoto. Ten people have been arrested.

Udoto said some animals might be trapped between the steep sides of the dormant Longonot volcano, 60 kilometers (37 miles) northwest of the capital. Aberdare, Mt. Elgon and Ruma parks were threatened by the fires, which started Saturday. Udoto said he did not know how many animals had been killed. "Large mammals, including lions, cheetahs and leopards were able to run away," he said. "Elephants are able to detect fire from far away and run away." But smaller animals might have been trapped in flaming undergrowth, he said. There are no larger animals in the Longonot volcano, but smaller species like buck and zebra live there.

More than 18 square miles (46 square kilometers) of land have been destroyed across the country so far. More than 4,500 firefighters, policemen and soldiers have battled the flames over the last three days, but the fires have continued to spread. Udoto said the fires have been fed by low humidity, high temperatures, strong winds and a prolonged drought.

[The above story was issued on March 25th by the U.S. Associated Press and found on line:

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5hfygXwGJn2uzb5Ine7JmULbEf2iAD974GFF83>]

**Indonesia – Komodo National Park
Fisherman Who Illegally Entered Park Killed By Komodo Dragon**

Summary/Resumen: A fisherman who entered a section of the park closed to visitors due to wild Komodo dragons was killed by one of them./Un pescador que entró a una parte del parque cerrado por la presencia de los dragones Komodo fue matado por uno de ellos.

An Indonesian fisherman died after being mauled by a Komodo dragon on an island generally barred to humans because of the dangerous reptiles, officials said. Fransiskus Harum, manager of Komodo National Park, said on Tuesday that Muhamad Anwar, 32, died while other fishermen were taking him to a hospital, CNN reported. "The fisherman was inside the park when he went looking for sugar-apples," Harum said. "The area was forbidden for people to enter as there are a lot of wild dragons."

The Komodo dragon, which can grow to be 10 feet long, is the world's largest lizard. Their saliva is toxic because it contains bacteria that cause a dangerous infection, and they sometimes kill prey by biting it and then waiting until the animals die. Only 4,000 dragons are believed to remain in the wild, although they have been bred successfully in zoos and wildlife parks.

Tourists in the national park must be accompanied by rangers, who tell the story of a Swiss visitor who vanished in Komodo dragon territory, leaving only his camera and glasses, CNN said.

[United Press International article, posted on March 25th:

http://www.upi.com/Top_News/2009/03/24/Fisherman_killed_by_Komodo_dragon/UPI-27511237925803/]

**United States – Biscayne National Park
Fishermen With Illegal Take Have Option Of Fines, Education**

Summary/Resumen: Rangers charged several men with a number of fishing violations, but offered them the choice of either paying a significant fine or going to an innovative new course to learn how to fish responsibly./Los guardaparques denunciaron a varias personas por violaciones de las normas de pesca. En vez de pagar una multa, los infractores fueron dados la oportunidad de participar en un programa de capacitación innovador para aprender pescar en una forma razonable.

On January 2nd, rangers stopped a boat in Hurricane Creek for fishing violations (the park is on the Atlantic Ocean in Florida). The fishermen had 49 mangrove snappers on board, a total that was 29 over the legal limit. Only eight of the fish were longer than the legal size limit of ten inches. A number of citations were issued to the fishermen, including a \$1,575 citation for the limit violation and a \$2,125 citation for the undersized fish. Through an agreement with the Department of Justice, rangers can offer a fisheries education course as an alternative to paying a fine or appearing in court. The four-hour course, developed by the park's resource management staff, is designed to educate anglers on fishing regulations and responsible fishing techniques. To date, more than 93 people have participated in this course and no course participants have become repeat offenders. The captain of the boat will also have the option of taking the class as an alternative for the bag limit violation, but will have to pay or appear in court for the undersize fish violation.

[From the U.S. National Park Service Morning Report, found at <http://home.nps.gov/applications/morningreport/>]

Parks And Protected Areas

IUCN/WCPA – Parks and Protected Areas Worldwide Protected Areas Cover Estimated 12 Percent Of Earth's Surface

Summary/Resumen: IUCN has issued a listing of the number of protected areas around the world and the total acreage contained within them./La IUCN ha publicado un listado de las áreas protegidas del mundo y sus extensiones en kilómetros.

According to IUCN/WCPA data, there were 106,000 protected areas covering some 18 million square kilometers (km²), or about 11.63% of the Earth's surface, as of 2007. While estimates of marine areas under protection are complicated because country reports may contain some land areas, best estimates were that there were 4,435 marine protected areas covering 2.35 million km², or only about .65% of the ocean's surface. Particularly alarming from those figures was the fact that critical marine ecosystems were severely under-represented.

Overall, however, significant progress has been made in growth of protected areas over the past decade. IUCN records show that in 1962 there were 9,214 sites covering 2.4 million km². By 1992, these figures had grown to 48,388 protected areas covering 12.3 million km². As of 2003, the UN List of Protected Areas (the most recent issue at this writing) contained 102,102 protected areas covering more than 18.8 million km², or about 12.65% of the Earth's land surface (UN List, 2003, p. 21), notably slightly more than the 2007 in terms of surface coverage but less in terms of numbers. As these data show, growth between 1992 and 2003 was significant, with a doubling by number and surface area. As noted above, 2007 shows further growth in numbers. [This information was taken from an IUCN/WCPA publication and sent by past IRF president Rick Smith].

United Kingdom – Channel Islands National Park Proposed For Jersey

Summary/Resumen: A park is under consideration for the Bailiwick of Jersey, one of the Channel Islands off the Normandy coast of France and a British crown dependency./Se están considerando un nuevo parque en una de las islas cerca de la costa de Normandía que pertenece a La Reina Unida.

The Bailiwick of Jersey is considering creating a national park on the island. It could include Corbiere headland; Ouaisne heathland, dunes and wetland; the commons of Portlet and Noirmont to the South; and Les Landes and Plemont to the north. Expectations are that this plan will move forward quickly.

Said an island senator: "The area is a special place and we must have a clear vision on how we pass it on to future generations. Granting the area national park status will raise the profile of what we want to protect – be it bio-diversity, building restrictions, or protection of existing buildings. There need to be discussions between the stakeholders, the local community and local businesses on how to set the boundaries. I think it will boil down to two or three particular issues, and that is where our efforts will be concentrated."

The prospect of a national park has delighted the president of the National Trust for Jersey, Mike Stentiford. Stentiford said: "It is a place of wonderful balance. Around St Ouen's pond you have migrating African birds in the summertime, and more familiar domestic birds in the winter. It is also home to two very important Sites of Special Interest (SSI) – Le Blanches Banque and Les Landes." Although national parks generally need policing, he believes the infrastructure is already part in place: "The SSIs are already managed extremely well by Environment and Planning and the National Trust looks after St Ouen's pond. People underestimate how important having big open spaces is. In the modern stress-filled world it is critical."

[This information came from the text of a BBC radio report sent by U.S. member Jeff Ohlfs]

Park Management

United States – Civil War Battlefield Parks Battlefield Preservation Organization Lists Threatened Sites

Summary/Resumen: In the United States, the National Park Service is responsible for managing many historical sites along with natural areas. These include many battlefields, particularly from the U.S. Civil War of 1861 – 1865. Development on or near these battlefields are threatening their integrity. A major historic preservation organization in the U.S. has issued its annual list of most endangered sites, including four that are national parks. /En los EEUU, el Servicio de Parques Nacionales tiene la responsabilidad de manejar sitios de importancia histórica. Esta responsabilidad incluye el manejo de muchos de los campos de batalla de la guerra civil. El desarrollo moderna cerca de estos campos amenaza la integridad de los sitios. Una organización significativa para la preservación de la historia de dicho país ha publicado su listado anual de sitios más amenazados. Cuarto parques nacional aparecen en el listado.

On March 18th, the Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT), a U.S. group that works to protect Civil War battlefield and other sites, unveiled its annual report on the status of the nation's historic battlegrounds. The report, entitled *History Under Siege™: A Guide to America's Most Endangered Civil War Battlefields*, identifies the most threatened Civil War sites in the United States and what can be done to save them.

"In town after town, the irreplaceable battlefields that define those communities are being marred forever," said CWPT president James Lighthizer. "As we approach the Sesquicentennial of the bloodiest conflict in our nation's history, we need to be more aware than ever of the importance of preserving these sacred places for generations to come."

Joining Lighthizer at the news conference announcing the report was actor Richard Dreyfuss, who is also an avid student of history and has been involved in numerous documentary projects, including *The Great Battles of the Civil War* and *Lincoln*.

Of the growing need for historic preservation Dreyfuss said, "These hallowed battlegrounds should be national shrines, monuments to American valor, determination and courage. Once these irreplaceable treasures are gone, they're gone forever."

Four of the ten sites on the list are NPS areas (noted with asterisks):

- Monocacy, Maryland *
- The Wilderness, Virginia *
- Port Gibson, Mississippi
- Cedar Creek, Virginia *
- Fort Gaines, Alabama
- Gettysburg, Pennsylvania *
- New Market Heights, Virginia
- Sabine Pass, Texas
- South Mountain, Maryland
- Spring Hill, Tennessee

For more information, click on this link: <http://www.civilwar.org/news/PressDetail.php?releaseID=184>

[This report comes from InsideNPS, a publication of the U.S. National Park Service]

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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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