

# Junior Ranger Project in Europe

In partnership to protect Europe's natural and cultural heritage

## Report of Study Visits 2008

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Mgr. Květa Černošávková  
[junior.ranger@volny.cz](mailto:junior.ranger@volny.cz)  
Czech Republic



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## Index to Abbreviations

EF – EUROPARC Federation  
IUCN - International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources  
JRP – Junior Ranger Project  
MAB – Man and Biosphere  
NGO – Non-Governmental Organization  
NP – National Park  
PLA – Protected Landscape Area

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## 1. Preface

One of the greatest challenges facing protected areas today is to find ways of demonstrating that the conservation of nature and culture and the sustainable use of natural resources have a fundamental relevance to people's daily lives. The Junior Ranger Project has proved to be an ideal tool to foster strong and lasting bonds between local communities and their protected areas.

Young people are at the heart of the local communities living in and around protected areas. They are also their future advocates, guardians and potential employees. By providing young people with opportunities to participate at their work, protected areas fulfil their educational role whilst enhancing understanding of their aims and appreciation of the natural and cultural resources they protect. In return, the youngsters gain a wealth of rich and meaningful experiences and learn useful work skills in an outstanding natural environment close to their home. Such opportunities also encourage young people to develop a life-long commitment to protected areas and to the protection of our natural environment and cultural heritage.

This report is written to enlighten how individual Junior Ranger Projects run in different corners of Europe. The report also brings proposal for unification of project aims and methodology. This Project enables Junior Rangers to follow specific training programmes which give them a wide general knowledge and complementary skills similar to a real ranger in protected areas in Europe. The Junior Ranger is then able to communicate with visitors about nature conservation issues and with local communities about their concerns. Along with these skills the Junior Ranger becomes familiar with both global and local topics (nature, environment, history, society etc.).

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## 2. Basic Information about Junior Ranger Project

### 2.1. *What is Junior Ranger Project*

The Junior Ranger Project (JRP) is a EUROPARC Federation pilot project, which has been going on in many European states since 2002. The main aim of JRP is first and foremost to boost the image of protected areas management bodies by influencing children and subsequently people around them (parents, schoolmates etc.).

### 2.2. *Project Aims*

- Creating a network of youngsters who actively participate in nature protection and act as advocates for their home protected area.
- Improving youngsters' knowledge of the ranger profession, thus raising the profession's profile and the number of young people choosing the ranger profession or other jobs in nature conservation.
- Raising awareness about the natural, cultural, social and economic values of protected areas, as well as their role and daily work.
- Enhancing recognition of protected areas and their administrations' achievements – enthusiastic junior rangers act as multipliers among families, schoolmates and friends.
- Sensitize children and youngsters to the economic potential provided by protected areas.
- Promoting friendship and a group ethic between young people by engaging them in the achievement of the common goals of European protected areas.
- Offering activities for junior rangers that are hands-on and fun!

### 2.3. *What is EUROPARC Federation*

The EUROPARC Federation is a pan-European, politically independent, non-governmental organisation, whose purpose is to support and promote the whole range of protected areas in Europe. EUROPARC is the umbrella organisation of Europe's protected areas. It unites national parks, regional parks, nature parks and biosphere reserves in 38 countries, with the common aim of protecting Europe's unique variety of wildlife, habitats and landscapes.

This organization coordinates the European Junior Ranger network, supports the increase in Junior Ranger network partners throughout Europe, exchanges information and experience through the organisation of international meetings and training events. And they also organize an "International EUROPARC Junior Ranger Camp" each summer.



## 3. Outcomes of Statistical Investigation

### 3.1. Form and Content

The main solving method was a survey via questionnaire followed by visiting some of the protected areas during study visits.

In 84 protected areas in Europe an electronic questionnaire regarding JRP was sent during the autumn of 2007. It was focused on obtaining their experiences with the project. The main aim of this questionnaire was to get relevant information from mentors of JRP on the basis of 10 questions.

64 answers (76%) which were monitoring the current JRP situation in Europe were returned. Seven answers from the total indicated that there is no JRP within their area. Seven letters gave an explanation of desire to start with JRP this year or later. All in all, the number of completed questionnaires was 51.

### Hypothesis

1. There is an assumption of obtaining more than 70% of answers.
2. There is a hypothesis of working with 10 – 15 children, who are 12 – 14 years old.
3. There is a supposition that in more than 70% of answers the professional rangers are actually JRP mentors.
4. There is a hypothesis that JRP mentors are responsible for the development of Junior Ranger Activity Programmes in more than 70% of answers.
5. It is supposed in more than 70% of answers that there is an absence of consistent collaboration with another Junior Ranger team in other protected areas.



### 3.2. Submitted Questionnaire

1. Since when has the Junior Ranger Project (JRP) been implemented in your protected area?

Year of your 1 <sup>st</sup> JRP activity:	Ever since the Junior Ranger Project has been implemented for the first time, it has been running	The Junior Ranger Project in your protected area has been initiated by:
<input type="checkbox"/> 2002 <input type="checkbox"/> 2003 <input type="checkbox"/> 2004 <input type="checkbox"/> 2005 <input type="checkbox"/> 2006 <input type="checkbox"/> 2007	<input type="checkbox"/> Continuously and regularly up to date <input type="checkbox"/> With interruptions <input type="checkbox"/> Only for one year <b>Recent situation:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> JRP is currently being implemented <input type="checkbox"/> JRP has finished	<input type="checkbox"/> EUROPARC Federation <input type="checkbox"/> Others:

2. How many Junior Rangers do you have and what is their age? Please use one line per existing group.

Group of JRP	Number of Junior Rangers	Age range:
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

3. How often do Junior Rangers meet?

Frequency of Junior Ranger meetings:	Kinds of activities that are offered as part of your JRP:
<input type="checkbox"/> C. 1 time per week <input type="checkbox"/> C. 1 time in 3 months <input type="checkbox"/> C. 1 time per year	<input type="checkbox"/> C. 1 time per month <input type="checkbox"/> C. 1 time in 6 months <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
	<input type="checkbox"/> Junior Ranger summer camp <input type="checkbox"/> Follow-up programmes <input type="checkbox"/> Other:

4. How many permanent Junior Ranger mentors do you have?

Number of permanent mentors

5. Which position / job do your Junior Ranger mentors have?

JR Mentor	Job position of JR mentor (ranger, teacher, environmental educator...)
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	



6. Who is responsible for developing Junior Ranger Activity Programmes? (JR mentors, director, rangers etc.)

<input type="checkbox"/> JR mentors	<input type="checkbox"/> Rangers
<input type="checkbox"/> Director	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:

7. What do your activity programmes mainly focus on?

<input type="checkbox"/> Games and entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Study of legislation background
<input type="checkbox"/> Lectures and job training	<input type="checkbox"/> Communication training
<input type="checkbox"/> Manual work	<input type="checkbox"/> Excursions
<input type="checkbox"/> Nature observation and study	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:

8. Do you have any regular collaboration with Junior Ranger teams in other protected areas?

No       Yes, with the Junior Ranger team(s) from:

9. Which Junior Ranger activities will you hold between January 2008 and September 2008?

Date (please write month and year)	Short description of planned activities:

10. Can I visit your protected area in the context of my “Alfred Toepfer Natural Heritage Scholarship” to learn about your Junior Ranger Project?

No       Yes

Your comment:

Name of your protected area:

Contact person:

Name:

E-mail:

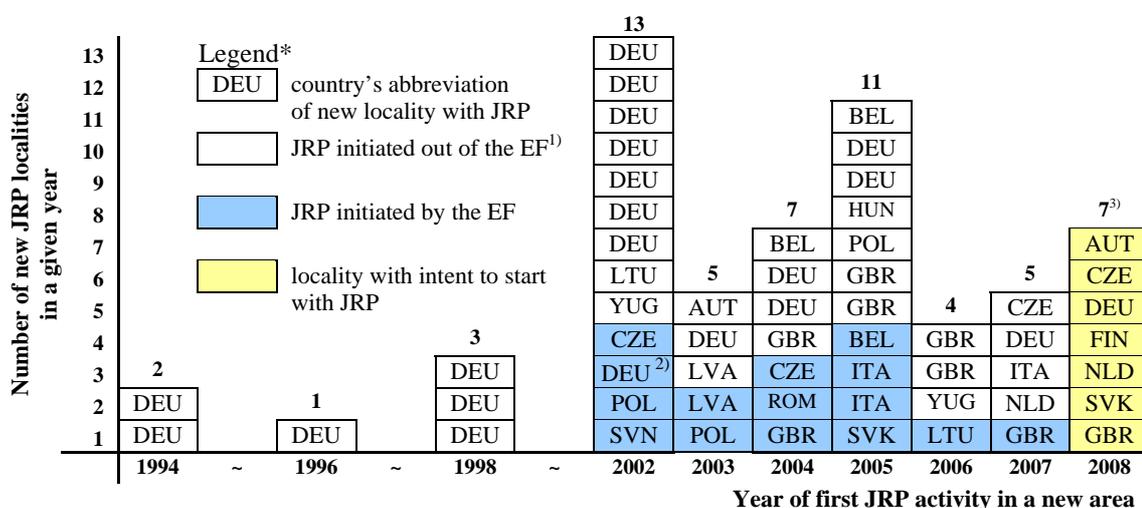
Thank you very much for your time and help!  
 Mgr. Květa Černošávková  
 junior.ranger@volny.cz



### 3.3. Questionnaire Evaluation

Number of mailed questionnaires:	84	
Number of addressed European states:	21	
Number of answers:	64	(= 76%)
- of which JRP is not present:	7	
- of which JRP is intending to start:	7	
Number of completed questionnaires:	51	

#### 1. Since when has the Junior Ranger Project (JRP) been implemented in different protected areas



Note:

\* Abbreviations used: JRP – Junior Ranger Project, EF – EUROPARC Federation, AUT - Austria, BEL – Belgium, CZE – Czech Republic, DEU – Germany, FIN - Finland, GBR - Great Britain, HUN – Hungary, ITA – Italy, LVA - Latvia, LTU – Lithuania, NLD - Netherlands, POL - Poland, ROM - Romania, SVK – Slovakia, SVN - Slovenia, YUG – Yugoslavia

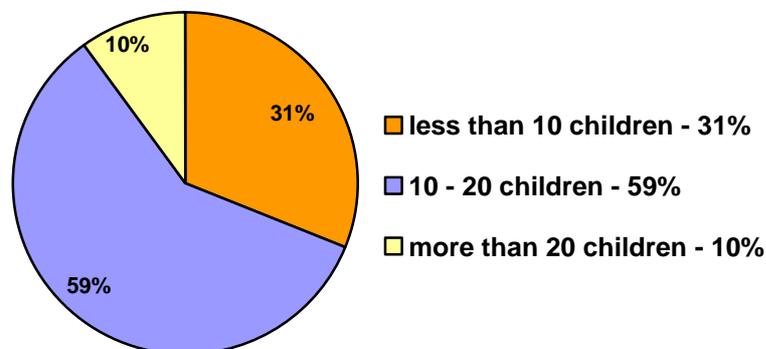
- 1) Project was initiated mostly by the Authority of protected area.
- 2) Authority of Nationalpark Bayerischer Wald started with JRP in 1998, subsequently they collaborated with the EF on development of first JRP method in 2002.
- 3) Locality cooperating with the EF, they are interested in beginning with JRP in 2008 or later.

## 2. Number and age of Junior Rangers in one group

The average number of Junior Rangers: 14 children

The least number of Junior Rangers in one group: 3 children (Germany)

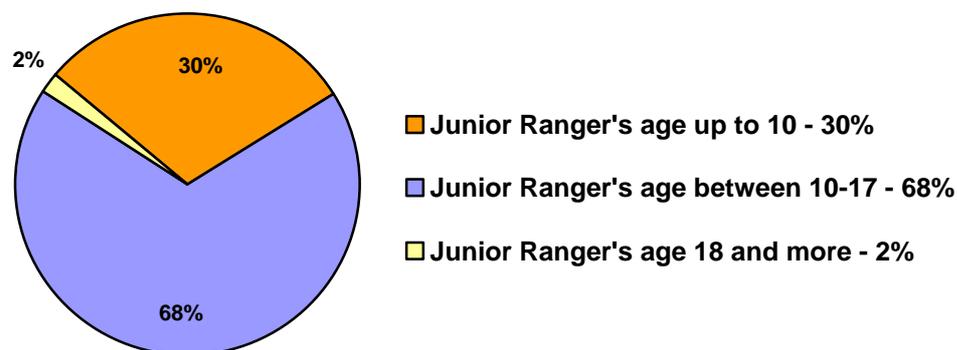
The most number of Junior Rangers in one group: 50 children (Bulgaria)



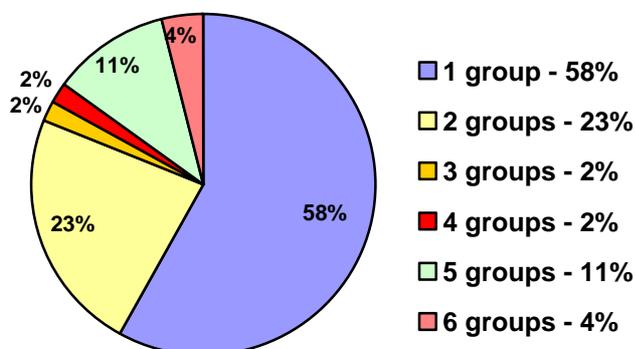
Mean age of Junior Rangers: 12

The youngest Junior Ranger: 4 years old (Germany)

The oldest Junior Ranger: 20 years old (Great Britain)

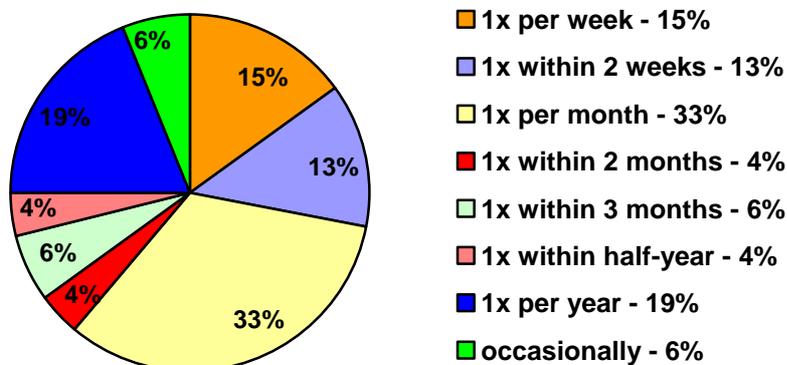


The average number of Junior Ranger groups in one protected area: 2 groups

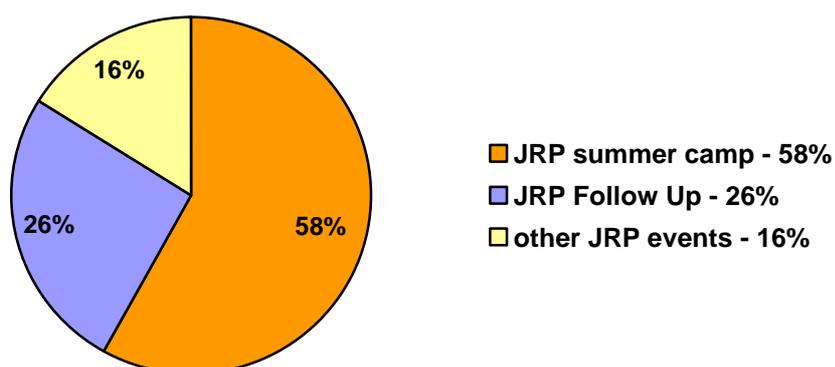


### 3. Frequency of Junior Ranger meetings and kinds of JRP activities

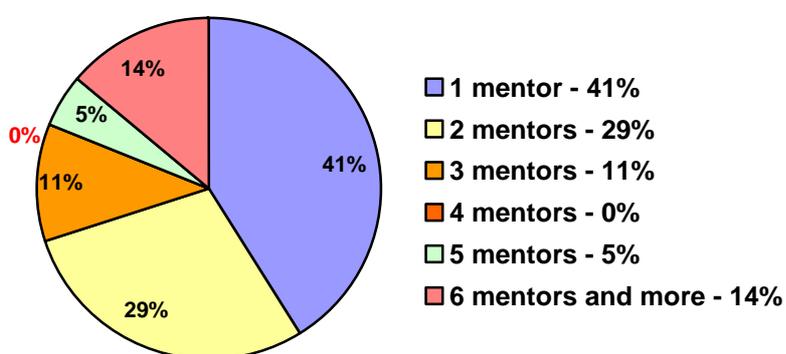
Frequency of Junior Ranger meetings:



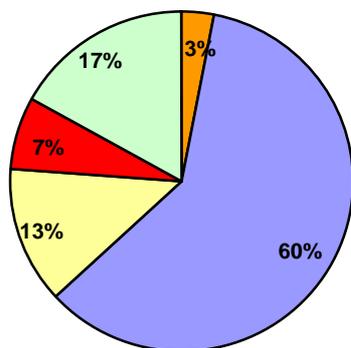
Kinds of JRP activities:



### 4. Number of permanent Junior Ranger mentors in one locality

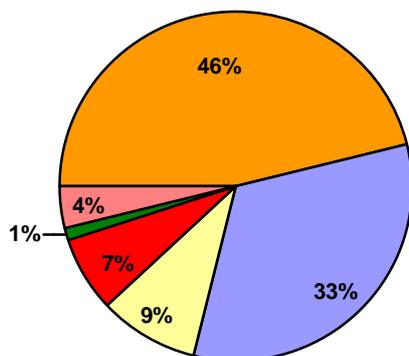


### 5. Position / job of mentor



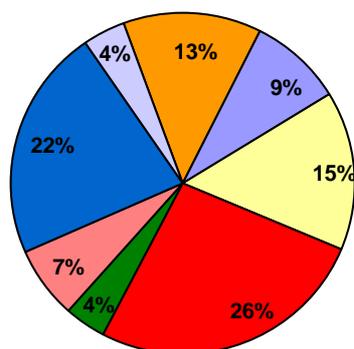
- teacher - 3%
- ranger - 60%
- environmental educator - 13%
- other employee of the Authority - 7%
- student or volunteer - 17%

### 6. Responsible for developing Junior Ranger Activity Programmes



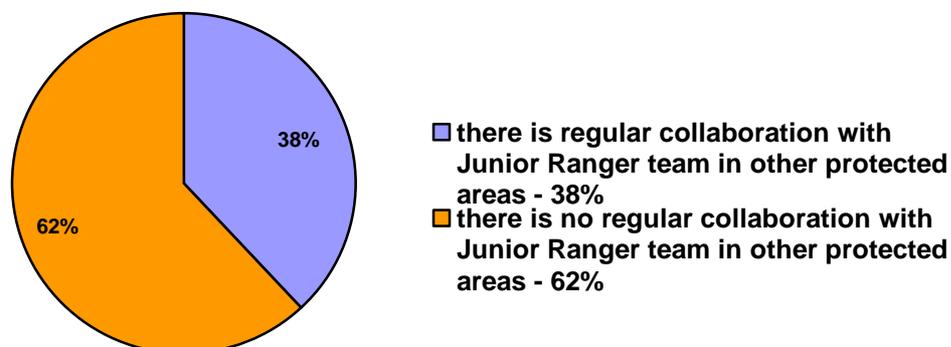
- JRP mentor - 46%
- chief of ranger service and professional rangers - 33%
- director of protected area Authority - 9%
- other employee of protected area Authority - 7%
- external consultee - 1%
- Junior Rangers themselves - 4%

### 7. Scope of the activity programmes



- games and entertainment - 13%
- lectures and job training - 9%
- manual work - 15%
- nature observation and study - 26%
- study of legislation background - 4%
- communication training - 7%
- excursions - 22%
- other activities - 4%

## 8. Regular collaboration between Junior Ranger teams



### 3.4. Results of Research

On the basis of the statistical investigation it is possible to conclude that JRP has variable aims and scope in different areas in Europe. 76% of answers were obtained. Results of statistical evaluation are illustrated by the graphs.

Question 1 represents the chronological addition of newly initiated projects. Only about 30% of projects were initiated by the EUROPARC Federation. In other cases the remaining projects were initiated mostly by the Authority of protected areas. This explains the wide range of aims and externalization as is apparent from results of question 7.

The average number of Junior Rangers in one group is 14 children in mean age of 12. The graphic representation of question 2 evaluates the age and quantity variation of groups. The number of Junior Rangers in one group is from 3 to 50 and their age is between 4 and 20. The size of the group and children's age has cardinal importance for the content of the Project.

Question 3 represents frequency of Junior Ranger meetings and kinds of JRP activities. The most common frequency is one time per month (33%). During the year they usually have JRP summer camp (58%), JRP Follow Up programmes are held in 26% of cases.

Question 4 and 5 examine JRP mentors. The most frequent job of JRP mentors is actually a professional ranger (60%). It refers to one of the project's aims - to present knowledge of the ranger profession to them. Environmental educators or other employees of authorities make up the second most numerous group of JRP mentors. In 17% of cases is the mentor a student or a volunteer perhaps due to personnel or financial deficiency in authorities.

Question 6 reflects that JRP mentors are responsible for development of the Junior Ranger Activity Programmes only in 46% of cases. In other instances



the Junior Ranger Activity Programmes are prepared either by employees of authorities or directly by Junior Rangers themselves.

Question 7 envisages the main focus of JRP programmes. A large variability is also evident. In most cases (26%) the project is focused on nature observation and study.

Question 8 shows that there is some regular collaboration between Junior Ranger teams only in 38% of cases.

In conclusion, these various results collectively suggest that there is high diversity in the Junior Ranger Projects in Europe. There are not uniformly defined aims, methods and scope. A lot of detailed and interesting information on the JRP were obtained. For further information, including the detailed results, it is possible to contact the author of this report.

### Hypothesis Evaluation

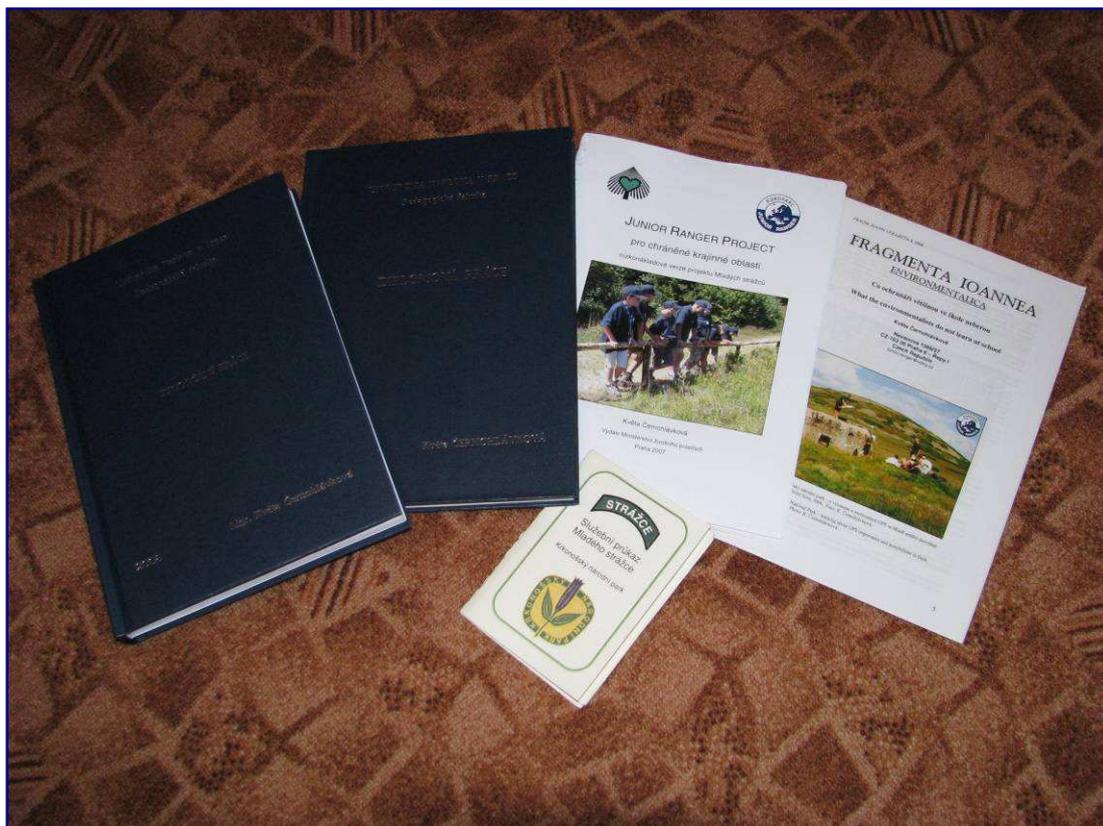
1. There is an assumption of obtaining more than 70% of answers.  
*Evaluation: YES – 76% of answers were obtained.*
2. There is a hypothesis of working with 10 – 15 children, who are 12 – 14 years old.  
*Evaluation: YES – one group of Junior Rangers has on average 14 children with a mean age of 12.*
3. There is a supposition that in more than 70% of answers the professional rangers are actually JRP mentors.  
*Evaluation: NO – the results show that only 60% of JRP mentors are professional rangers. Environmental educators or other employees of Authority make up the second most numerous group of JRP mentors.*
4. There is a hypothesis that JRP mentors are responsible for the development of the Junior Ranger Activity Programmes in more than 70% of answers.  
*Evaluation: NO – JRP mentors are responsible for developing the Junior Ranger Activity Programmes only in 46% of cases. In other instances the Junior Ranger Activity Programmes are prepared either further employees of Authority or directly by Junior Rangers themselves.*
5. It's supposed in more than 70% of answers that there is an absence of consistent collaboration with another Junior Ranger team in other protected areas.  
*Evaluation: NO – regular collaboration with another Junior Ranger team in other protected areas occurs only in 38% of cases.*

## 4. Objectives of the Study Visits

### 4.1. Base of the Study Visits

The first part of the author's work was published as a diploma thesis in 2007. It is based on information and experiences gained on visits in the Czech Republic (Krkonoše NP, Šumava NP, PLA České středohoří, PLA Beskydy) and from completed questionnaires from all the Czech protected areas. Basic information about other European protected areas has been mainly gathered from the internet and from the EUROPARC Federation sources.

The second part of the author's work was published as a post-graduate thesis in 2008. It is based on information and experiences gained from completed questionnaires from 51 European protected areas. Several protected areas for JRP event visits were chosen on the basis of the answers.



**Figure 1.** Author's work: diploma thesis, post-gradual thesis, methodology of JRP programmes, record book of Junior Rangers from Krkonoše National Park

Specific programmes developed and published in these theses have universal criteria. They are suitable for JRP in different protected areas of central Europe because they contain basic general characteristics for each ranger

(communication, interpretation, presentation, negotiation and facilitation skills) and are useful in relation to visitors. Sharing these general experiences and skills is important for the development of the Junior Ranger education and training programmes. This could lead to a common profile and standards for rangers across Europe.

## 4.2. Aims of the Study Visits

- to gather new information about current Junior Ranger Projects in European protected areas using questionnaires
- to gain practical and field experience of Junior Ranger Projects in Europe
- make comparative analyses between various projects

## 4.3. Travel Plan and Areas of Study

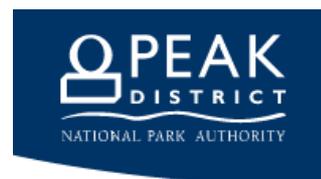
Date	Name of Area	Theme of Event
(1) 22.4. – 28.4. 2008	GBR Peak District National Park	Navigation and Survival Skills (JRP has run here since 2004).
(2) 14.5. – 17.5. 2008	CZE Šumava National Park	10 <sup>th</sup> Annual Rangers Meeting (JRP has run here since 2004).
(3) 22.5. – 25.5. 2008	DEU Harz National Park	National Park-Rally: Biodiversity (JRP has run here since 1994).
(4) 28.6. – 2.7. 2008	SVN Triglav National Park	Short visit to JRP mentors (JRP has run here since 2002).
(5) 2.7. – 6.7. 2008	ITA Prealpi Giulie Nature Park	JRP summer camp (JRP has run here since 2007).
(6) 6.7. – 12.7. 2008	AUR Nationalpark Hohe Tauern	JRP summer camp (JRP has run here since 2003).
(7) 19.7. – 20.7. 2008	CZE Krkonoše National Park	JRP summer camp (JRP has run here since 2002).
(8) 26.7. – 3.8. 2008	GBR Cairngorms National Park	JRP international summer camp.
(9) 4.8. – 10.8. 2008	FIN Nuuksio National Park	JRP first summer camp (JRP has run here since 2008).
(10) 22. 8. – 24.8. 2008	CZE PLA Jizerské hory	JRP summer camp (JRP has run here since 2007).

## 4.4. Map of Europe



**Figure 2.** Visited areas: (1) Peak District NP; (2) Šumava NP; (3) Harz NP; (4) Triglav NP; (5) Prealpi Giulie Nature Park; (6) Hohe Tauern NP; (7) Krkonoše NP; (8) Cairngorms NP; (9) Nuuksio NP; (10) PLA Jizerské hory

## 5. Peak District National Park (Great Britain)



### 5.1. *Basic Information about Park*

The Peak District National Park is Britain's first national park, established in 1951. It covers 1 438 km<sup>2</sup> between large industrial cities of North-West England. The National Park is home to 38 000 people and there are over 22 million visits each year, making it one of the most visited National Parks in the world.

The visitors come to find peace, tranquillity and adventure, experiencing some of England's finest climbing, caving, walking and cycling. One of the most popular ways people enjoy the National Park is by using the open land and the extensive number of footpaths, bridleways and byways. The local economy is based on tourism, farming, quarrying and manufacturing.



**Figure 3.** The Peak District National Park landscape

## 5.2. Ranger Service

Today the ranger service is divided into 14 areas each managed by an area ranger. There are a further 8 full-time rangers, with over 200 part-time and volunteer rangers. The essence remains always the same: to provide a key point of contact between the Park Authority, local people and visitors.

Rangers help to look after the open land and routes, discussing details with landowners and highway authorities before building stiles or footbridges, signing routes or repairing worn out surfaces. Rangers also work closely with other services of the Authority helping to deliver practical action relating to biodiversity, archaeology and landscape improvements. Rangers have extensive knowledge of what to see, where to go and the history, both human and natural, of the National Park. Rangers provide help to local people especially during emergencies such as flooding, moorland fires or severe winter weather. The ranger service is often the first point of contact in sorting out any problems and misunderstandings which occur between local people and visitors.



Figure 4. The Peak District National Park ranger service and signs

The ranger service delivers environmental education in formal school environments and as informal activities and events for the general public, such as guided walks and family activities. As part of the Promoting and Understanding Strategy the ranger service is responsible for working with all primary schools within the Peak District National Park.

### 5.3. Youth Ranger Project

The Youth Ranger Project in the Peak District National Park is for children aged 13 to 16 years. The aim is to give an insight into the role and work of the Park ranger, by providing basic training and practical experience.



**Figure 5.** The Youth Ranger Project in the Peak District National Park

The programme is in three parts. Part 1: Introduction to navigation / survival skills and woodland management (precursor to other modules – 3 ½ days). Participants plan their route and navigate to site where they learn aspects of woodland management in order to provide their own shelter and cook over an open fire. Part 2: Five skill-based days are undertaken where day release from school each week provides the opportunity to gain more experience in biodiversity and species protection, navigation and tourism management, interpretation and leading a guided walk and practical conservation work.

Part 3: Involves acting as an advocate for the National Park, working within schools and communities on particular issues.

The activities are run throughout the National Park through a number of accredited modules leading to an award. To gain an award, students must work with an experienced ranger, environmentalist, teacher or youth worker appropriate to the activities, show enthusiasm, commitment and involvement towards the award, complete a portfolio and the required credits, and comply with health and safety procedures.

#### **5.4. My Involvement in the Project Event**

I learnt a lot about National Park environmental education and ranger topics when I visited Losehill Hall, Castleton Information Centre, the National Park headquarters in Bakewell, Crowden Youth Hostel and a number of other ranger and visitor centres in and around the National Park.

After meeting with Sally Kempson, the Manager of the Peak's Junior Ranger Project, I was able to participate in a Youth Ranger Residential Weekend which concentrated on navigation and survival skills.



**Figure 6.** My visit to the Peak District National Park



Date	Key Activities	Place
22.4. 2008	Visit to the historical cotton processing museum.	Quarry Bank Mill
	Visit to the university & spa town and culture exhibition.	Buxton
23.4. 2008	Meeting with Sally focused on Youth Ranger Project, visit to the education centre.	Losehill
	Visit to the info centre with nature exhibition.	Castleton
	Trip through the Park to see dry-stone walls, reservoirs, moorlands and edges.	Stanage Edge
24.4. 2008	Visit to the Duke's seat with its museum.	Chatsworth
	Meeting with professional rangers of the National Park.	Bakewell
25.4. 2008	Meeting with city rangers focused on their Young Ranger Project.	Sheffield
	Meeting with Sally and other mentors of Youth Ranger Project. Preparing the Residential Weekend programme. Welcoming of children, opening presentations about National Park, Youth Ranger Project and about navigation and maps.	Crowden
26.4. 2008	Navigation exercise – walking in three groups to the same camp site. Introduction to survival outdoors. Setting up the camp, bivouacs, fire and preparing food.	Leam Woods
27.4. 2008	Learning about woodland management, forestry skills and making simple tools.	Leam Woods

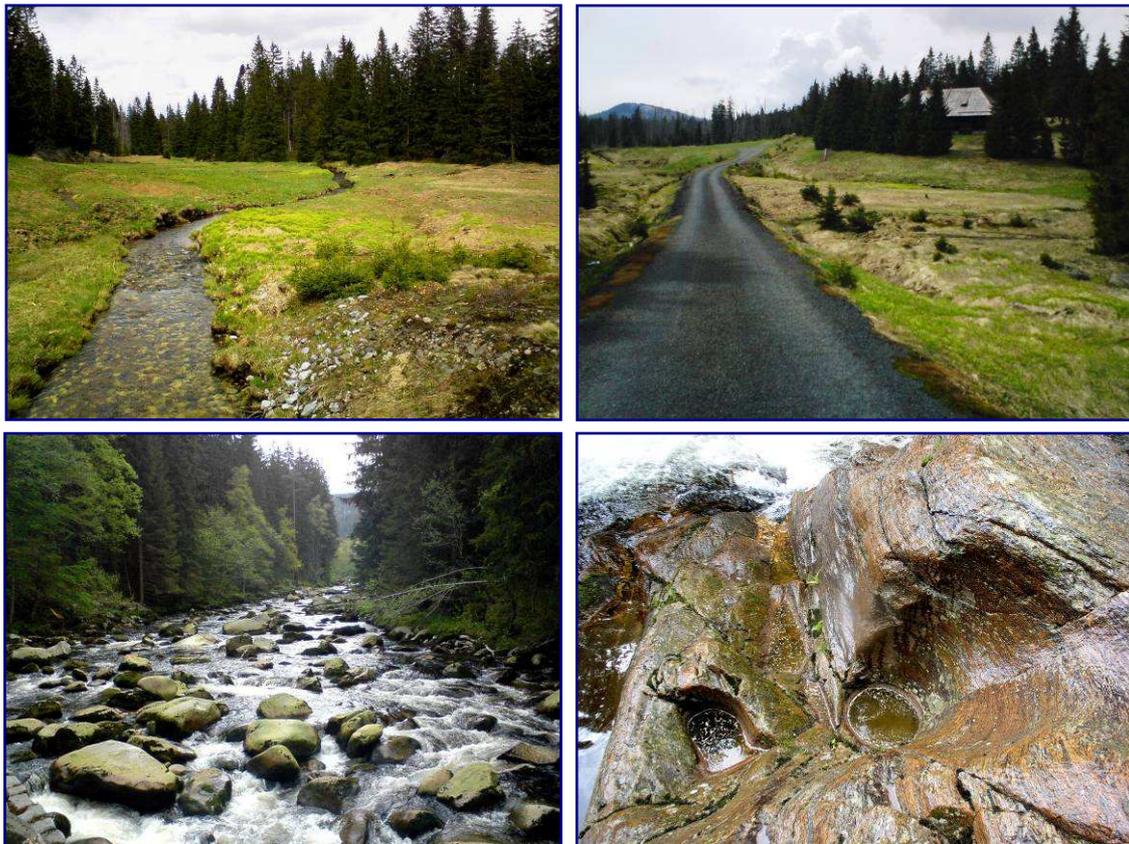
## 6. Šumava National Park (Czech Republic)



### 6.1. *Basic Information about Park*

In 1991, a large part of the Šumava mountain, range situated along the south-west frontier of the Czech Republic with Germany and Austria, was declared a National Park, considered the highest legal measure of natural protection in Czech territory.

Covering an area of 690 km<sup>2</sup>, this Park is the largest of the four national parks in the Czech Republic. Due to its situation within densely populated Central Europe, its relatively high wildlife conservation, and rich water resources, the Park is often referred to as the 'Green Roof of Europe', the international significance of which is ever-increasing.



**Figure 7.** Šumava National Park landscape

Šumava National Park includes most of the highly valuable natural features of the Šumava mountains requiring strict protection, such as glacial lakes, mountain and valley, or remnants of primeval forests. At the same time, one of

its major features is the permeation of this barely touched ‘virgin nature’ with traces of man’s presence. It lends specific charm and unusual mystery to this sparsely populated area.

## 6.2. Ranger Service

In Šumava National Park, there is a ranger service performed by 27 professional rangers and 15 voluntary rangers. The ranger service is divided into 6 areas.

The main tasks of the ranger service are to check on observance of the rules regarding nature conservation as well as to offer an information service for visitors to the Park. Rangers help to look after their area and they cooperate with other services of the Authority, helping to deliver practical action relating to biodiversity and landscape improvements. Rangers collaborate with the police, fire brigade and also with councils, schools and local residents. Rangers perform environmental education. One part of their work is also to provide guided excursions and to participate in programmes for children like the Junior Ranger Project.



**Figure 8.** Šumava National Park ranger service and signs

### 6.3. Junior Ranger Project

The Junior Ranger Project in Šumava National Park began in 2004. A group was established of 13 children of the age 12 - 14 from and around Vimperk. This group existed till 2006. In 2007 a new group was established of 15 children from and around Hartmanice and Kašperské Hory.

During the first two years, the Project is focused on cognition of the Park. Afterwards the Project is focused on active cooperation between Junior Rangers and professional rangers. In the programme, there are lectures and discussions with experts, learning about the Rules of visits and the Rules about nature conservation, communication with public and a lot of other activities. There is usually one week-long summer camp and one or more meetings per month. Junior Rangers from Šumava National Park collaborate with other teams in the Czech Republic as well as around Europe.



Figure 9. The Junior Ranger Project in Šumava National Park (photos from 2007)

#### 6.4. My Involvement in the Project Event

I participated in the Annual Meeting of the Czech Ranger Association this year as well as the previous one. This 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting was held in Šumava National Park in chalet 'Povydří' near the village Srní. It was focused on ranger work with public, mainly with children's groups. I met with a lot of colleagues. There were 52 professional and voluntary rangers from Krkonoše NP, PLA Beskydy, PLA Jeseníky, České Švýcarsko NP, Šumava NP, PLA Moravský kras, PLA České středohoří (all from Czech), NP Bayerischer Wald (Germany), PLA Muráňská Planina (Slovakia). The main information about work with children was presented by Josef Erhart (NP Bayerischer Wald), Lucie Městková (Šumava NP), Peter Bryndza (PLA Muráňská Planina) and Květa Černohlávková.

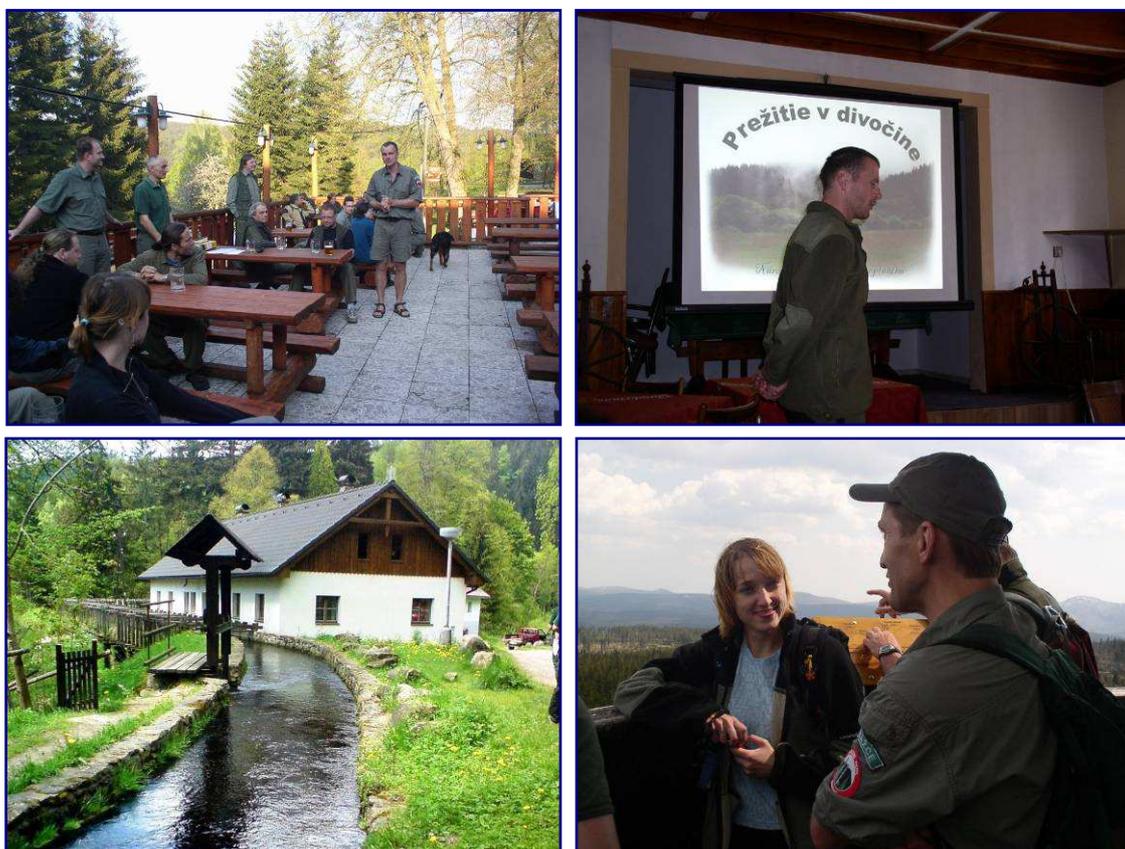


Figure 10. My visit to Šumava National Park

We also visited some places in Šumava National Park in order to learn something about the wildlife and landscape there. These excursions were focused on natural heritage, water plants and rivers, visitor centres and also on history.



Date	Key Activities	Place
14.5. 2008	Official opening of meeting by chief of ranger service on Šumava NP, Jan Konvička and opening of ranger party.	Srní, chalet 'Povydří'
15.5. 2008	Presentations about work with children.	Srní, chalet 'Povydří'
	Excursion to the National Park.	Poledník, Prášily
16.5. 2008	General meeting of Czech Ranger Association.	Srní, chalet 'Povydří'
	Excursion to the water plant 'Šumavská energie'.	Čeňkova Píla

## 7. Harz National Park (Germany)

## Nationalpark Harz



### 7.1. Basic Information about Park

In 2006 the Harz National Park in Germany became the first to cover two federal states. Its eastern part in Sachsen-Anhalt consists of 89 km<sup>2</sup> and was set up in 1990. In 1994, the federal government of Niedersachsen established the western part of this park, covering 158 km<sup>2</sup>. This means that the united Harz National Park now consists of 247 km<sup>2</sup>. The Park is part of the European nature conservation network Natura 2000.

The Harz National Park stretches from the low mountain range near Herzberg in the south, across the Harz massif to its northern slopes near Bad Harzburg and Ilsenburg. It offers the entire range of characteristic ecological systems, variations in height, slopes and rocks. Height varies from 240 m in the north up to 1 142 m on the Brocken peak. The park offers an ecologically complex landscape and contains different vegetation zones.



Figure 11. The Harz National Park landscape

Scientific research has identified numerous habitats which are (based on Middle-European standards) quite close to a natural state, such as the high and middle zones of the Harz, rocky biotopes, a lot of running water, and a large beech/spruce and mixed forest area. In several sections, however, ecological changes in afforestation must be carried out, in order to get closer to the original, natural forest conditions.

## 7.2. Ranger Service

One of the priorities in the future for the Harz National Park is carrying out environmental information and education services. With its geographical location, environmental set-up and layout, the Harz National Park region is one of the most significant recreational areas within Central Europe. A group of 40 rangers and several National Park Visitor Centres contribute a great deal to the services for the visitors.



Figure 12. The Harz National Park ranger service and signs

## 7.3. Junior Ranger Project

The Junior Ranger Project was initiated in 1994, immediately after the founding of the original Harz National Park. There are four children's groups

working. The kids in the individual groups have given themselves animal names: in Herzberg-Lonau it is the 'Peregrine Falcons', in Braunlage it is the 'Wolves' and in Bad Harzburg they are the 'Bears' and the 'Lynx'. The groups are under the auspices of the National Park Education Centre. At present they are under the guidance of the National Park Youth Rangers – assisted by volunteers in their Voluntary Ecology Year programme. A young people's group usually consists of about 10 to 30 participants aged 6 to 14. An activity in the Park is undertaken weekly during the school term. At pre-designated times during the year, for example at the beginning of the school holidays, certain activities such as bat hikes or animal observation walks are incorporated in order to increase the children's enthusiasm.



**Figure 13.** The Junior Ranger Project in the Harz National Park

In order to motivate the youngsters to long-lasting participation in the groups, a system of awards was developed which also encourage the older children to assist the younger kids. As Junior Rangers they can work together with the Ranger Service in preparation and realisation of the events. Upon joining the group the children receive a 'Year's Badge' bearing the symbol of their group. Naturally, kindergarten children can also receive this badge. At the end of the second year of regular attendance, with participation in at least 40 meetings, a child qualifies to be a 'National Park Waldläufer'. In the following year, with participation in at least 60 events, the title 'National Park Scout' is awarded. After the fifth year and participation in about 80 – 100 events the children's age

is 11 or 12. The youngsters can, with the recommendation of those responsible, take the Junior Ranger examination. The presentation of the awards is always made by the National Park Director in an impressive setting at the annual combined meeting of all youth groups. The parents of the children are involved there too, thus establishing a tie to the Park through the children's group work.

### 7.4. My Involvement in the Project Event

I learnt a lot about the Harz National Park when I visited the Info Centre and National Park Houses and another places in and around the National Park.

I met with Sandra Meckbach-Wolter, the coordinator of the Junior Ranger Project, and with professional rangers. We talked about this Project and then we went to prepare the programme for children and their families. After this meeting I was able to participate in a 'Nationalpark Ralley' which concentrated on biodiversity.



Figure 14. My visit to the Harz National Park

Date	Key Activities	Place
22.5. 2008	Visit to the Info Centre with nature exhibition.	Bad Harzburg



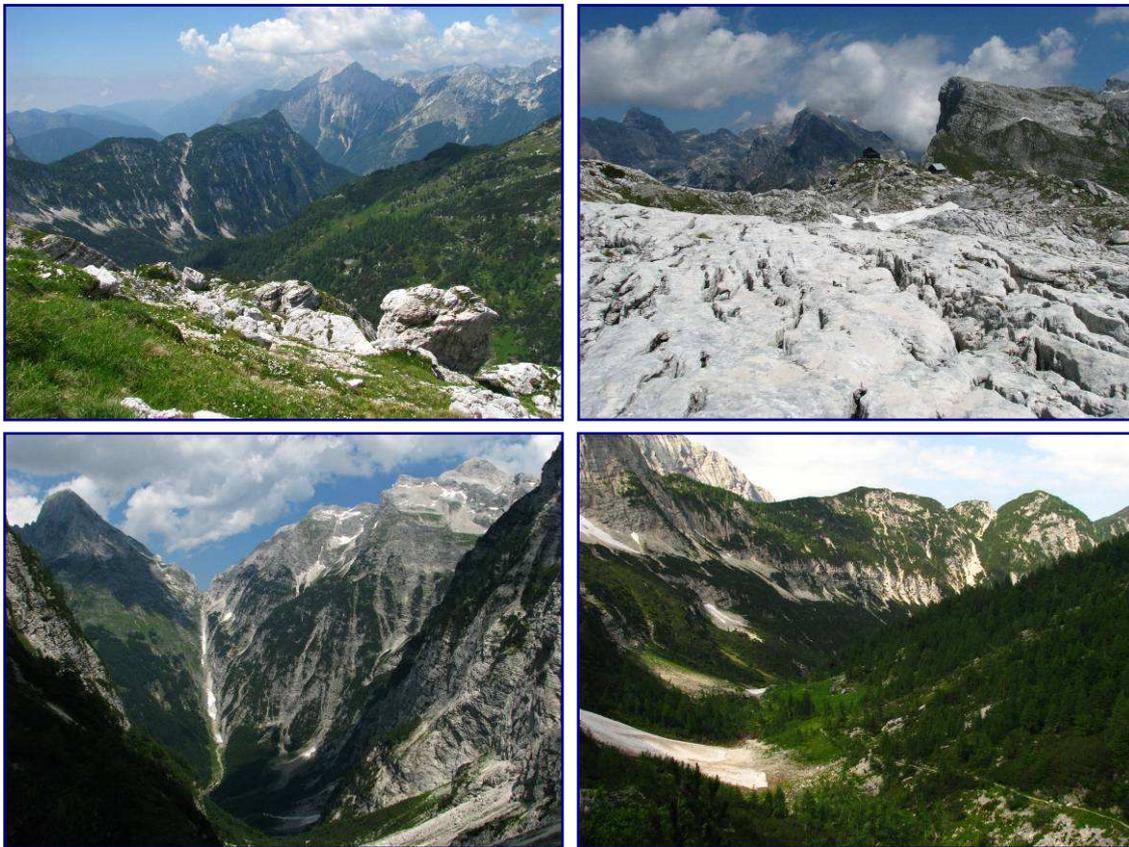
	Visit to the National Park House.	Altenau Torfhaus
23.5. 2008	Meeting with Sandra and professional rangers.	Sankt Andreasberg
	Preparing of the programme for children and their families.	Braunlage
	Visit to the National Park House with Education Centre.	Sankt Andreasberg
24.5. 2008	'Nationalpark Rally' which concentrated on biodiversity.	Braunlage
	Geological and historical sight-seeing.	Sankt Andreasberg
25.5. 2008	Excursion to the National Park.	Oderteich

## 8. Triglav National Park (Slovenia)



### 8.1. Basic Information about Park

Triglav National Park is the only Slovenian national park. The Park was named after the highest mountain in the heart of the Park, which is also the highest summit in Slovenia (2 864 m). The origin of the name Triglav is rather uncertain. Triglav owes its name to its characteristic shape as seen from the south-east or to the highest Slavic deity who was supposed to have their throne on the top of the mountain. The mountain is a true national symbol and is featured on the national coat of arms and the flag.



**Figure 15.** Triglav National Park landscape

Triglav National Park extends along the Italian border and close to the Austrian border in the north-west of Slovenia, that is, in the south-eastern section of the Alps. Its territory is almost identical with that occupied by the Eastern Julian Alps. The park covers 880 km<sup>2</sup>, or 3% of the territory of Slovenia. Triglav National Park is among the earliest European parks, the first protection dates back to 1924 when the Alpine Conservation Park was founded. The principal

task of the Triglav NP Public Institution is the protection of the park, but it also carries out specialist and research tasks.

## 8.2. Ranger Service

Management of the Park is the responsibility of the Triglav NP Public Institution, based in Bled. The professional and common services of the Authority permanently employ 24 people; the Professional Ranger Service employs 20 people and another 7 people work at the Information Centre, the Trenta Lodge (Dom Trenta).

The Institution is becoming a place where different interests – nature conservation, economy, recreation, culture – meet and interact to fulfil one purpose: to provide for such development of the Julian Alps that will preserve and secure all the functions of the environment for future generations. The only way to achieve this goal is by continuing to work together so that every village in the Park, every organisation and every individual will contribute to the economic, social, and cultural performance of the areas at the foot of Triglav.

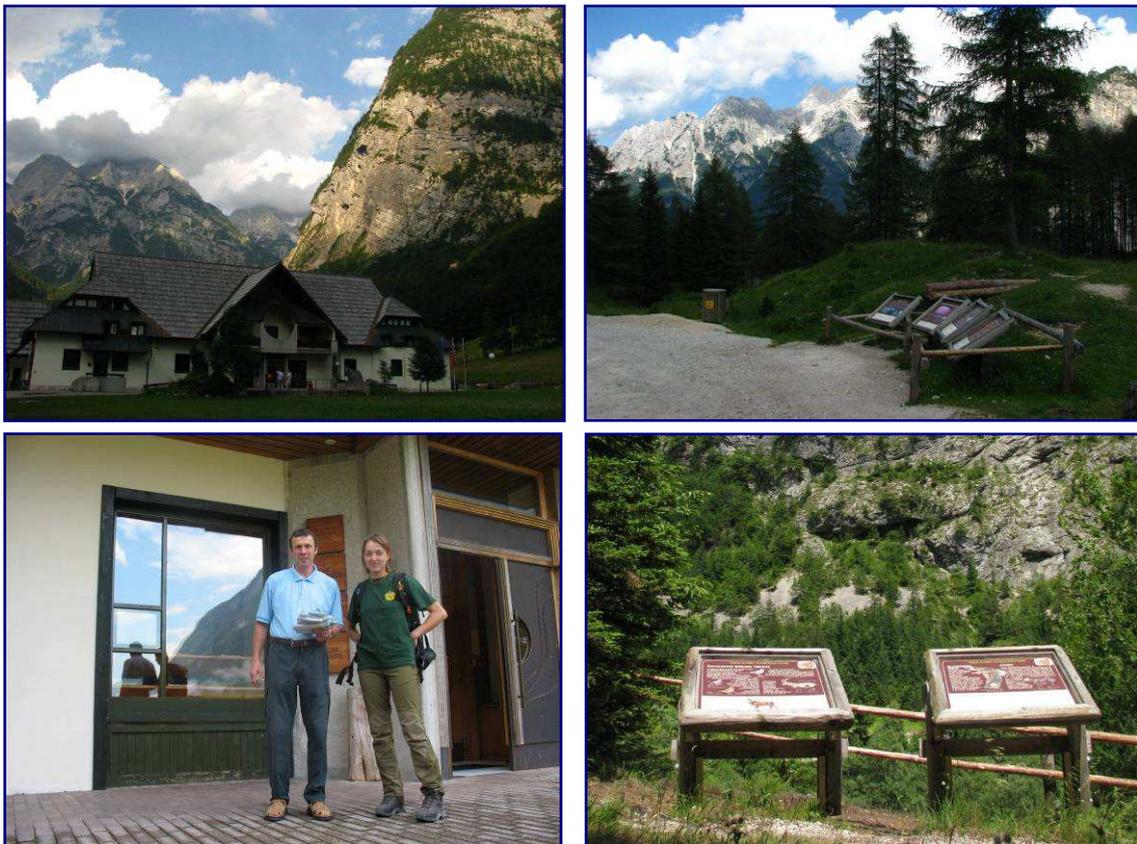


Figure 16. Triglav National Park ranger service and signs



Professional rangers carry out regular law-enforcement controls. Rangers build and maintain Park infrastructure (nature trails, info points, viewpoints, hunting infrastructure etc.). Sometimes they also help to manage cultural landscape (hay making, pasture and meadow cutting). They also manage educational days for school children and cooperate in the Junior Ranger Project. They guide children on educational excursions, teach to observe nature and share the duties of a ranger. The majority of rangers are also responsible for hunting, especially for monitoring; they mostly hunt only when animals are sick. Some rangers are also mountain guides for the Park and they offer guided excursions.

### **8.3. Junior Ranger Project**

The Junior Ranger Project is run in the framework of the Ranger Service. The Project was started in 2002 when the EUROPARC Federation chooses this park and three other European national parks for the pilot team of a project titled 'Junior Ranger – In action to protect European natural and cultural heritage'.

This Project involves young people living in the Park or its immediate surroundings who wish to learn more about the primary objectives of protected areas, the Park and the work of park rangers. Young people are involved in the Project at the age of 13 or 14. The Project starts with a one-week initial camp, followed by several Follow-Up activities. When the candidates come of age, they can take an examination for voluntary park rangers. Activities take place according to the annual programme of work and include cleaning campaigns, thematic workshops and winter and summer camps lasting several days.

In 2006 there were 33 Junior Rangers who have been included in the Project since 2002 or 2003. The next initial camp is planned for 2009. The Project requires prior participation in an alpine club.

### **8.4. My Involvement in the Project Event**

During this visit I learnt a lot about the Park when I visited the Tourist Information Centre in Trenta. I also learnt a lot during excursions, for example I was on the Soča Trail which is a nature trail taking visitors to Triglav National Park along the Soča river from its source towards Bovec. It is the first trail to have been created in the Park.

I met Edvin Kravanja, interpretation officer and mountain guide of the Park, and I spoke with him about ranger service and about the Junior Ranger Project. I also spoke with Marjeta Albinini, the mentor of Junior Rangers, about the system of their Project.



**Figure 17.** My visit to Triglav National Park

Date	Key Activities	Place
28.6. 2008	Visit to the Tourist Information Centre.	Trenta Lodge
29.6. 2008	Excursion to the National Park.	Zasavska kočna na Prehodavcih
	Meeting with Edvin Kravanja focused on Ranger Service and on Junior Ranger Project.	Trenta
30.6. 2008	Excursion to the National Park.	Soča Trail
	Meeting with Marjeta Albinini focused on Junior Ranger Project.	Trenta
1.7. 2008	Cultural and historical sight-seeing.	Bovec

## 9. Prealpi Giulie Nature Park (Italy)



Parco Naturale  
delle  
Prealpi Giulie

### 9.1. *Basic Information about Park*

Prealpi Giulie Nature Park was established in 1996 and includes territory of the Communes of Chiusaforte, Lusevera, Moggio Udinese, Resia, Resiutta and Venzone, in the Province of Udine, covering an overall surface area of around 100 km<sup>2</sup>.

The Park's office and main visitor' centre is in Resia. The Park's territory, within the context of the six Communes, spans two different geographical areas: the Giulie Alps and Subalps. The Italian side of Mount Canin (2 587 m) belongs to the former, as far as the ridge between the Baba Piccola and the sella Prevala, the entire Foran dal Muss plateau, the Bila Pec and Col Ladris. These are long mountain ranges, arranged side by side in a south-westerly direction, that follow one another like decreasing wings towards the Plane of Friuli.



**Figure 18.** Prealpi Giulie Nature Park landscape

This vast area belongs almost entirely to the watershed basin of the river Tagliamento, except for a small part around Uccia that belongs to the Isonzo basin.

## 9.2. Ranger Service

There is no ranger service in Prealpi Giulie Nature Park. A service is provided by province Police and regional forestry service.

## 9.3. Junior Ranger Project

The Junior Ranger Project in Prealpi Giulie Nature Park is for children aged 12 to 15 living in the municipalities of the Park. The Project has been running there from 2007. The aims are to give an insight into the role of the protected area in the problems of nature-man relation management, better knowledge of the environmental features of the Park, practical basic experience of environmental management.



**Figure 19.** The Junior Ranger Project in Prealpi Giulie Nature Park

The programme is made up of three seasonal meetings during the year and a four-day summer camp hosted in mountain shelters of the Park. Topics are

mainly focused on fauna management but lessons on safety measures for mountain hiking are also provided. The Park cooperates with nature guides, regional forestry service, national hiking federation in order to assure wide and complete information to the participants.

The summer camp activities are done according to the topics developed during the seasonal meetings. Elements of originality are also provided. The activities are divided into three areas: knowledge of the territory, practical conservation, sport skills.

#### **9.4. My Involvement in the Project Event**

During this visit I got to know the nature of Prealpi Giulie Nature Park as well as the system of the Junior Ranger Project there. On the first day I met Verdiana Camilla Morandi, the mentor of Junior Rangers and we spoke about the summer camp programme. Afterwards I participated in their Junior Ranger summer camp.



**Figure 20.** My visit to Prealpi Giulie Nature Park



The Junior Ranger summer camp began in Venzone and every night we moved somewhere else. During this wandering camp there was an interesting programme with a lot of activities.

Junior Rangers helped at a farmhouse with repairing of window shutters and tables. They also monitored fauna and they learnt about its life. During the climbing class they tried out mountain climbing. At the end of the Camp there was a Closing ceremony. The director of the Park handed certificates over to the Junior Rangers.

Date	Key Activities	Place
2.7. 2008	Visit to the Info Centre, meeting with Verdiana Camilla Morandi focused on Junior Ranger Project.	Prato di Resia
3.7. 2008	Beginning of the summer camp, familiarization, and visit to the Museum Forestry – Man – Economy.	Venzone
	Visit to the upland farm house, practical work (repairing of window shutters and tables).	Malga Confil
4.7. 2008	Excursion through the Nature Park, discovering and monitoring fauna.	Casera Cjariguart
5.7. 2008	Walk through the Nature Park, visit to the Information Centre with Footpath for Everyone.	Pian dei Ciclamini
	Film about the Nature Park.	Pian dei Ciclamini
6.7. 2008	Climbing class for Junior Rangers and Closing Ceremony for Junior Rangers and their families, handing over certificates.	Pian dei Ciclamini

## 10. Hohe Tauern National Park (Austria)



### 10.1. Basic Information about Park

The Hohe Tauern National Park was established in 1981 and it is Austria's first National Park. During the following decades the National Park developed into the largest nature reserve in Central Europe, covering an area of over 1 800 km<sup>2</sup> of the three provinces of Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol.

The Park is situated almost exclusively on privately owned land, a situation which is, for a nature reserve of its size, unique throughout the world. Thus, the development of the National Park has always taken place on the basis of cooperative partnership. Thanks to this approach, the National Park was granted international recognition in 2001, in accordance with the criteria of the IUCN. Although the glaciers of the Alps have been retreating for decades, the Hohe Tauern region still retains impressive treasures from the ice mountains. The Pasterze Glacier which, with a length of 9 km and an area of almost 19 km<sup>2</sup>, is the biggest single glacier in Austria.



Figure 21. The Hohe Tauern National Park landscape

Visitor and information centres represent the ideal starting point for voyages of discovery into the National Park. There are interactive exhibitions, attractive special displays and information areas staffed by experts. Their National Park centres, such as the 'BIOS' in Mallnitz or the 'House of Water' in St. Jakob, are among the most modern in Europe. The numerous theme trails offer a very rewarding way of getting to know the nature reserve. Paths lead to the highest waterfalls, to the largest glaciers, to the enchanting mountain forests. Along the trail, nature's secrets are revealed in an informative way. In addition, guided walks and illustrated brochures are available for many theme trails.

### 10.2. Ranger Service

The rangers in the Hohe Tauern National Park concentrate in particular on diverse youth programmes, working with youths in their schools, like the water school or climate preservation, so that they get involved with nature.



**Figure 22.** The Hohe Tauern National Park ranger service and signs

Other duties are to arrange and conduct walks and excursions with school classes, to accomplish project weeks, to run the winter and summer programme, to implement and conduct exhibitions and to enforce park regulations in the core zone.

### 10.3. Junior Ranger Project

Under the Motto “Offer interesting and meaningful activities to youngsters” the Hohe Tauern National Park Authority initiated the Junior Ranger Project in 2003, together with the Coca-Cola Company, the sponsor of this Project. This year is the sixth year of this Project.

Every year a new group of 16 Junior Rangers is created in the Park. This group is coached for three years. Junior Rangers get together during a two-week long JRP summer camp. The first week of the camp is always a collective for the whole group of Junior Rangers. In the second week they are split into three groups according to where they live (Tyrol, Kärnten and Salzburg) and the programme is focused on specific duties of their area.

Junior Rangers will come to the National Park two more times for summer practise after passing this first year. They will provide the ranger service with some financial benefit together with the professional rangers.



**Figure 23.** The Junior Ranger Project in the Hohe Tauern National Park

### **10.4. My Involvement in the Project Event**

During this visit I learnt a lot about the Junior Ranger Project system in the Hohe Tauern National Park. On the first day I met JRP mentors and a new group of Junior Rangers. I participated in their Junior Ranger summer camp for one week.

On July 7<sup>th</sup> 2008 a two-week long summer camp in the National Park began with a new group of Junior Rangers. During the Opening ceremony in the National Park Centre BIOS the director of Park Authority handed over outdoor equipment to Junior Rangers. This equipment and the whole programme is free of charge due to the sponsor.

Afterwards we went to the mountains for their first collective week in Großglockner region. During the week we visited lots of places near the Pasterze Glacier. Junior Rangers gained general information about the Park, flora and fauna, and also about ranger's duties. There were a lot of things on their programme: monitoring, botany and zoology, mineralogy and petrology, glacier observing, excursion to a hydro power station etc.



**Figure 24.** My visit to the Hohe Tauern National Park



Date	Key Activities	Place
7.7. 2008	Beginning of the summer camp, familiarization and visit to the National Park Info Centre.	BIOS in Mallnitz
	Visit to the culture and historical areal 'Goldwaschanlage' focused on history of gold and prospectors.	Heiligenblut
8.7. 2008	Walk around Grossglockner focusing on plants and geology.	Gamsgrubenweg
	Visit to the Info Centre.	Kaiser-Franz-Josefs-Höhe
	Individual work of Junior Rangers: preparing posters focusing on their experience from the day.	Glocknerhaus
9.7. 2008	Walk around and along the Pasterze Glacier with focus on geology and monitoring.	Pasterze Glacier
	Completion of worksheet focused on glacier and geology.	Glocknerhaus
10.7. 2008	Excursion to exhibition about Park nature, history and culture.	Grossglockner Hochalpenstrasse
11.7. 2008	Excursion to the National Park to see high mountains and glaciers.	Around Grossglockner

## 11. Krkonoše National Park (Czech Republic)



### 11.1. Basic Information about Park

Krkonoše National Park was established in 1963 and is therefore the first Czech National Park. The total area of the Park is 360 km<sup>2</sup>. The highest point is the peak named Sněžka (1 602 m). Arcto-alpine tundra similar to middle Scandinavia is developed on the main ridge of the Park. It has formed four vegetation belts: submontane, montane, subalpine and alpine. There are about 1 300 species of vascular plants, including many endemics.



**Figure 25.** Krkonoše National Park landscape

Krkonoše National Park's outstanding natural beauty, easy accessibility and good facilities for tourism and recreation are reflected in the great number of visitors coming to this small range of mountains. Annually over 6 million people visited the Czech part of the Krkonoše mountains. It is one of the most visited national parks in the world. The high number of visitors endangers the sensitive ecosystems; soil erosion on trampled paths, damage to flora, waste

of all kinds, vehicle emissions, buildings and building sites, damage to the traditional local colour of the mountain landscape.

Tourism, together with the industrial emissions, are two limiting factors for the survival of Krkonoše National Park in the future. Due to the threats to the mountains, the Park was registered on the list of the most endangered national parks in the world (IUCN, 1984). Now the Czech and Polish Krkonoše mountains are declared as a biosphere reserve in UNESCO program MaB.

### 11.2. Ranger Service

The connecting link between the public and the Park Authority is the ranger service. There are 17 professional rangers and 29 volunteers. The main task of this ranger service is to enforce laws and rules by visitors and local communities in the Park.



**Figure 26.** Krkonoše National Park ranger service and signs

The best way is by prevention and distribution of information. This is done by 3 200 facilities for visitors (seasonal and permanent information offices, nature paths, information signs etc.) produced and maintained by the ranger service. Wood craft workshop for facilities production is part of this service. Manual

workers provide summer and winter maintenance of 186 km of mountain paths. They also help other departments of the Park Authority: collect data about snow distribution, avalanches, vegetation, birds, quality of cross-country roads and so on.

Professional rangers have an official status and are able to penalize people. They collaborate with the Police and other state and local organizations; participate in traffic regulation inside the Park. For prevention, rangers are in close contact to local communities, officers, majors and information centres. Part of the ranger's work is controlling visitors and local bodies (such as accommodation providers, owners of ski areas). A large number lectures and guided excursions are managed by rangers. They prepare a lot of programmes for the public. The Junior Ranger Project is led by the ranger service.

### 11.3. Junior Ranger Project

The Junior Ranger Project was initiated by the EUROPARC Federation in 2002 in four European national parks – Triglav, Kampinoski, Bayerischer Wald and Krkonoše. The methodology and programmes were developed and tested there.



**Figure 27.** The Junior Ranger Project in Krkonoše National Park



The first group of 18 Junior Rangers was established in 2002 and it ran till 2005. The second group of 13 Junior Rangers was established in 2006 and it is still running today.

The first action of every year is Opening ceremony where JRP is introduced to children and their parents, usually with a small guided excursion to the mountains after an official lecture. During the summer there is usually a one-week long Junior Ranger summer camp. Increasing knowledge about Krkonosé, team building activities, outdoor training, first aid, practical conservation were topics on the programme.

Monthly one-day JRP Follow Up programmes ran during school time. The main aim of these short programmes is to develop the general skills of a real ranger: knowledge about nature, history, legislation, environment and sociology of the National Park, outdoor experiences. There are three lectures focused on presentation, conflict communication and negotiation. One JRP Follow Up programme is focused on Junior Ranger's parents with many pictures, games and activities similar to Junior Rangers. There is also a Closing ceremony with handover of certificates.

Junior Rangers from Krkonosé National Park collaborate with other teams in Europe. They meet at International Junior Ranger summer camps and during others events. They also communicate on web pages.

#### ***11.4. My Involvement in the Project Event***

Like last year I participated on the Junior Ranger summer camp in Krkonosé. Unfortunately this year I was only able to take part in the first two days. The Junior Ranger summer camp began in Harrachov where I met Junior Rangers and their parents.

During the programme Junior Rangers walked over the Krkonosé mountains. Topics were: interpretation training, communication games, visiting info centre, horse riding, removing invasive plants, maintenance of tourist paths and nature observing.



Figure 28. My visit to Krkonoše National Park

Date	Key Activities	Place
19.7. 2008	Beginning of the summer camp, meeting Junior Rangers and their parents. Collective visit to a Traditional glass factory and visit a barite and fluorite mine.	Harrachov
	Trek over mountains to the info centre, presentation about JRP in Europe, practice for two Junior Rangers: preparing their presentation about Krkonoše NP to International summer camp in Scotland.	Rokytnice nad Jizerou
20.7. 2008	Presentation of nature feature by each Junior Ranger as a small exercise, small quiz and communication games.	Rokytnice nad Jizerou
	Visit to horse farm and horse riding, trek around Mísečky and excursion with professional ranger Jiří Marek.	Mísečky

## 12. Cairngorms National Park (Great Britain)



### 12.1. Basic Information about Park

The Cairngorms National Park is Britain's largest and newest national park. It contains within it a unique range of landscapes, wildlife, habitats, and people. The Park is 3 800 km<sup>2</sup> of mountainous area. Four of Scotland's five highest mountains are within the Park. There is an arctic wilderness. The land above 600 metres (known as the 'montane zone') is the largest area of arctic mountain landscape in the British Isles. The Cairngorms contains the finest collection of different landforms outside arctic Canada.



**Figure 29.** The Cairngorms National Park landscape

Thirty-nine percents of the Park is designated as important for natural heritage; twenty-five percents is of European importance. The central mountain area provides a harsh habitat for a unique assemblage of vegetation, insects and animals. The forests of the Cairngorms contain remnants of the original Caledonian pine forest and include a rare kind of pinewood found only in Scotland and Norway. Heather moorland covers much of the National Park. A product of centuries of interaction between man and nature, it fosters

enormous ecological diversity. The rivers, loch and marshes are among the cleanest in Scotland.

The National Park is home to twenty-five percents of the UK's threatened bird, animal and plant species. The Cairngorms is the best place in for the Scottish crossbill, the only bird unique to Britain. Golden eagle, osprey, dotterel, capercaillie, and crested tit are just a few of the bird species found here. The National Park is home to a wide variety of animals - including pine martens, red squirrels, badgers, wildcats, water vole, and otters. The rivers are home to a rising population of the globally endangered freshwater pearl mussel, as well as salmon, trout, and rare lampreys.

### 12.2. Ranger Service

There are thirteen different Ranger Services operating within the Cairngorms National Park alongside a number of wardens and site managers. Their main roles include providing a welcome for visitors to the countryside and encouraging responsible access. They also help people understand the local environment and look after the countryside for us all to enjoy.



**Figure 30.** The Cairngorms National Park ranger service and signs

Many of the services run free or subsidised events for the public to help visitors better understand the special qualities of the National Park.

The first main aim of ranger's work is to ensure a warm welcome and provide support for people to enjoy the outdoors. The second aim is to increase awareness, understanding, care and responsible use of the natural and cultural heritage. The third aim is to support the sustainable management and use of the outdoors to meet a range of social, economic and environmental objectives. There is a clear role for Rangers within the co-ordinated planning, provision and management of access, countryside and greenspace resources. Rangers also managed sites and facilities for enjoying the outdoors to required standards and they use monitored to ensure the needs of local communities and visitors.

### 12.3. Junior Ranger Project

On July 26<sup>th</sup> 2008 the 7<sup>th</sup> EUROPARC Junior Ranger summer camp started. This International Camp was held in Glen Tanar, hosted by the Cairngorms National Park Authority and Scottish Countryside Rangers Association.



Figure 31. The Junior Ranger Project in the Cairngorms National Park

Scottish youngsters joined forces with international counterparts to share ideas on protecting the world's natural treasures during the week-long camp. There is no Junior Ranger Project at the moment in the Cairngorms National Park. During this camp they got a lot of information about the Project and they are interested in starting JRP next year.

#### **12.4. My Involvement in the Project Event**

More than forty rangers and Junior Rangers took part in the week-long camp. I obtained an opportunity to participate in this event. I met a lot of marvellous people and I got a lot of interesting information about Junior Ranger Projects in Europe.

Conservation activities, canoeing, biking and hill walking were among the activities taking place at the EUROPARC Junior Ranger summer camp. We helped with conservation activities such as cutting invasive trees or repairing paths and wooden bridges. In our programme there were also lots of social activities: theatre, Scottish dancing, campfires and games. The Aboyne Highland Games with pipes competition, Scottish dress with kilt, typical dancing and sports was a very magnificent experience.



**Figure 32.** My visit to the Cairngorms National Park



Date	Key Activities	Place
26.7. 2008	Welcoming, set up camp, familiarization and split into three groups.	Glen Tanar on Deeside
27.7. 2008	Visit and conservation activities.	Abernethy Forest
	Excursion to the National Park.	Cairn Gorm area
	Presentations by three pairs of Junior Rangers.	Kinord Hall, Aboyne
28.7. 2008	Excursion to the National Park, mountain walk.	Mount Keen
	Presentations by four pairs of Junior Rangers.	Kinord Hall, Aboyne
29.7. 2008	Visit and conservation activities.	Mar Lodge
	Presentations by three pairs of Junior Rangers.	Kinord Hall, Aboyne
30.7. 2008	Canoe.	River Dee
	Play by Puppet State Theatre 'The man who planted trees'.	Aboyne Community Centre
31.7. 2008	Visit and conservation activities.	Balmoral
1.8. 2008	Mountain bike.	Crown Estate
	Closing ceremony with hand over of certificates, ceilidh and Scottish dancing.	Kinord Hall, Aboyne
2.8. 2008	Aboyne Highland Games.	Aboyne

## 13. Nuuksio National Park (Finland)



### 13.1. Basic Information about Park

Nuuksio National Park was established in 1994 in the municipalities of Vihti, Espoo and Kirkkonummi. At the end of 2007, it extended over area of 45 km<sup>2</sup> and is regularly being extended by areas purchased by the State from what constitutes Natura 2000 sites. Nuuksio is managed by the Finnish Forest and Park Service.

The National Park comprises the western most area of the Nuuksio lake upland, the most valuable contiguous wilderness and hiking area in the country of Uusimaa. It is a deceptively small-scale mosaic of alternating rocky forests, spruce canyons, wilderness ponds and gulches, open mountain viewpoints and dense willow.



**Figure 33.** Nuuksio National Park landscape

Nuuksio offers a plain general view. Pine forests grow on its rocks whose flanks descend steeply into lakes and wet ravines. In winter, the walls are

covered with enormous icicles and huge swollen lumps of frozen water. In May, the ground is blooming with blue and white wildflowers. Flying squirrels also feel at home here. The numerous lakes and ponds have swampy banks and their water is crystal clear or brown with humus.

### 13.2. Ranger Service

The rangers are responsible for work as foremen in charge of prison inmates working in the park, maintenance of paths and all infrastructure (wooden causeways, bridges, fire sites, dry toilets etc.), in the woods and construction of new infrastructure (when needed). They also collect data about visitors (visitor monitoring). The rangers are responsible for law enforcement, they mostly give warnings and guidelines to hikers rather than acting as policemen, they are not allowed to give any fines.



**Figure 34.** Nuuksio National Park ranger service and signs

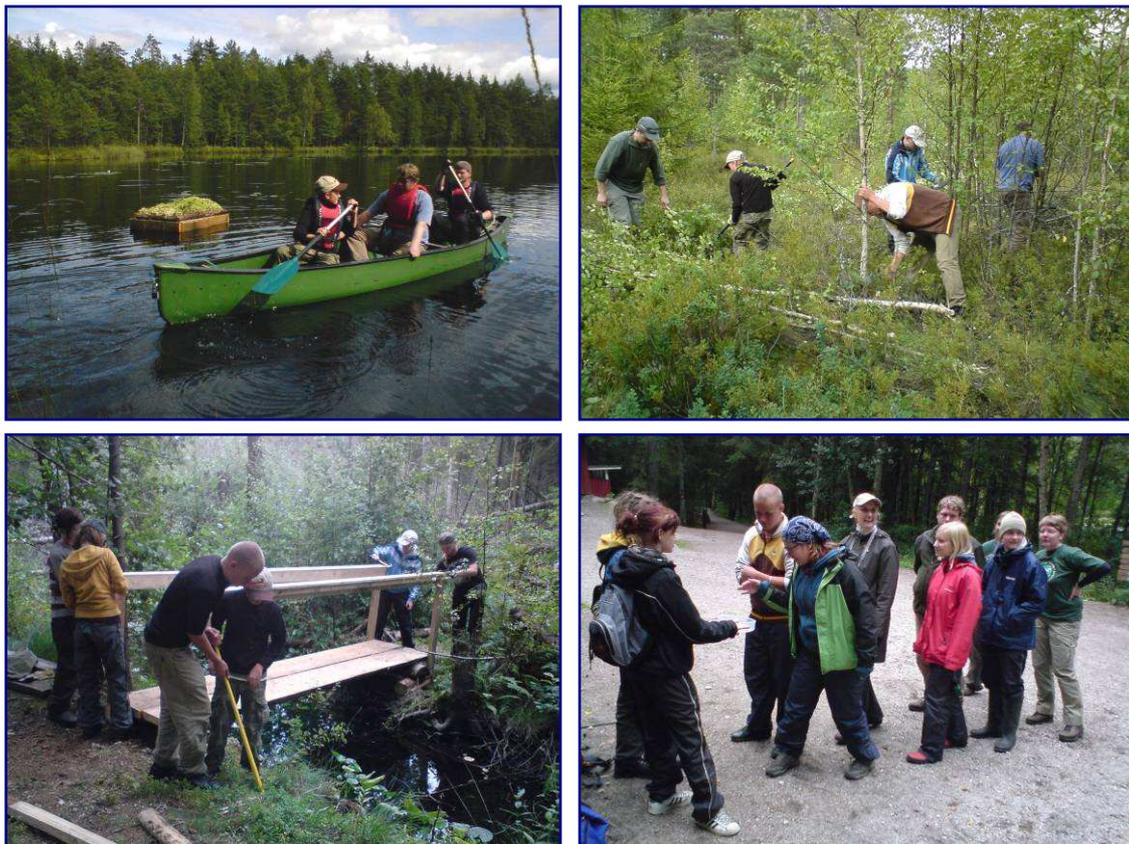
Rangers restore areas to conserve endangered species and restore or preserve natural habitat types. The rangers maintain data systems (visitor monitoring systems, GIS data) and advise visitors. There is no visitor centre in Nuuksio yet. Nature interpretation in general in Finland's National Parks is run by staff of visitor centres and by summer guides, who are specialised in nature

interpretation and customer service. School visits by rangers have not been arranged so far.

The aims of the ranger service are to keep Nuuksio National Park in a suitable condition for the wildlife that lives there, to help endangered species by nature conservation, to keep the Park tidy and to keep the infrastructure in good condition for hikers.

### **13.3. Junior Ranger Project**

In 2008 the Nuuksio National Park Authority organised their first JRP summer camp. The project is managed by a senior advisor of nature interpretation in co-operation with park rangers. Finland's National Board of Education together with Uusimaa College for Rural Development has given financing for the development of the Junior Ranger Activity Programme within the Park. Uusimaa College's staff and students participate in the camps and they are responsible for food, tents and assistance in programmes.



**Figure 35.** The Junior Ranger Project in Nuuksio National Park

Tentative plans have been made to arrange one camp per year and 4 meetings (one per season). Junior Rangers can participate in the JRP from 2 to 4 years. The main focus of the JRP is to get the children's approval of the

Park and nature conservation in general, understanding of the reasons for establishing the National Park, improvement of nature knowledge and the understanding of man's own environmental effects. The Project is important especially for the future of the Park.

### **13.4. My Involvement in the Project Event**

I discovered a new part of Europe during my visit to Finland. I found a different landscape and exciting wildlife in Nuuksio National Park. During my week-long visit I participated in their first JRP camp. On the first day I met the coordinator of the Project, Elina Pilke, at Kattila campsite.

Before this camp they appealed to children around the Park with articles in newspapers and magazines and advertisements on web pages to take part in this first camp. They wanted to establish the first group of Junior Rangers at the age of around 12. Unfortunately reception was not good and only two children registered. All the same the camp was held and programme was full of interesting activities.



**Figure 36.** My visit to Nuuksio National Park



Date	Key Activities	Place
4.8. 2008	Preparing the camp with students of Uusimaa College, setting up tents.	Kattila
5.8. 2008	Welcoming of Junior Ranger, ice-breaking games for getting to know each other and to know the Park.	Kattila
	Excursion to the Park, visit to the Guide House with small exhibition about the Park.	Haukankierros Trail
6.8. 2008	Getting to know the Park, practical work in the Park.	Vähä – Holma and Iso - Holma
	Night monitoring of bats.	Kattila
7.8. 2008	Getting to know the Park, practical work in the Park.	Klassarin kierros trail
	Feedback from Junior Ranger, closing ceremony with hand out of certificate to Junior Ranger.	Kattila
8.8. 2008	Feedback from students of Uusimaa College.	Kattila
	Visit to the Park Authority seat.	Högbacka
9.8. 2008	Visit to the capital city of Finland, tour of the city with visit to the zoo.	Helsinki

## 14. Protected Landscape Area Jizerské hory (Czech Republic)



### 14.1. Basic Information about PLA

Jizerské Hory was designated as a Protected Landscape Area in 1968 because of its natural treasures. The most valuable natural phenomena have been conserved in less accessible places, on steep slopes, on screes, in high-altitude localities, in bogs, in waterlogged meadows and wetlands, especially beech forests, peat moors, mountain pine forests and herbaceous-rich meadows.

These localities are mostly protected as small-scale conservation areas (national nature reserves, nature reserves and nature monuments). On the other hand, there are forests damaged by the effects of air and ground pollution, high winds and insect infestation, changes in forest composition and intensive exploitation.

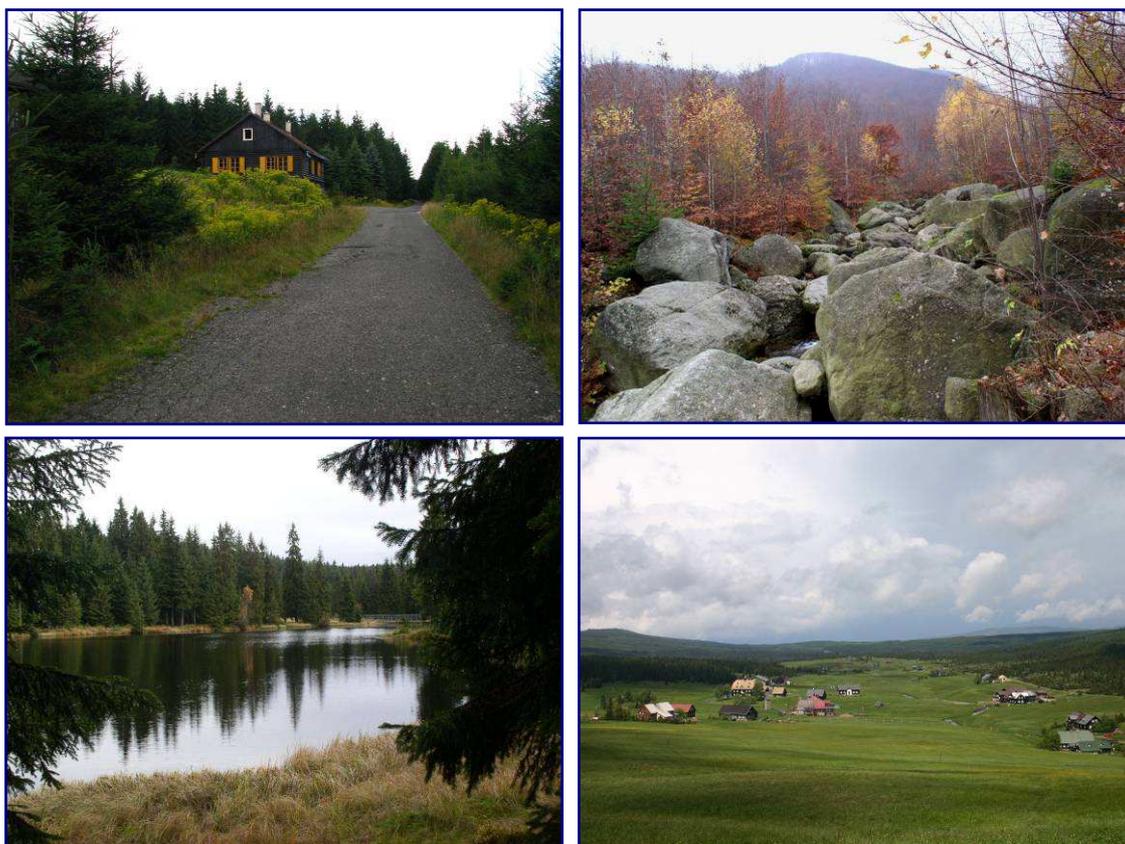


Figure 37. Landscape of Protected Landscape Area Jizerské hory



## **14.2. Ranger Service**

In Jizerské hory a voluntary group of rangers existed before acceptance of the Act No. 114/1992 of the Czech National Council. This group had more than 100 members in six areas of PLA. After 1989 a very fast decrease in interest in cooperation with PLA occurred, for different reasons. In 1992 a nature-guard was appointed, according to the Act No. 114/1992.

At present, the nature-guard of PLA has 30 members including 16 rangers and 14 assistant who give them information. During the last few years the members of the nature-guard have received important experience of how to communicate with visitors and become better qualified. Some of them are now able to expertly communicate and competently cooperate with visitors of PLA, others are specialists in other spheres of interest and they cooperate with the PLA Authority in a vocational activity. The nature-guards have regular meetings once a month in the seat of the PLA Authority. The members are trained, especially in knowledge of legal enactment. One of the main aims at present is to monitor the most frequented places in PLA during the days with high number of visitors.

Since 1995 one professional ranger has been employed by the PLA Authority. His main task is to ensure supervisory and guard duties during the week and lead the voluntary nature-guard.

## **14.3. Junior Ranger Project**

The Junior Ranger Project began in PLA Jizerské hory in 2007, but beforehand there was long tradition of work with children and youth. Last year a group was established of 11 children aged 14 – 19 from the Young Protectionists group.

They have environmental lectures and outdoor activities once a month. They are interested in the protection of nature and looking after it, camping and basic skills to survive in nature. The group is a part of the local chapter No. 36/02 of the Czech union for nature conservation (ČSOP), the biggest environmental NGO in the Czech Republic.

They organize JRP summer and winter camps which are full of activities like: cleaning fish sluices, painting the ranger base, helping adult rangers with guard duty, repairing old fences around saplings, looking for the source of the river Jizera etc. They also manage regular meetings one or more times per month such as JRP Follow Up programmes, Biological Olympiads and so on.



**Figure 38.** The Junior Ranger Project in Protected Landscape Area Jizerské hory

#### ***14.4. My Involvement in the Project Event***

Junior Rangers from Jizerské hory had their second summer camp this year. The two-week long camp took place in their native area, PLA Jizerské hory in a chalet called 'Tetřeví chata'. I arrived there and I met the voluntary ranger and coordinator of JRP, Tomáš Klimovič. I visited them in the middle of their camp only for three days but for me it was a very inspiring meeting.

After discussion with Tomáš about the Project, Junior Rangers returned from their three-day hiking trip. They were taken at night to an unknown location where they obtained a map, a tent and some food. The mission was clear – get back to the chalet 'Tetřeví chata'.

On Saturday the JRP Follow Up programme 'Ranger and legislation' took place. This programme one of mine is focussed on laws and ranger's duties. Junior Rangers prepared, in three groups, proposals of Rules of Visits to PLA Jizerské hory. During the evening celebrations the director of PLA Jizerské hory handed out Junior Ranger's identification cards to them.

The group of Junior Rangers actively collaborate with others groups in the Czech Republic. A couple of Junior Rangers from Krkonoše National Park and

Šumava National Park took part in this two-week long camp. Together they visited the most interesting places in Jizerské hory.



**Figure 39.** My visit to Protected Landscape Area Jizerské hory

Date	Key Activities	Place
22.8. 2008	Meeting with Tomáš, talking about JRP.	Chalet 'Tetřeví chata'
	Greeting with Junior Rangers after their return from three-day hiking trip, campfire.	Chalet 'Tetřeví chata'
23.8. 2008	JRP Follow Up programme 'Ranger and legislation'.	Chalet 'Tetřeví chata'
	Completion of worksheet focused on legislation.	Chalet 'Tetřeví chata'
	Join with Junior Rangers from Krkonoše National Park, small excursion to PLA.	Hejnický hřeben, Jizerskohorské bučiny
	Evening celebrations with campfire, the director of PLA Jizerské hory handing out Junior Ranger's identification cards.	Chalet 'Tetřeví chata'
24.8. 2008	Small quiz.	Chalet 'Tetřeví chata'

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## 15. Overall Evaluation

### **15.1. Visit Ratings and Results**

During the visits a lot of important information as well as practical experience was gained. These many authorities of protected areas in Europe manage specific programmes for children. This is essential for the future. Junior Ranger Project has found its place in the environmental education of many European countries. This Project is the bridge between young people and nature protection and it endears itself to everybody.

On the basis of Statistical investigation information was obtained about the current Junior Ranger Project in Europe. The main survey method was via a questionnaire followed by visits to some of the protected areas. Seventy six percent of answers which were monitoring the current JRP situation in Europe were returned. It is possible to conclude that JRP has variable aims and scope in different areas of Europe.

Only about thirty percent of projects were initiated by the EUROPARC Federation. In other cases the remaining projects were initiated mostly by the Authority of protected areas. This explains the wide range of aims and topics. The average number of Junior Rangers in a group is fourteen children with a mean age of twelve. The number of Junior Rangers in a group varies from three to fifty and their age is between four and twenty. The size of the group and children's age has cardinal importance for the content of the Project. When considering the Project aims it is necessary to clearly define the children's age.

The most common frequency of Junior Ranger meetings is once per month and during the year they usually have a JRP summer camp. The most frequent job of JRP mentors is actually a professional ranger. It refers to one of the project's aims - to present knowledge of the ranger profession to them.

JRP mentors are responsible for development of the Junior Ranger Activity Programmes only in forty six percent of cases. In other instances the Junior Ranger Activity Programmes are prepared either by employees of authorities or directly by Junior Rangers themselves. There is a possibility to offer methodically developed programmes to JRP mentors, not only for convenience of programme preparation but also for a partial unification of project aims and focus.

There is regular collaboration between Junior Ranger teams only in thirty eight percent of cases. The possibility to support their collaboration as well as establishing new contacts is being offered.

In conclusion, these various results collectively suggest that there is high diversity in the Junior Ranger Projects in Europe. There are not uniformly defined aims, methods and scope. However, a lot of detailed and interesting information about the JRP was obtained.



**Figure 40.** 7th EUROPARC Junior Ranger summer camp: international group of Junior Rangers and their mentors from the Czech Republic, Great Britain, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Estonia and Spain

## **15.2. Discussion and Conclusions**

Work with children focused on nature conservation is gaining increasing importance. In our technical age, children have only been learning about wildlife at school, through television or via educational CD-ROM programs. Less and less children have personal contact with wildlife in the field.

Authorities of protected areas are bridging borders between wildlife and people. One of the main aims, among others, is to help local residents to understand the importance of their protected area as well as the reasons for stricter nature conservation. The authorities are trying to find an acceptable balance between tourist and conservation interests. They offer the possibility of active free time in the landscape, explain nature processes and provide sport activities in harmony with nature conservation.

The Junior Ranger Project is one of the broad possibilities of environmental education programmes. It is, however, the only one which is focused on youth preparation for a future job in this frame work. The link of professional training with entertainment and the possibility to spend free time actively in wildlife is actually the reason why this project is so popular with Junior Rangers today.

How can we successfully implement the Junior Ranger Project? As I have determined during my visits, there are various ways of working with children in this Project. Is it possible to put forward the know-how? If we clearly define the main aims of the Project and the children's age, then the answer is yes.

A choice of quality or quantity?

The size of a group as well as the children's age have cardinal importance for the content of the Project. When considering the Project aims it is necessary to clearly define the children's age. If the EUROPARC Federation holds the opinion that the main aim is to improve youngsters' knowledge of the ranger profession, then the children's age up to ten is unattractive, because at this point in life children are not choosing their future jobs. A solution to this problem could be multilevel model of JRP. The children could be split into different age groups and every level could have a different project focus – from early development of nature interests to serious professional training. The first level of the Project is able to address the large number of children. This is the way of 'quantity'. The second and third levels of the Project gradually lead to 'quality' with children who are truly interested.

How to sign up children?

An experienced method is by personal involvement directly in schools. It is important to present the Junior Ranger Project there, talk with children, show them some pictures about the Project, the uniform of Junior Rangers and so on. At best, such a presentation should be provided by an experienced Junior Ranger alongside a professional ranger. At the same time it is necessary to

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provide information about the Project via the internet (domain with its web pages), leaflets and media distribution.

Who should be a Junior Ranger mentor?

Ideally the mentor is a professional ranger in co-operation with an environmental educator. But everyone is not suitable to be a mentor. Professional rangers should be excited about the Project. Another possibility is to lead a group of Junior Rangers by a non-governmental organization or by a teacher from a local school. In this case it is important to have close collaboration between mentor and ranger service. It is useful to cooperate with specialists (e.g. communication expert, specialists on laws and rules, geology etc.) during the programmes. Volunteers could be older Junior Rangers.

How frequent should common events be?

It is important to work with Junior Rangers regularly and in the long term. During the year it is recommended to provide one-day events as well as multi-day events. The main part of the programme activities should be creative work and practical activities for children mainly outdoors.

What should be the target of these programmes?

A basic manual of programmes for mentors would be very helpful. There could be information about topics, draft of presentations, worksheets and others. The time necessary for mentor preparation would be reduced. Topics of programmes should be very variable. The Project will become more interesting and attractive. On the other hand, it is more difficult for preparation because mentors need a wider spectrum of knowledge. Perhaps the most important characteristic for real rangers are communication skills. It is essential to develop and train these skills of Junior Rangers through games, presentations and practical exercises.

Where to gain financial resources?

A well organized Project can add value to the Authority's reputation, thus certain support could be taken there. A different possibility could be external money from foundations, grant providers or sponsors, or the European Union. It can ask an establishing NGO for Project management. Notwithstanding, the most important donors are the parents. Their ability and desire to give some money is an indicator of the Project's success.

Who to collaborate with?

A connection between mentor and parents of Junior Rangers is very important for fundraising and advertising the Project. It is necessary to inform the parents about Project events. It is also possible to prepare a special programme for parents, with basic points coming from programmes for Junior Rangers. Parents will gain an understanding of the Project aim and they will support it as well. The Project is a very attractive topic for the media. There usually isn't a problem presenting the Project in newspapers or journals. Another way is a presentation on the Authority's web pages. They could be used for regular

information for parents or to encourage children to join a new JRP team. Collaboration with local schools and with municipalities is equally important. What is also important for the Project is regular collaboration with other Junior Ranger groups in Europe. Meetings of several teams provided by EUROPARC Federation are very encouraging for children. They share and exchange their knowledge and experience.

How could the EUROPARC Federation help?

This organisation provides international summer camps for Junior Rangers. They also offer financial support for the first year of the Project's life. For more help the organisation could offer actual contact with current groups of Junior Rangers on their web pages. They could also publish the basic manual of programmes in English for mentors. It would also be helpful to organize special training and workshops for mentors of Junior Rangers to exchange experience and ideas.



**Figure 41.** Author of the Report, the Hohe Tauern National Park

### 15.3. Comparison of Ranger Services 2008

Name of Park	Year Established	Total Area <sup>(1)</sup>	Inhabitants	Inhabitants per km <sup>2</sup>	Annual Visitors	Annual Visitors per km <sup>2</sup>	Number of Professional Rangers	Number of Voluntary Rangers	Employer of Rangers
Peak District National Park GBR	1951	1438 km <sup>2</sup>	38 000	26.4	22 million	15 299.0	22	223	Park Authority
Šumava National Park CZE	1991	690 km <sup>2</sup>	16 964	24.6	2,4 million	3 478.3	27	15	Park Authority
Harz National Park DEU	2006 <sup>(2)</sup>	247 km <sup>2</sup>	700	2.8	2 million	8 097.2	44	0	Ministry of Environment
Triglav National Park SVN	1981	840 km <sup>2</sup>	2 200	2.6	2 million	2 380.9	20	75	Ministry of Environment
Prealpi Giulie Nature Park ITA	1996	100 km <sup>2</sup>	0	0	no information	-	0 <sup>(3)</sup>	0	-
National Park Hohe Tauern AUR	1981	1129 km <sup>2</sup>	0	0	2 million	1 771.5	35	0	Park Authority
Krkonoše National Park CZE	1963	360 km <sup>2</sup>	27 000	75.0	6 million	16 666.7	17	29	Park Authority
Cairngorm National Park GBR	2003	3800 km <sup>2</sup>	16 000	4.2	1.4 million	368.4	25	0 <sup>(4)</sup>	Park Authority
Nuuksio National Park FIN	1994	50 km <sup>2</sup>	0	0	0,2 million	4 000.0	5	0	Forest and Park Service
PLA <sup>(5)</sup> Jizerské hory CZE	1968	368 km <sup>2</sup>	no information	-	no information	-	1	18	Authority of PLA

<sup>(1)</sup> Without buffer zone

<sup>(2)</sup> Year of consolidation eastern part (established - 1990) and western part (established - 1994)

<sup>(3)</sup> Service provided by Province Police and Regional Forestry Service

<sup>(4)</sup> Many of the ranger services provide opportunities for people to volunteer but none operate voluntary rangers.

<sup>(5)</sup> Protected Landscape Area

## 15.4. Comparison of Junior Ranger Projects 2008

Name of Park	First Year of JRP <sup>(6)</sup>	Number of JRs <sup>(7)</sup>	Age of JRs	Frequency of JR meetings	JRP Mentors	Form of Evaluation	Financing
Peak District National Park GBR	2004	19 (1 group)	14-15	1x / 2 months	1 environmental educator, rangers (+voluntary aides)	Handbook, Questionnaire	Heritage Lottery Fund, Park Authority
Šumava National Park CZE	2004	15 (1 group)	12-15	1x / 1 month	Rangers, 2 volunteers	Verbal Evaluation	Park Authority, Parents, Grants
Harz National Park DEU	1996	80 (5 groups)	8-14	1x – 4x / 1 month	Rangers	Tests, Worksheets	Park Authority, Parents
Triglav National Park SVN	2002	28 <sup>(8)</sup> (1 group)	17-20	3x / 1 year	Rangers	Verbal Evaluation	Parents, Sponsors, Park Authority
Prealpi Giulie Nature Park ITA	2007	14 (1 group)	13-14	4x / 1 year	Nature guide, park employee	Questionnaire	Park Authority
National Park Hohe Tauern AUR	2002	46 (3 groups)	13-14	1x / 1 year	Rangers, 2 volunteers	Worksheets, Tests	Sponsor, Park Authority
Krkonoše National Park CZE	2002	13 (1 group)	15-16	1x / 1 month	Rangers, 1 environmental educator	Worksheets, JRP essay	Park Authority, Parents
Cairngorm National Park GBR	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nuusio National Park FIN	2008	1 <sup>(9)</sup> (1 group)	12	2x / 1 year	Rangers, 8 volunteers, 1 environmental educator	Questionnaire, Verbal Evaluation	National Board of Education, Parents
PLA <sup>(10)</sup> Jizerské hory CZE	2007	11 (1 group)	14-19	2x / 1 month	Ranger, 3 volunteers	Tests, Worksheets	Financing via NGO <sup>(11)</sup>

<sup>(6)</sup> Junior Ranger Project

<sup>(7)</sup> Junior Rangers

<sup>(8)</sup> Information about situation in 2007, new group of JRs will be establish in 2009

<sup>(9)</sup> This is the first year, JRP is just beginning and has a problem with marketing – to get children

<sup>(10)</sup> Protected Landscape Area

<sup>(11)</sup> Many sources e.g. Czech Union for Nature Conservation, Ministry of Education, PLA Jizerské hory, Pavučina, Region Liberec, Parents, ...

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# 17. Appendix

EUROPARC's 2007 junior ranger activities are implemented through the project EUROPARC Junior Ranger Network 2007 with financial support from the Free State of Bavaria, Germany, and the Bavarian Academy for Nature Protection and Landscape Conservation (ANL) thanks to a grant from the Environment Fund

Bayrische Akademie für Naturschutz und Landschaftspflege

The EUROPARC Federation is a pan-European, politically independent, non-governmental organisation, whose purpose is to support and promote the whole range of protected areas in Europe. For more information on the EUROPARC Junior Ranger initiative and international events please contact the EUROPARC Federation Headquarters:

**The EUROPARC Federation**  
 Kröllstr. 5  
 Postfach 1153  
 94475 Grafenau  
 Germany

Phone +49 (0) 855 2 96100  
 Fax +49 (0) 855 2 961019  
 E-mail junior-ranger@europarc.org  
 Internet www.europarc.org/juniorranger/index.php

**Network Partners**

You can also contact protected areas directly to learn about their activities. The following list is a selection, further contacts in your home country or region can be requested from the EUROPARC Headquarters:

Austria	Gessate National Park	www.natopark.at
Czech Republic	Khonovce National Park	www.europarc.cz
Estonia	Saaremaa National Park	www.saaremaa.ee
Germany	Bavarian Forest National Park	www.junior-ranger.de
	Brandenburg Ranger Service / Schorfheide-Chorin	www.natopark.bayern.de
	Biosphäre Biosleite	www.natopark-mechernsee.de
	Polnische Jugend Natur Park	www.natopark-mechernsee.de
Great Britain	Natural Area of Outstanding Beauty	www.natopark-mechernsee.de
	Peak District National Park	www.youthrangers.com
	South Downs Joint Committee	www.southdowns.gov.uk/peapark-163
Italy	EUROPARC Italy	www.europarc.it
	Provincia Giulio-Natura Park	www.provincia.giuliana.org
Lithuania	Gauja National Park	www.gpj.lt
Ethiopia	Donkajo National Park	www.donkajonationalpark.it
Slovenia	Trzin National Park	www.trzin.gov.si
Sweden	Tejby National Park	www.tejby.se
Spain	Agüestinos-Etxezarok Salu National Park	www.mediambientepnac.net

**EUROPARC Junior Rangers**

In partnership to protect Europe's natural and cultural heritage

www.europarc.org

## EUROPARC Junior Rangers getting started as part of a network

The EUROPARC Junior Ranger Programme was launched as a pilot project embracing four partner parks in 2002, and the network has grown ever since comprising almost 50 partners in 2007. With the support of EUROPARC funds and through park administrations' own resources, park directors and rangers throughout Europe have established and developed junior ranger activities on a long-term basis. Why? One of the greatest challenges facing protected areas today is to find ways of demonstrating that the conservation of nature and culture and the sustainable use of natural resources have a fundamental relevance to people's daily lives. The EUROPARC Junior Ranger model has proved to be an ideal tool to foster strong and lasting bonds between local communities and their protected areas.

Young people are at the heart of the local communities living in and around protected areas. They are also their future advocates, guardians and potential employees. By providing young people with opportunities to participate in their work, protected areas fulfil their educational role whilst enhancing understanding of their aims and appreciation of the natural and cultural resources they protect.

In return, the youngsters gain a wealth of rich and meaningful experiences and learn useful work skills in an outstanding natural environment close to their home. Such opportunities also encourage young people to develop a life-long commitment to protected areas and to the protection of our natural environment and cultural heritage!



Picture: Kamila Antošová



## EUROPARC Junior Rangers what it is all about

- Creating a network of youngsters who actively participate in nature protection and act as advocates for their home protected area.
- Improving youngsters' knowledge of the ranger profession, thus raising the profession's profile and the number of young people choosing the ranger profession or other jobs in nature conservation.
- Raising awareness about the natural, cultural, social and economic values of protected areas, as well as their role and daily work.
- Enhancing recognition of protected areas and their administrations' achievements – enthusiastic junior rangers act as multipliers among families, schoolmates and friends.
- Promoting friendship and a group ethic between young people by engaging them in the achievement of the common goals of European protected areas.
- Offering activities for junior rangers that are hands-on and fun!

## Who can participate?

The EUROPARC junior ranger initiative is aimed at young people attending schools in and around protected areas. Pupils from all types of school can get involved. Junior Rangers are usually between 11 and 18 years old. The age range of local groups is determined by each network partner.

## Planning implementation

The EUROPARC handbook 'Junior Rangers: In Action to Preserve Europe's Natural and Cultural Heritage' provides further detailed information on the most important aspects of junior ranger programmes. Both hard and electronic copies can be obtained from the EUROPARC Federation Headquarters.



## EUROPARC's role

- Coordinating the European Junior Ranger network.
- Supporting the increase in Junior Ranger network partners throughout Europe.
- Exchanging information and experience through the organisation of international meetings and training events.
- Organising an "International EUROPARC Junior Ranger Camp" each summer.