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CARPATHIA®
NewStories from the Făgăraș Mountains
FOR COMMUNITIES
FOR NATURE
carpathia.org
October 2025

Main activities summary

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



1

Forest conservation and management

© Liviu Ungureanu


© Sebastian Mastahac

To protect nature, you need to have a good understanding of it. At the end of May, we started a project to make an inventory of the virgin and quasi-virgin forests in the Făgăraș Mountains, with the aim to:

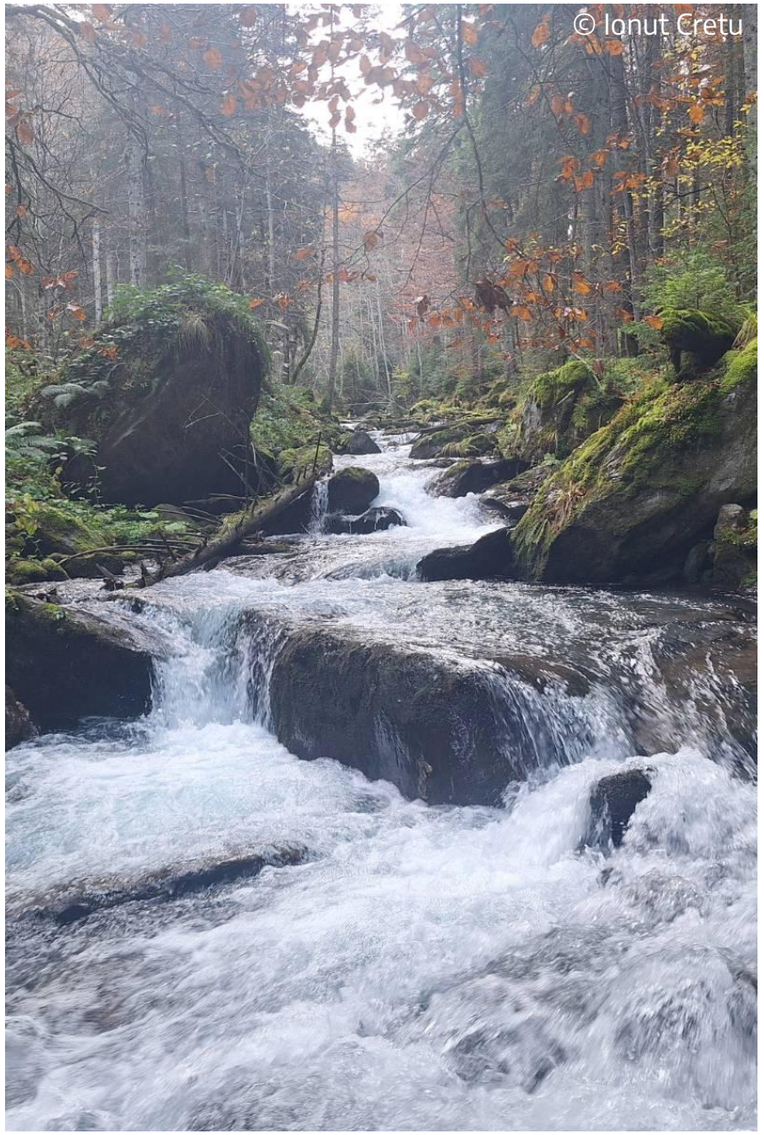
- Create recent orthophoto maps (high-quality maps made by assembling drone images) of the forests in the National Catalogue of Virgin Forests in the Făgăraș Mountains, in support of the Ministry of Environment, Water, and Forests;
- Build a database with the long-term evolution of virgin forests in the National Forest Catalogue;
- Produce photographic material on Romania's exceptional natural values to help promote tourism in local communities around the Făgăraș Mountains.

”We mainly admired the grandeur of these magnificent forests from a drone, at a height of about 120 m above the tree canopy,” says Ionuț Crețu, our ranger involved in the project.

”To get good photos, we had to climb to altitudes higher than the forest’s. So far, over a period of six months we have covered on foot a total distance of about 200 km, on difficult terrain with steep slopes and with thousands of meters in elevation. It was the only way we could monitor 7,600 ha of the 10,000 ha of virgin and quasi-virgin forests in the Făgăraș Mountains.”

We will repeat this monitoring in a few years to understand what and how things are changing in these forests.


© Sebastian Mastahac


© Ionut Cretu

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High biodiversity means favourable conditions for many species of fungi (mushrooms). In turn, these contribute to maintaining biodiversity. It is an ecological cycle of interdependence and balance.

The abundance of fungi is an indicator of the inestimable value of the ecosystem and forests, and the rains have once again served as a litmus test highlighting this fact.

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2

Ecological restoration

© fisheye.ro

Zârna Valley, in the south of the Făgăraș Mountains

We continued planting on one of the most difficult ecological restoration sites in the Făgăraș Mountains.

Access to the Zârna Valley is arduous. The area is characterized by steep slopes, hard soil, and rocks, all of which are challenging when you want to plant saplings.



© Foundation Conservation Carpathia





We are working on this site alongside a team of 15 workers from local communities such as Dragoslavele and Valea Iașului. We are continuing our efforts to transform the area back into a resilient forest.

We have managed to plant between 1,500 and 2,500 seedlings per day, a result that gives us motivation.





© Foundation Conservation Carpathia



We have talked before about the beech nut, which contains such a valuable seed. Harvesting it is a laborious and time-consuming activity, but essential for several projects: the study of the availability of food for bears and the production of new seedlings.

In October, we gathered 11 kg of beech nuts from the Vidraru sampling plots and delivered them to the nurseries for sowing, along with those collected from other sampling areas.

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Wildlife Conservation

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Acoustic monitoring device



Ural Owl© Adrian Idor



Pygmy Owl © Dan Dinu



Tawny Owl © Robert Zeitz

In October, we launched a pilot programme for acoustic monitoring of four species of owls. We are interested in their distribution, period of activity, and interactions between species.

We are focusing our attention on the following species:

- **Tawny Owl (*Strix aluco*)** - the most common and widespread owl species in our forests;
- **Boreal Owl (*Aegolius funereus*)** - the rarest owl species in the mountainous area;
- **Pygmy owl (*Glaucidium passerinum*)** – the smallest species of owl in Europe;
- **Ural owl (*Strix uralensis*)** – the second largest species of owl in Romania.

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Ruben Iosif and Costin Enache, our colleagues from the Wildlife Monitoring Department, participated in the Tușnad Eco Bear Fest conference. They presented the results of our studies on the dynamics of wolf (*Canis lupus*) and lynx (*Lynx lynx*) populations that we have conducted in recent years in the southern Făgăraș Mountains.









© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

© Diana Bobeș



Conservation Enterprise Programme

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In October, we attended New Agro 2025, an event organized by Biz Magazine, dedicated to the future of agriculture in Romania.

Istvan Szabo, our Director of Conservation Enterprise and Community Relations, spoke about the Roadele Munților Făgăraș initiative. During the panel discussion ‘Short Supply Chains and Cooperatives: The Collective Future of Agriculture’, he showed how collaboration, innovation, and local communities can change the way we produce and consume and bring us closer to nature.





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Travel Carpathia joined us at the Romanian Embassy in Vienna, at the invitation of Mrs. Andreea Amza-András.

We talked about how our ecotourism model works in the southern Făgăraș Mountains: hiking and wildlife watching, accommodation in isolated forest cabins, cultural experiences, and local food through Roadele Munților Făgăraș.

Diplomats, journalists, tourism and environmental professionals, as well as students, were curious to learn how ecotourism supports nature and local communities.

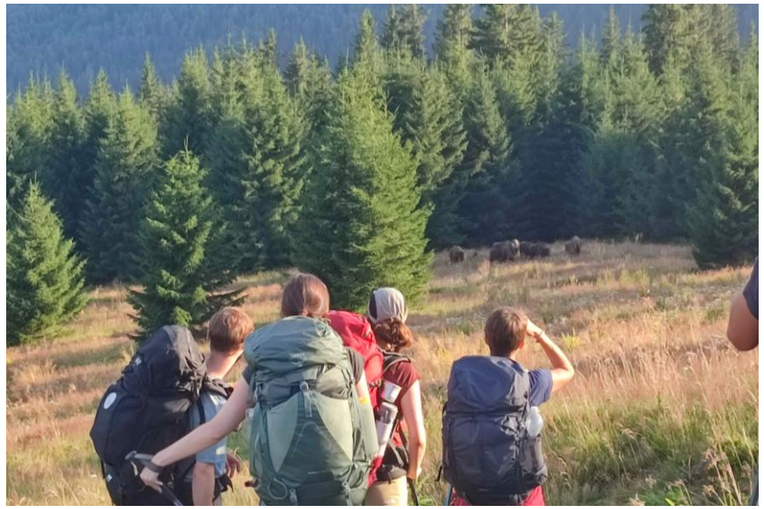
We thank the Romanian Embassy in Austria for the warm welcome!

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With Travel Carpathia guides, every walk through the forest becomes a captivating lesson, every footprint in the mud is the sign of an exciting story, and the fatigue at the end of the day is just a pause before a new adventure.

The Travel Carpathia team of guides ‘translates’ nature for everyone to understand, turning every sound of the forest and every animal track into a living story.

At the end of the season, we met with them in an informal setting to discuss what went well and what we can do even better in the future.

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia









Winter is getting near, the season when snow-covered trails turn into fairy tale routes for riders.

At Equus Silvania, we are preparing for the snow riding season, the perfect time to experience the authentic connection between human and horse.

If this sounds appealing, the Equus Silvania Horse Riding and Nature Exploration Center awaits you.

Find out more by calling

+40 752 065 946 or send a message to bookings@equus-silvania.com.

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Communication and community outreach









Aspen GMF Bucharest Forum is a landmark event, hosting open dialogue on global issues of strategic importance.

At the 14th edition, which took place in October, our executive director Christoph Promberger discussed the significance of forests and wildlife for Romania's strong national image.

The dialogue session also featured Charlie Ottley, journalist and author of the Netflix travel series ‘Flavours of Romania’, and Nicoleta Iordan, co-founder of Cărturești bookstores, and was moderated by Ana-Maria Atonoaie, Director of Strategic Partnerships at Foundation Conservation Carpathia.

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

At Climate Change Summit Week, we discussed a topic that concerns us all: the role of forests in mitigating the effects of climate change.

Mihai Zotta, our conservation director, presented our experience in the Făgăraș Mountains and explained how protecting forests reflects on the preservation of natural resources that we all depend on.

This is a particularly timely and important conversation, and we are happy to contribute with arguments in support of nature conservation.





© Foundation Conservation Carpathia









We fondly remember the enthusiasm and attention of the rangers who attended the 2025 European Ranger Congress!

The cold and rainy weather did not stop the participants. Those who chose to visit our project area appreciated the activities and infrastructure we have developed. They were impressed by the Richita Nature Exploration and Activity Centre, the Beaver House, the way the work is organised at the nurseries, and the ecological restoration sites.

We thank them for their interest and passion, but also for confirming that our work is defining the highest conservation standards at European level.

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

At the end of October, some of the young people in the Junior Rangers programme went on an exchange trip to Vânători-Neamț Natural Park. Together with education specialists Mihai Sorea and Liviu Ungureanu, they explored nature and visited cultural destinations such as Ion Creangă's House and Neamț Fortress.

They followed the tracks of the bison in this park and shared their impressions and knowledge about monitoring animals and the forest with the rangers from Vânători-Neamț.

It was an experience full of discoveries, which showed them that nature is best learned by living it.









© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

Junior rangers from previous years joined us for our autumn activities. Near Nucșoara, the teenagers in the programme went out into the field and helped gather the beech nut harvest.

It was a long day, but full of results and good cheer, as the young people continued to learn what it means to be true protectors of nature.



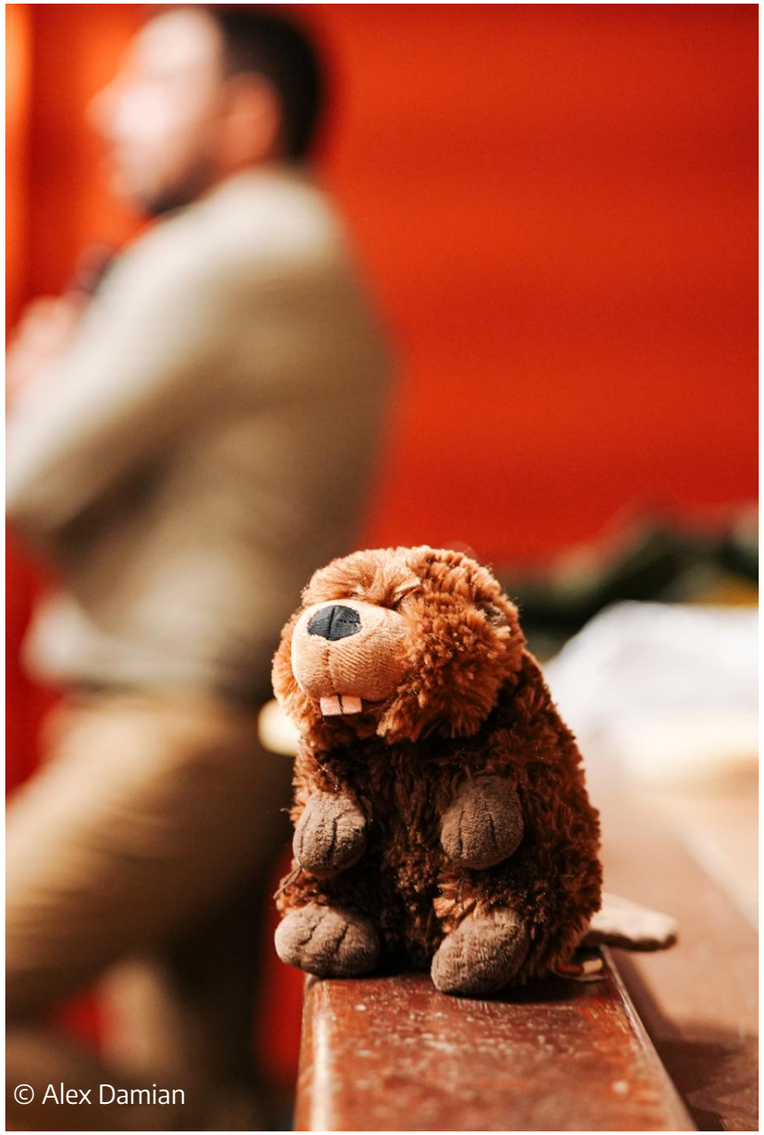


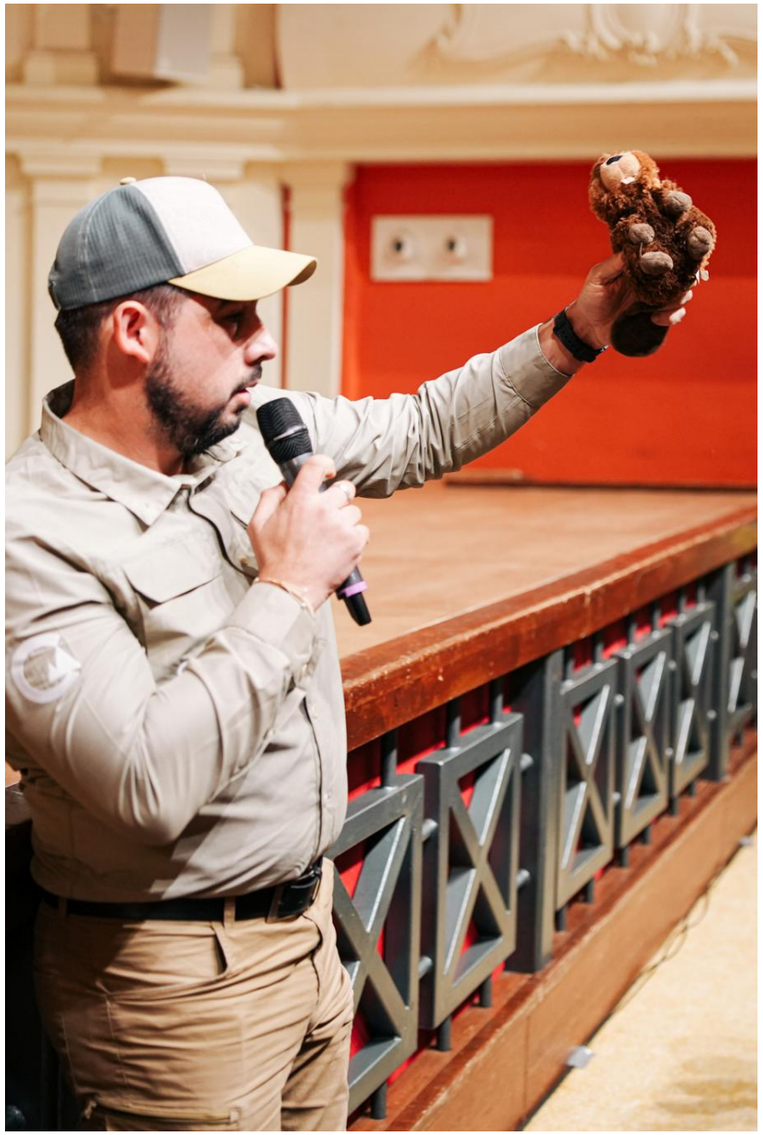
© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

Nature's most industrious architect left his dams and tree trunks behind for a day to come to the movies!

At the screening of the documentary ‘Nature’s Architects’, produced by legendary Romanian filmmaker Dan Dinu, at Astra Film Junior (October 20–24, Sibiu), the children prepared a veritable dam of questions for Brebenel.

Together with Liviu Ungureanu, our specialist in beaver reintroduction and a passionate education specialist, Brebenel answered every curious question!


© Alex Damian



© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

‘Nature's Architects’ on the small and big Screens

The documentary about the return of bison and beavers can be seen in cinemas across the country from October 24. It is suitable for everyone: families, specialists, or simply nature lovers.

If you don't get to see it on the big screen (although it would be a shame, as every detail is worth admiring), you can catch it on TVR1 station on December 4 at 10 p.m.



Results

4,528,254

trees planted

78,000 ha

protected for wildlife, with no sport or trophy hunting

353 people from local communities

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

27,906 ha

of forest under permanent protection and safeguarded for future generations

2,200

students and teachers involved in environmental education projects

>30

local producers are part of the Roadele Munților Făgăraș initiative

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FOUNDATION CONSERVATION CARPATHIA

Calea Feldioarei 27A, Brașov, Romania

info@carpathia.org

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.

ANA-MARIA ATONOAIE

PARTNERSHIP & CORPORATE RELATIONS DIRECTOR

Mobile: +40 753 956 452

E-mail: a.atonoaie@carpathia.org

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