

The Day of Parks 2010 in Pallas Yllästunturi National Park (FI)

Pallas Yllästunturi National Park is located in the area of Enontekiö, Kittilä, Kolari and Muonio in Northern Finland. Pallas Yllästunturi National Park's natural protection and a long research history, combined with a strong tourism destination at Ylläs in Lapland makes it very special. The park is managed by Metsähallitus, Nature Heritage Services Lapland.

This year we celebrated the Day of Parks in the Nature Centre Fell Lapland in Hetta on 23rd and 24th May, where the was opened. Highlights of the programme in 2010 included the opening event where the EUROPARC exhibition 'Living Parks: 100 years in Europe', which spent a month in the park, was presented; the café for free word; and free access to the main exhibition of the centre which presents the life of the Nomadic Sámi and Arctic Nature. In the cafeteria people had a possibility to write their ideas about nature protection and about the attitudes about our park on the table cloths. The day ended with the combination of storytelling and a hike to the Hietajärvi Lake and Kellostapulit. The superintendent of the park Mr Pekka Sulkava led and talked the audience through the park's history and myths and ledgends.

On the second day of celebrations a group of volunteers from a local institution came to visit and talked to the park staff about maintenance work in the field. They were also shown both exhibitions in the centre. The feedback from volunteers made us aware that many people dont know anything about the history of protected areas on a European level.

The May month is off- peak tourist season and very calm time for people living in Lapland. But nature itself is full of action. The village where the Nature Centre is located is tiny little village in Sámi region even it is the centre of Enontekiö. About 2000 inhabitants are divided in very large area. Around 200 of these took part in the Day of Parks activities.

Pallas Yllästunturi National Park has celebrated the European Day of Parks for many years. During the years we have found that it is a great occasion to inform staff, stakeholders, guests and nature lovers about nature protection and the national park. For us it is honour to organize it.

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