

NewStories from the Făgăraș Mountains

July-August 2024



carpathia.org



In July we lost Ioana Săvulescu, our legal director, in a serious car accident. In the 13 years we spent together, we admired her day by day not only for her professionalism and uprightness, but also for the passion she put into everything she did. Her passing leaves a huge void.

We are grateful for all that she has given us. Foundation Conservation Carpathia and the whole team owe her a great debt!



A fresh start

Thank you for reading our field report! With autumn approaching, we have recreated it under a new name.

Each month we collect the most interesting NewStories from our recent work. You can find them on carpathia.org, and if you want to make sure you don't miss an edition, [subscribe with your e-mail address](#).

Once a month (not more often, we promise!) you will receive the newsletter letting you know that a new edition of the stories has been published.

Main activities summary

1. Forest conservation and management
2. Ecological restoration
3. Wildlife conservation
4. Conservation Enterprise Programme
5. Communication and community outreach

FOR NATURAL RESOURCES, FOR COMMUNITIES

Forest conservation and management

1



The forest does not take a summer holiday! On the contrary, it's a period of intense activity, which we watch with interest to make sure that no major problems arise.

We monitor potential sources of problems, such as bark beetles and areas affected by erosion. We are always amazed by the resilience of healthy forests, where all the links in the ecosystem are in place.



© Sebastian Mastahac, Claudiu Țoanță, ISU Argeș

This summer was literally hot and unfortunately the high temperatures also affected the forest.

In mid-August on Mount Tămaș, in an area where the forest had been clear-cut and we had replanted, a fire broke out. Tall grass and drought contributed to the fire spreading.

Fortunately, with the help of ISU Argeș, the Salvamont Argeș team and fellow rangers, we managed to stop it in good time. The effort was significant, as it is impossible to reach the area with fire engines. After the flames were extinguished, we worked for another 2-3 days to locate and extinguish the smouldering fires, hidden under vegetation and ash.

Big thanks to everyone who helped!



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2

Ecological restoration

Ecological reconstruction sites (replanting)



We checked the situation in the Pietrosul Mare area in the south of the Făgăraș Mountains, where we planted in spring. The drone photos help us see how the forest areas have evolved. The rather tall grass, about 1.5 metres high, tells us that we will need to intervene soon to bring the seedlings to light.

Tall grasses can suffocate the saplings or consume the water they need to grow. Moreover, if we don't cut the grass, in the winter the snow will topple the saplings together with the surrounding vegetation, so we intervene with teams of workers to remove them. This work is called 'uncovering'.

These works debuted in August, and were focused on the Dobroneagu and Basa plantations in the southern Făgăraș Mountains.

The work has been very hard because of the down of *Epilobium angustifolium*, a pioneer plant that grows abundantly in areas where the forest is being cut down. The fruits of this plant are accompanied by a lot of down, which makes the air difficult to breathe.

We're glad we managed to get the job done, even under these conditions.





This eye-catching flower has a name to match: commonly it's known as cutleaf coneflower, and in scientific parlance as *Rudbeckia laciniata*.

Despite its innocuous appearance, it is an invasive alien plant that can eliminate local species and even damage agricultural crops. It is not the only one: in areas where we are reforesting or in riverbeds where we are studying the vegetation in the Făgăraș Mountains, we encounter several invasive alien plant species.

The Vâlsanului Valley, the Târgului River, the grassland in the Găinașul Mare area are just some of the areas from which we removed these dangerous plants in July and August. We monitor them year on year to make sure they don't come back, and that the local flora thrives.



3

**Wildlife
conservation**

**FOR NATURAL
FOR COMMUNITIES**

Red Deer

We are in the process of removing the deer monitoring cameras from the field. Together with volunteers from the Foundation Conservation Carpathia team, we have de-installed 104 cameras out of the 127 installed for this study.





Red deer DNA sample collection

In parallel with the recall of the cameras we also ran DNA sample collection sessions. We managed to collect 477 samples, which were sent to our partners in Slovenia for analysis.





Beaver

Beaver families have new members. Meet some of them, as caught on camera.





4

Conservation Enterprise Programme

DUS
MUNTELE
FOR NATURE'S
FOR COMMUNITIES



Cobor Biodiversity Farm

The farm enjoyed receiving many visitors in July and August. The children who camped in Jibert enlivened the yard with their games. The most difficult part of the summer was the drought. We bring water by tractor from many kilometres away to make sure that the animals we host do not suffer from thirst.





We launched the **Guides Academy**, a programme of excellence for mountain guides!

The programme is for those who are determined to offer guests not just a trip to the mountains, but a comprehensive experience in the heart of nature.

Courses and training are held by experts from Foundation Conservation Carpathia and experienced trainers. While participation is free of charge, attendance and involvement in the practical activities is essential for obtaining the graduate diplomas.

We wish success to all!





O inițiativă Fundația
Conservation Carpathia

Un pic de implicare pentru un câștig mai mare

Alătură-te comunității de producători
locali Roadele Munților Făgăraș!



Proiect susținut de



Roadele Munților Făgăraș

A lot is happening in the Roadele Munților Făgăraș community! We are going through a visual identity redesign, the results of which will be revealed soon.

At the same time, we want to grow and welcome new producers in the community, that's why we have launched a campaign inviting those interested to get in touch with us. Curious, or know someone who wants the support of a community of experienced entrepreneurs? Fill in [this form](#).





Local producers from the Roadele Muntilor Făgăraș community have been the delight of this summer's festivals. At Făgăraș Fest they brought to the public dishes specific to the area, made from wholesome ingredients.



Summer essence in Honey Colonia

Most Honey Colonia products are either ECO or available in an ECO certified version. You can feel the taste of childhood in every product from our online shop <https://roadelemuntilor.ro/>.



Ionuț Ocneanu, founder of Honey Colonia, has been passionate about beekeeping since childhood, when he used to help his neighbour take care of the bees. The passion turned into a business that leaves nothing to chance: the first product was launched after 10 years of testing and research!



Based in Curtea de Argeș, Honey Colonia produces a wide range of beekeeping products, from honey to pollen, propolis tincture, bee cap or even mini beehives, just as they are taken from the hive.



Comisu wildlife observatory

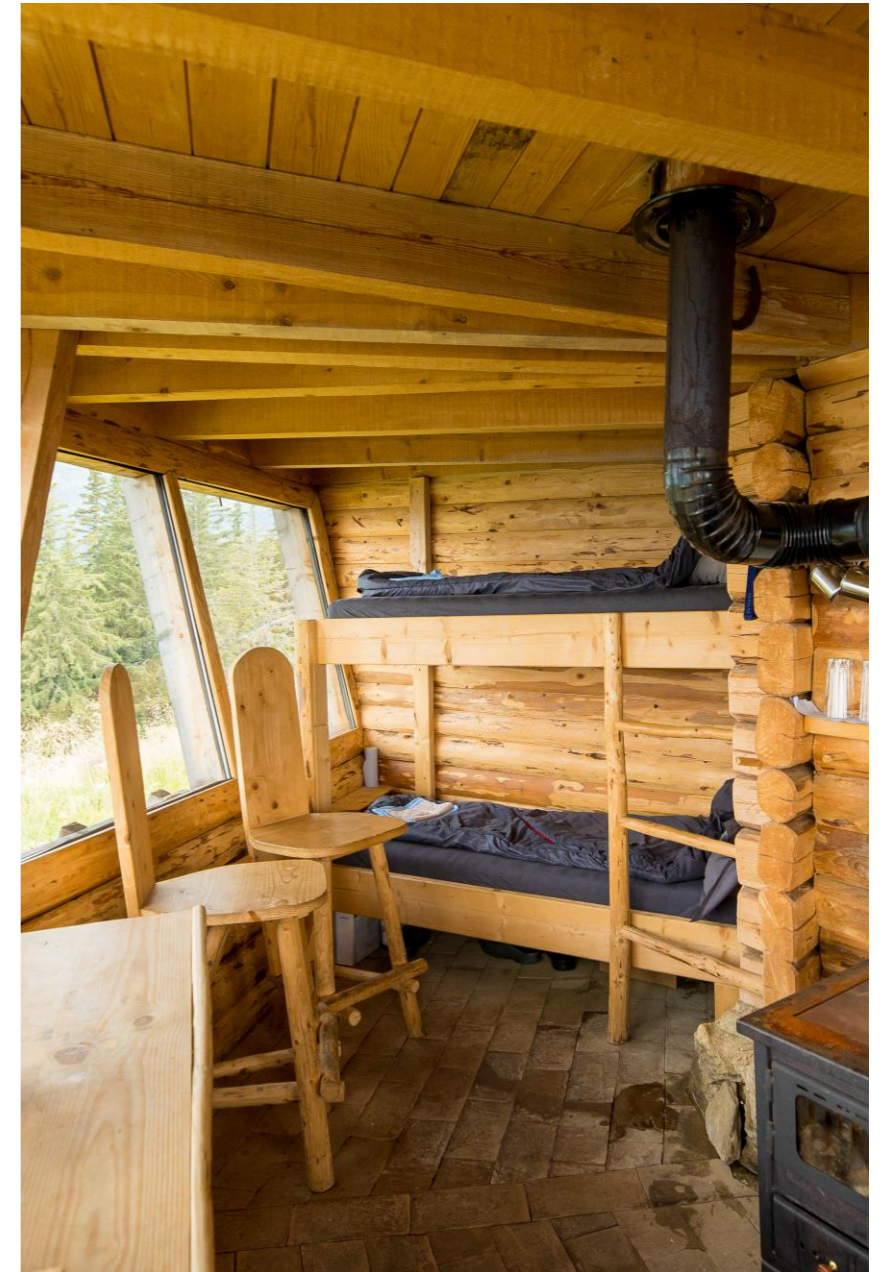
Travel with us to a wild area in the Făgăraș Mountains!

You reach Comisu after a 2-hour hike, climbing from 1,100 to 1,600 m. The two huts, Comisu I and Comisu II, have a breathtaking view of the Piatra Craiului, Făgăraș and Iezer-Păpușa mountains.

At sunset and sunrise, wild animals appear in the unreal landscape. You can admire bears, lynx, deer or even bison in their natural habitat, from the safety and comfort of cabins built with respect for nature.

For more details or to book go to <https://travelcarpathia.com/>





FOR NATURAL, FOR COMMUNITIES

Communication and community outreach



Făgăraș Fest

Moășei Valley was filled with joy at Făgăraș Fest, the festival of the Făgăraș Mountains!

In Sebeșu de Sus, Racovița commune, over 7,000 people pulsated to the rhythms of nature. Guided tours on flora and fauna, family activities, concerts, games and products generously prepared by local producers contributed to a very successful edition.

Thanks to all participants!



© Claudiu Postelnicu



The installation 'It's oh so quiet', designed and built by Atelier VRAC, was one of the highlights of the festival.



© Claudiu Postelnicu



We are waiting for you at the Beaver House Visitor Centre!



In July we opened the Beaver House Visitor Centre in Rucăr. Visitors can learn many interesting facts about the life of this natural engineer in a fascinating interactive exhibition. Discover more [on the website](#).





They have cute names, like 'cutleaf coneflower' or 'Himalayan balsam', but when they get out of control, they pose a big risk to local flora.

Invasive alien plants are a problem for the balance of nature. That's why we have launched an information campaign to help you recognise them and understand how destructive they can be.

Details on carpathia.org.



Știi musafirul acela care vine la o cafea și rămâne până la cină?

Cam așa e și cu **plantele străine invazive**, doar că ele rămân pentru totdeauna!



Annual report 2023

We've collected all our work from 2023 in one place. You can now download the [activity report](#) for the past year from the website.

From 26th to 30th August in Tartu, Estonia, one of the most important nature conservation events took place: the European Society for Ecological Reconstruction Conference. In short: SERE 2024.

We were represented by a multi-disciplinary delegation, whose members presented some of our most important activities: from non-invasive wildlife surveys to the Roadele Munților Făgăraș project or the reintroduction of key species in the ecosystems of the Făgăraș Mountains.

We are glad to have been part of this international exchange of ideas and experiences!





© Mihai Sorea

15 students from the counties of Arges, Sibiu and Braşov enjoyed a trip to the Bavarian Forest National Park. The young winners of the 'Adopt a corner of nature' competition had an exciting experience and saw how a national park on the other side of Europe works.





We are honoured by the attention our projects are receiving from distinguished guests. In August we were visited by a delegation composed of Their Excellencies Mrs. Kathleen Kavalec, Ambassador of the United States of America to Romania, Mr. Giles Portman, Ambassador of the United Kingdom to Romania, Mr. Peer Gebauer, Ambassador of Germany to Romania, and Mr. Gavin Buchan, Ambassador of Canada to Romania, together with their families.

We thank the distinguished guests for their visit and look forward to welcoming them back!



A new generation has joined the Junior Rangers programme and started to learn and practice the activities of a true protector of nature.

For these kids, the months of July and August were filled with learning moments, from the introductory camp at the Richita Nature Exploration and Activity Centre, to the cultural day hosted by the Beaver House Visitor Centre, or the field trip on invasive alien plants.



A new ambassador

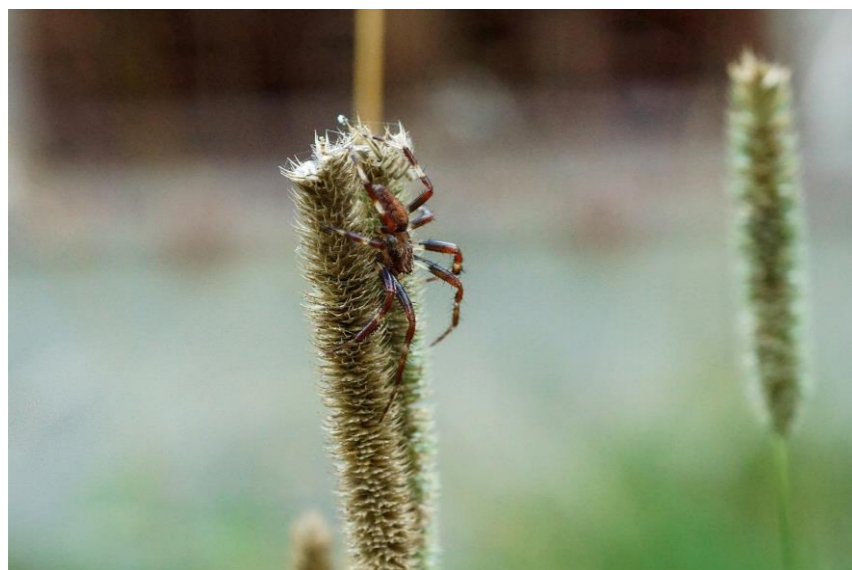
Nature photographer Rareș Beșliu joined the group of ambassadors of the Făgăraș Mountains. We thank him for his inspiring pictures and for capturing the richness of our country's nature with talent and such attention to detail!





Did you know how talented the students from the Făgăraș Mountains area are? Together with photographer George Soare, the children who passed the selection process took part in a photography camp at the Richita Nature Activities and Exploration Centre.

The result? Beautiful frames that highlight even more the amazing nature of the area!



Prezentat de WaterBear, Jack Wolfskin și Fundația Conservation Carpathia

SPIRITUL PĂDURII



waterbear
ORIGINAL

The documentary 'Spirit of the Forest' had a special screening at the Râșnov Film and History Festival. This movie pays homage to the more than 5,000 centuries-old beech trees that stretch their branches to the sky in the commune of Nucșoara.

You can also watch it online [on the YouTube account of](#) Foundation Conservation Carpathia.





Întrecerea Gulașurilor

📍 Ferma de Biodiversitate Cobor

**Descoperă și savurează
gulașul din Sură de Stepă!**

12 Octombrie 2024

- Concurs culinar
- Atelier de gust
- Ulița copilăriei

Invitation

Getting ready for the tastiest event of the fall! On October 12, at the Cobor Biodiversity Farm, eight teams of talented chefs will compete with goulash recipes using Transylvanian Grey cattle meat. Come and enjoy the beauty of the place, the flavour of the dishes but also the other activities on the programme, most of them culinary.

Tickets available on iabilet.ro.

Un eveniment:



Parteneri:



© Foundation Conservation Carpathia



Results

**4,142,254 trees
planted in clear-cuts,
riverbanks and
restoration areas of
spruce monocultures**



Results

27,434 ha

of forest under permanent protection and safeguarded for future generations

75,000 ha

protected for wildlife, with no sport or trophy hunting

353 locals

are involved in CARPATHIA project's activities, receiving a fair pay

2,200

students and teachers involved in environmental education projects

>30

local producers are part of the Roadele Munților Food Hub







FOUNDATION
CONSERVATION CARPATHIA

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How can you help?

Get in touch and let's discuss ways that you can get involved, as an individual and/or as a company.

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or access [Donations – Carpathia](#)