

CAMP DESCRIPTION

General

Logistics/Facilities

Activities

EVALUATION

Organisers

Rangers and Mentors

The general feedback from all Rangers and Mentors, was really positive. They all enjoyed the camp and said it was very well organised and managed.

Main positive aspects:

- Information, documents and pre-camp organisation were clear, on time and useful;
- Location in the farm – a working farm, not a “farm show” – was a great experience, gave the opportunity to stay in a close contact with the environment, the animals, the people... to discover the landscape and local biodiversity.
- So many different and varied activities everyday made the camp very interesting;
- Blog, website and facebook page very good idea and useful to start to know each other;
- Meeting with the other Rangers were useful to exchange views and to know how things are managed in different PAs.
- Timing very good
- The management, coordination and presentation of the activities by the various experts/farmers/etc were very well done. Learning by doing.
- Very funny the last night with traditional dance.

Some less positive (difficult to call them negative)

- Difficulties for some participants to access the blog :
- Some days too many activities, sometimes too many physical activities on the same day: could be better balanced;
- Improve and increase the icebreaking games and those to know each other, mainly during the first days;
- Improve the quality of the presentations made by the JR;

General comments/suggestions

- Rangers and Mentors have few time available to support JR in the camp preparation: difficult to meet to prepare the presentations;
- Unless someone asked to have a longer camp, we agreed, after some discussion, that the camp cannot last more than 8 or 9 days.
- Consider plan B in case of rain;
- Better have, when possible, lunch and dinner all together sitting (chairs and tables) could also facilitate the exchange and chatting

- Could be better to have presentations also during the day, not just at night.
- We underlined and agreed that the JR programme is a programme of environmental education: we are not training future Rangers! But the JR programme can be clearly considered as a first step to promote the development of volunteer groups within PAs. (JR are not volunteers as volunteers must be older than 18)
- After some discussion, considering the different sensitiveness of participants and different regulations in each country, rangers agreed that no alcohol could be drink in front of the kids and during the camp activities.
- Rangers and Mentors agree on the need/proposal to set a registration form for the Parks involved in the JR programme.
- Rangers don't feel the need of specific training to support their work. They would need more support from their parks for managing the activities during the year. We need to work to persuade the Park managers on the benefits that the JR programme can provide for PAs. One of the difficulties is that frequently Rangers are more in charge of surveillance and nature management than education !!!

Junior Rangers

My comments

The camp was in general very well organised, good timing and camp preparation well managed. The AONB, unless it is a very small structure, worked hard and produced good results, being able to involve local authorities, stakeholders and various other partners in the Camp Project (for funds and to support and manage activities). Locations were ok and the farm very interesting to do environmental education with youths, but we need to have our camp space... We were very well set and organised, maybe too many comforts: could be interesting to organise a really wild camp! Communication was good: the new website was appreciated and used, as well as the blog: maybe the blog started a bit too late (will see how this will go on in the coming future). Haven't seen so much activity in the facebook page.

The main objectives of the camp were to discover the biodiversity of the area, their connections and their relevance for the landscape and human life, and in general to better understand what is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These goals were clearly reached thanks to the various actions in which all participants have been actively involved: dry stonewalling, sheep shearing, archaeological and cultural visits, caving and climbing, work in the woods and in the farm, harvesting, cooking and foraging for wild food...

We probably had too many different activities with too many different external trainers, guides, mentors and I'm not sure how much the youth had time to assimilate and understand the links between things: my feeling is that sometime the "fil rouge" of the camp was missing. I was expecting more support from the advanced young rangers of Mendip Hills, the accompanying Rangers and the mentors to interact more with the youths and facilitate the exchange of experiences. Rangers and Mentors tend to come to the camp to participate in the activities and are a bit passive, as they were not

involved in the organisation of the event and they don't have a clear role there... Someone coordinating and leading the camp was a bit missing.

Accompanying Rangers and Mentors (only 6 of the 12 were Park Rangers) were satisfied of the meetings we had during the camp, to share experiences and exchange views on JR programme, even if they were not so much interactive... We got presentation on JR programme from: Sumava NP (CZ), Krkonosce (CZ), Jizera Mountain PLA (CZ), Nuuksio NP / Metshallitus (Fin)

Suggestions/Ideas

We could think to involve more the accompanying Rangers in the camp programme. Ex to directly manage some of the activities instead of involving external people. Find a way to make them protagonists... (Ask them to come one day before to prepare the camp? Every day give to one of the attending parks the time to manage an activity?) Otherwise better to have a camp just with JR... (Ranger and Mentors are really useful to support the JR only when the JR are 12-13)

We should pay more attention on connecting the activities, and explain why we do things and which are the links... JR should be more protagonists of the camp and less "enlivened". Think more on the educational objectives of the activities we plan

Better if Park's presentations are done after the 2 day of the camp when people start to know each other a bit better: it's more effective, and the atmosphere is different. Presentations should have a common title and try to give a message not just an overview of the park. (Not easy as the Rangers usually do not have time to prepare things with the kids)

Give more space to different languages: everyday learn a phrase in a different language?

Maybe we could think to focus some training with Rangers on education: how to make environmental activities, learning activities for JR... which are the educative goals, how to communicate messages. But also how to plan activities, how to organise an international camp and make a good programme...