

19th International Junior Ranger Camp

Where two oceans meet;
Frederikshavn Kommune



7 - 14 July 2023

Denmark



FREDERIKSHAVN KOMMUNE



The International Junior Ranger Camp is an opportunity for EUROPARC to highlight how nature connects us across boundaries, be it cultural or geographical. We are all part of nature, and as such should look after it for current and future generations.

Visiting the point of Denmark where the North Sea meets the Baltic Sea (Photo credit: James Jackson)



19th International Junior Ranger Camp

The International Junior Ranger Camp is a motivational and eye-opening experience for many young people across the continent. Here, they have the opportunity to make friends from across Europe who share a passion for nature and are involved in local Protected Areas. The camp's programme is full of exciting activities related to nature conservation, environmental issues, and cultural heritage. Furthermore, young people will discover a new Protected Area, be given responsibility to represent their park and their country, as well as contribute to the conservation of nature in a different part of Europe.

The camp is an opportunity for the EUROPARC Junior Ranger network to come together to share, learn, support and celebrate one another. It is a highlight for both the young Junior Rangers and also for their Mentors.



Photo credit: Jessica Micklem-Kolenic

The 19th International Junior Ranger Camp was hosted by the Frederikshavn Kommune Junior Rangers in Denmark, from the 7 - 14 July 2023. It was attended by 17 Mentors and 46 Junior Rangers.

Participants

In 2023, the participants were from 17 different Protected Areas across 11 European countries:

Denmark

Frederikshavn Kommune

Sweden

Kullaberg Nature Reserve

Latvia

Gauja National Park

Kemeru National Park

Slītere National Park

Estonia

Matsula National Park

Alutaguse National Park

The Netherlands

Dwingelderveld National Park

Weerribben-Wieden National Park

Wales:

Eryri National Park (Snowdonia)

Bannau Brycheiniog National Park

England

Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Scotland

The Cairngorms National Park

Italy

Prealpi Giulie Nature Park



Photo credit: James Jackson



Photo credit: Jessica Micklem-Kolenic

Germany

Müritz National Park

Bavarian Forest National Park

Romania

Retezat National Park

The principles of a EUROPARC International Junior Ranger Camp

- Experiential, practical, fun, safe and **inspirational activities in Protected Areas** managed by Rangers and “learning by doing”;
- A **non-discriminatory** programme, which requires a professional approach and high quality standards;
- Promotes **international exchange** to develop positive, cooperative and social skills, and to encourage the active citizenship of youth;
- **Enhance connections** between EUROPARC Protected Areas and young people;
- **Develop cooperation** between Rangers, Parks, and EUROPARC.



Photo credit: James Jackson



Photo credit: Jessica Micklem-Kolenic



Photo credit: Alish Roberts



Photo credit: Anette Plink

Inspirational Activities in Protected Areas

Introduction to Frederikshavn:



Visiting the North Sea Aquarium

Photo credit: Jessica Micklem-Kolenic



Exploring shore biodiversity

Photo credit: Jessica Micklem-Kolenic



Learning about historical burial mounds

Photo credit: James Jackson



Meeting of the North and Baltic Sea

Photo credit: James Jackson



Learning about Råbjerg Mile

Photo credit: Jessica Micklem-Kolenic

Outdoor Art Work:

The Junior Rangers visited the "Professors Plantation" for a day of art. Led by local artist, Anna Mørch, the Junior Rangers had to draw how they felt, heard, saw and smelt nature.



Photo credit: Anne Mørch

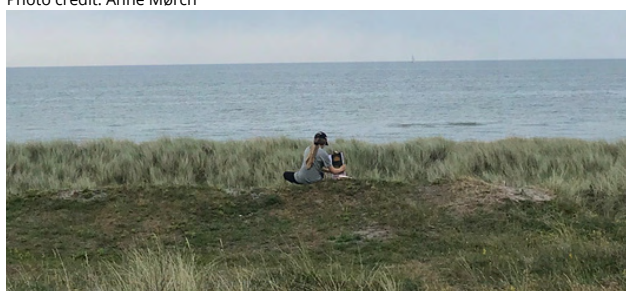


Photo credit: Anne Mørch



Photo credit: Anne Mørch

Outdoor Sports:

One of the days of the camp was dedicated to trying out various outdoor sports typical to the local area. Professional guides took us for stand-up paddleboarding and canoeing down the local river



Photo credit: Jessica Micklem-Kolenic



Photo credit: Kalle Kõllamaa



Photo credit: Will George



Photo credit: Marco Favalli



Photo credit: Jessica Micklem-Kolenic

Nature Restoration

On another day the Junior Rangers were taught about the challenges of local invasive species and different methods for clearing them. They also spent a few hours assisting by hand.



Photo credits: Jessica Micklem-Kolenic



Non-discriminatory Programme



The catering team did a fantastic job accommodating all the allergy and dietary considerations. At the camp, there were participants with the following dietary requirements: vegan, vegetarian, lactose-intolerant and gluten-intolerant. All of these were taken into account for all meals including snack breaks and desserts. Additionally, two of the evening meals were meat-free for all.



EUROPARC is dedicated to events which are inclusive, safe spaces for all. LGBTQIA+ participants were welcome and did attend. Solutions to any concerns were easily found and all participants felt welcome and able to be their true selves.



The accommodation was suitable for all needs. Individual solutions were found for those who needed more space to feel safe. Additionally, two participants were completing the scout challenge of 365 consecutive nights not under a roof. They slept in a tent and a hammock close to the dormitories.



Due to the fact that many Junior Ranger programmes restarted after the pandemic, the usual age limit of 14 - 17 years old was extended to allow 13 year olds in special circumstances, such as where the Protected Area had no older Junior Rangers, to attend.



The Junior Ranger programme has extended beyond EUROPARC's membership. In some countries like Switzerland and Scotland, the programme is run by a national ranger group. This year we decided to extend 1 available spot to a non-EUROPARC member and it has led to the park, Retezat National Park, making plans to join the network in the coming year.

International Exchange

This year the Junior Rangers presented their parks, programmes and experiences in a café style. Half of the teams set up their spots and the others rotated from one group to the next every 10 minutes. After a break for lunch, the groups switched. It was a huge success, the Junior Rangers had the chance to improve their public speaking and english language skills as they repeated their presentations to each visiting group. It was a great way for them to grow comfortable as ambassadors for their Protected Areas.



Photo credit: Jessica Micklem-Kolenic



Photo credit: Kalle Kõllamaa



Photo credit: Jessica Micklem-Kolenic

An international exchange is not only about nature protection but also sharing of culture through music, food and dancing. One of the events that is part of every International Junior Ranger Camp is the potluck dinner where all bring a little something from their country or region for everyone to taste. Similarly, musical instruments are always welcome and teaching one another folk dances happened spontaneously!



Photo credit: Jessica Micklem-Kolenic



Photo credit: Will George



Photo credit: Anette Plink

Enhance connection to EUROPARC

It is good to celebrate diversity, but it is also good to find unity through a shared community and identity. The International Junior Ranger Camp is an opportunity for the young participants to feel part of something bigger and to find common understanding with like-minded peers. It is also an opportunity to identify as part of the EUROPARC community, which links their parks.

As part of the camp's programme, the Junior Rangers created the artwork below filled with the fish of their future dreams which will be hung up at the EUROPARC Conference in the Netherlands later in the year. The wonderful team of caterers also prepared a very large cake to celebrate the 50 Years of EUROPARC.



Photo credit: Jessica Micklem-Kolenic



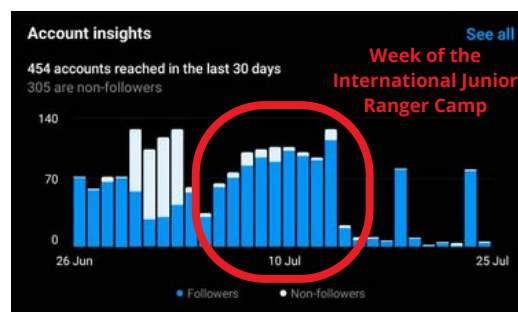
Photo credit: Will George



Instagram Highlights
@europarc.youth



The EUROPARC youth page on Instagram (@europarc.youth) was used to give updates on the activities of the Junior Rangers at the Camp. These stories were available for 24 hours and then stored as part of the highlight. We received positive feedback on this from the Junior Rangers, the Mentors and the parents.



Developing Cooperation



Photo credit: Ilaria Gardel

It is not only the Junior Rangers who benefitted from the camp. The Mentors were able to meet, share, learn and be inspired.

Each camp, the EUROPARC representative organises a Mentors workshop where they not only share their experiences, but also share their journeys and their challenges. This time is used to come up with solutions, inspire one another and build future collaborations such as cross-programme visits or twinning opportunities.

Workshop Results



Photo credit: Kalle Kõllamaa

EUROPARC presented the plan for the pilot of the European Youth in Parks Day, which will take place on the 23rd of September. Three parks already agreed to be part of the pilot and host events on the day, and all the mentors shared how it could be implemented.

European
Youth in Parks Day

"Our Nature,
Our Future"

23 September 2023

EUROPARC
FEDERATION

Media Coverage



General Press:

The Mayor of Frederikshavn Kommune posted about the opening on her [public page](#) on Facebook.

The radio station P4 interviewed the Junior Rangers on the 12th for their morning show, asking them about their experience at the camp.

On the 13th, mentor Bo Storm and a few Junior Rangers were interviewed for the evening news by TV2 Nord and a summary can be found on their [website](#).

Mentor Kalle Kõllamaa from Estonia, also published a piece about the camp on the [Estonian Protected Areas website](#).

Mentor Will George also published a blog article for the Cairngorms Community.

Photos were collected with permission and a photo album was created to share with participants, parents and parks.

[Full Photo Album](#)

Many of the park pages shared photos and comments about their participation:



- [Retezat National Park](#)
- [Matsula National Park](#)
- [Parco Naturale Prealpi Giulie](#)
- [Junior Rangers Nederlands](#)
- [Junior Ranger Kullaberg](#)
- [Gaujas Nacionālā parka Jaunie Reindžeri](#)
- [Dabas aizsardzības pārvalde](#) (Latvian nature conservation authority)
- [Cairngorm Rangers](#)
- [Kemeru Nacionālā parka jaunie reindžeri](#)



- Daily updates by [Junior Ranger Kullaberg](#)
- [Cairngorm Rangers](#)
- The Junior Rangers themselves posted on their private accounts

Feedback & Highlights

On the last day, the mentors were given an assignment to ask their Junior Rangers about the top highlights from the camp. Below you can see some of the answers shared with EUROPARC.

- (1) Meeting new and different people
- (2) The trip to Skagen
- (3) the campsite itself
- (4) the paddleboarding

The canoe-trip, followed by fishing on the ocean shore.

- (1) canoeing
- (2) field work
- (3) free time
- (4) dancing

We really enjoyed meeting and mixing with the other JRs, cultural exchange, canoeing and paddleboarding, and visiting the sand dune and oceanarium. Our own personal journeys and overcoming challenges were also very important to us.

The opportunity to get to explore not only Denmark but also getting to meet Junior Rangers from all around Europe

Canoeing and SUP boarding!
Sightseeing and dunes!

So many things, but the opportunity to foster a sense of community at a time with so much environmental "bad news" was invaluable and I feel like I got an awful lot from meeting like-minded people and making new close friends.

It is not only the Junior Rangers who benefit from the event, the mentors are also able to exchange, share, learn and build social capital. Below you can read some of the personal feedback from two of the mentors.

"Thank you !!!!! I would highly recommend the camp to all Junior Rangers and mentors. The opportunity to share an inspiring nature based experience with similarly passionate people from across Europe and grow your skills, knowledge and confidence is not to be missed. You will leave with fond memories, greater understanding and more motivation."

There are too many highlights to mention! From professional development point of view, the mentor workshop. For rewarding JR for their hard work and commitment to their local programmes, I thought the visit to the oceanarium was a lovely addition and made the young people feel special. The unstructured time in camp (singing, music, playing games) was fun, especially during the last two nights.



The 19th International Junior Ranger Camp, Denmark

We would like to take this opportunity to thank again all participants, the Junior Rangers, the Mentors and the Park Administrations.

In particular we want to express our gratitude for the expertise, dedication and passion of the Frederikshavn Kommune Team and their Junior Ranger Mentor, Bo Storm, for their kind support and dedication in pulling the different parts of this event together.

About the EUROPARC Junior Ranger Programme

The EUROPARC Junior Ranger Programme was launched in 2002 and the network has grown ever since. Being part of an extended European Junior Ranger network enables young people to connect with their peers across Europe.

The EUROPARC Federation Junior Ranger Programme is aimed at young people aged 12-18 who are living within or close to the Protected Area. The programme involves around 50 Protected Areas across 19 different countries, working with ~1000 youth every year.



About the EUROPARC Federation

The EUROPARC Federation is the largest European network of Protected Areas with more than 400 members from 40 countries. Our members are directly or indirectly managing thousands of National and Regional Parks, Marine Protected Areas, Natura 2000 sites. We are working on different levels to improve the management of Protected Areas in Europe to the benefit of nature and people. www.europarc.org

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