
CARPATHIA®
NewStories from the Făgăraș Mountains
June & July 2026
FOR COMMUNITIES
FOR NATURE
carpathia.org
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Main activities summary

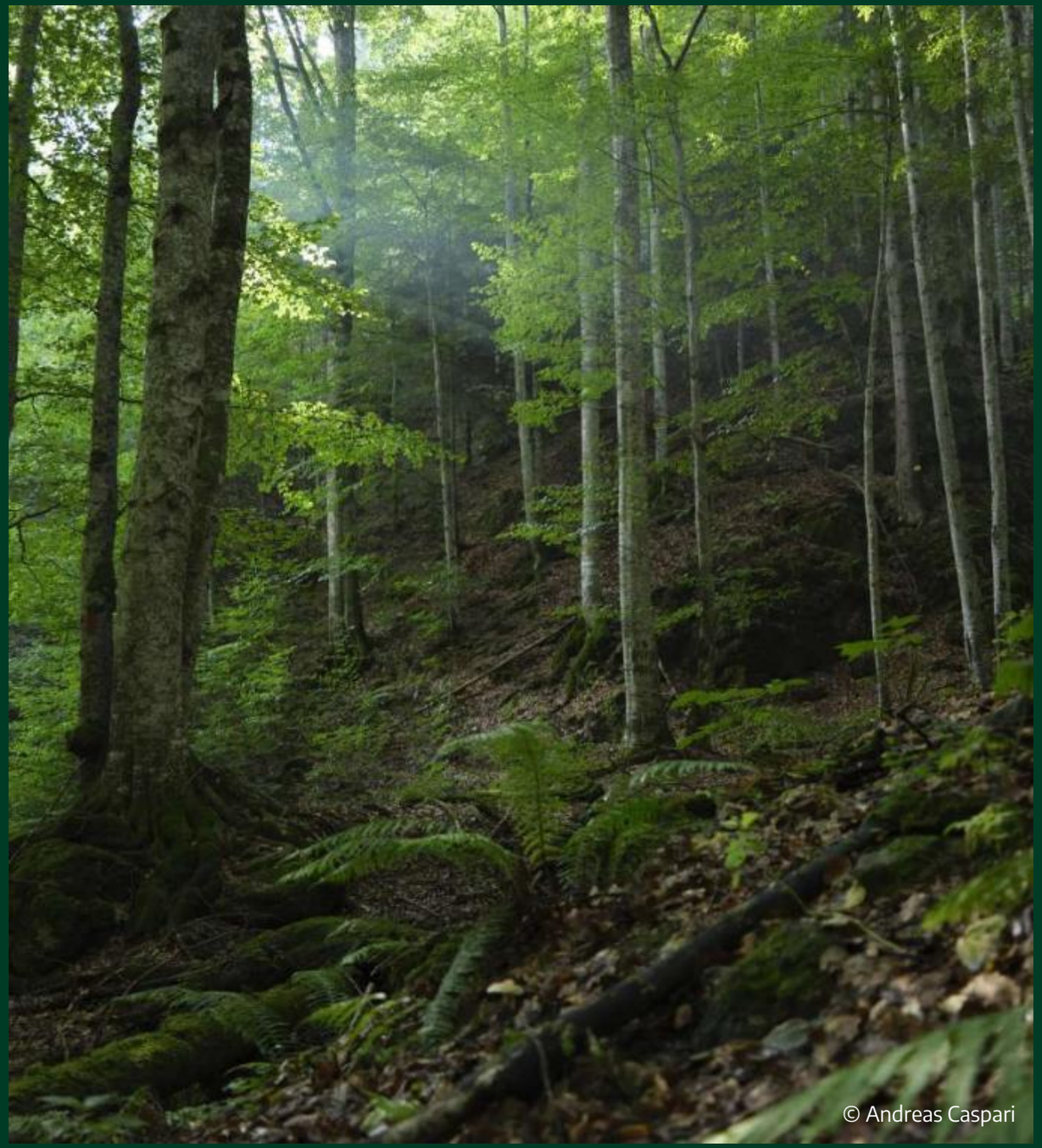
1. Forest conservation and management
2. Habitat restoration
3. Wildlife reintroductions
4. Human-wildlife conflict reduction
5. Research and Impact Monitoring
6. Communication
7. Community Relations
8. Conservation Enterprise Programme



1

Forest Conservation and Management

©Sandra Bartocha



In July, we purchased a further 120 hectares of forest to place under full protection.

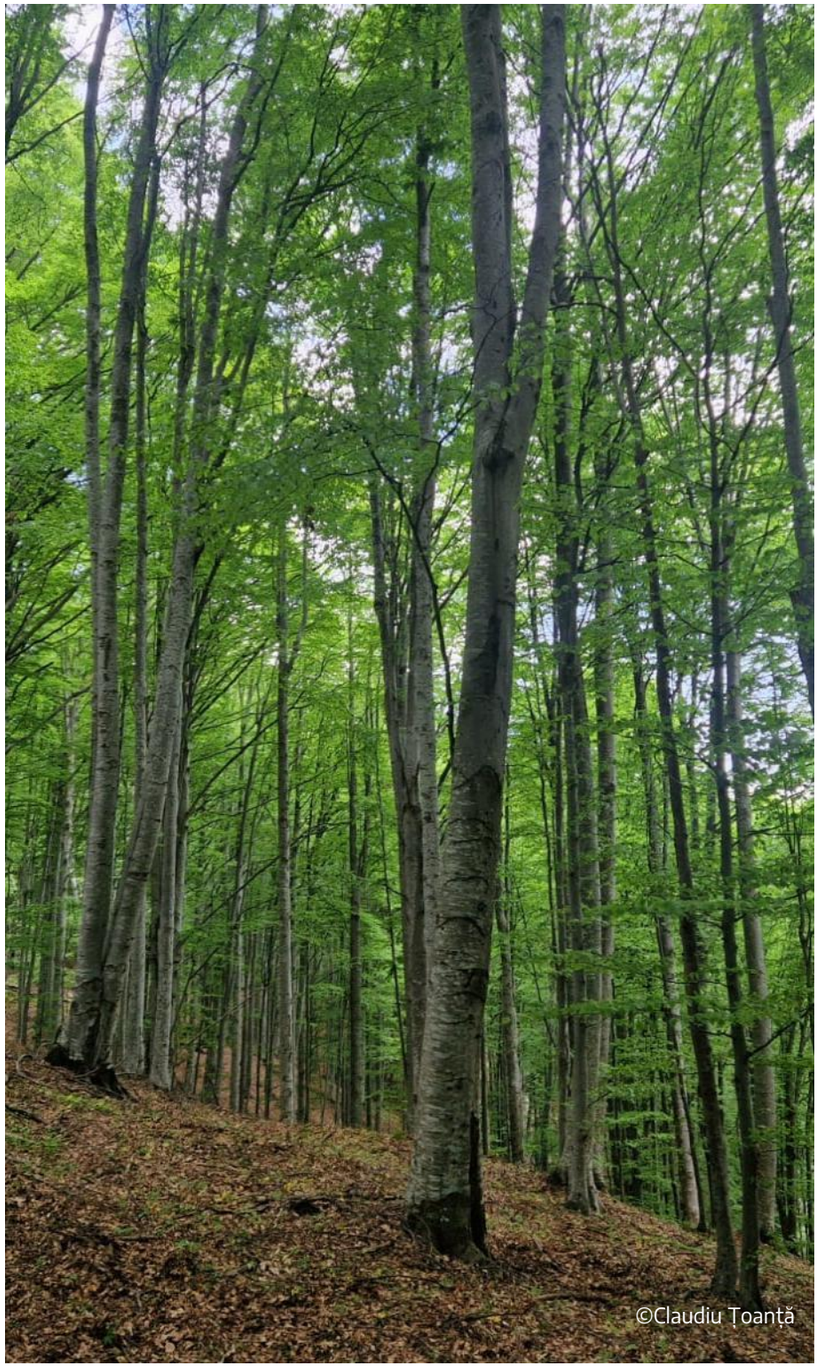
As we look at the summer we are living through, it is becoming increasingly clear that healthy and protected forests are one of our best safeguards in a changing climate to secure a steady release of water and to cool the surroundings.

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- Forests don’t take a summer holiday. Luckily, compared to the rest of Western and Central Europe, we did not have unusual heatwaves.
- During periods of summer temperatures and drought, our colleagues step up forest monitoring 24/7.
- We focus on preventing and detecting wildfires as early as possible. We also keep a close watch for any new bark beetle outbreaks in our forests, so we can act early and limit their spread.







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- We started to monitor marmots in the alpine areas of the headwaters of Dâmbovița River.
- On the remains of an old mountain shelter, we built an observation point. From here, with the help of monitoring cameras, we can quietly follow their lives and learn more about the health of the alpine grasslands they call home.

- Funded by Babelle Foundation, the project will also allow us to livestream footage in the future, giving visitors and everyone who loves the Făgăraș Mountains a glimpse into the marmots' daily lives. We will share the livestream link as soon as it becomes available.


© Nicolae Florin


© Ionuț Cioacă


© Dan Dinu


© Ionuț Cioacă

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia



2

Habitat restoration

©Liviu Ungureanu

The saplings we planted last season still have a few challenges to overcome before they can grow strong.

In June, our colleague Ionuț returned to check on them and found that they have grown new shoots and the young trees continue to grow.









© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

Over the past few years, we have been restoring alder galleries along the river valleys where we work in the Făgăraș Mountains.

By planting alders along watercourses, we restore riverside vegetation, help stabilise riverbanks and reduce the risk of flooding.

The first alders trees we planted 10 years ago have now reached heights of between 5 and 10 metres.



© Foundation Conservation Carpathia


© Claudiu Toanță


Annual fleabane, *Erigeron annuus*




Japanese knotweed, *Reynoutria japonica*

In June, our colleagues continued removing invasive alien plants from several valleys in the southern Făgăraș Mountains, including the Dâmbovița Valley, Râul Târgului and the Lerești area.

Annual fleabane, Japanese knotweed and cutleaf coneflower may have harmless-sounding names and attractive appearances, but they can displace native species and cause serious ecological damage.

In the areas where we return year after year, their numbers are steadily declining, giving native plants the chance to recover and thrive.

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

#UpClose

Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*)



Native to East Asia, it was introduced to Europe as an ornamental plant. Today, it is considered one of the world's most harmful invasive plant species.



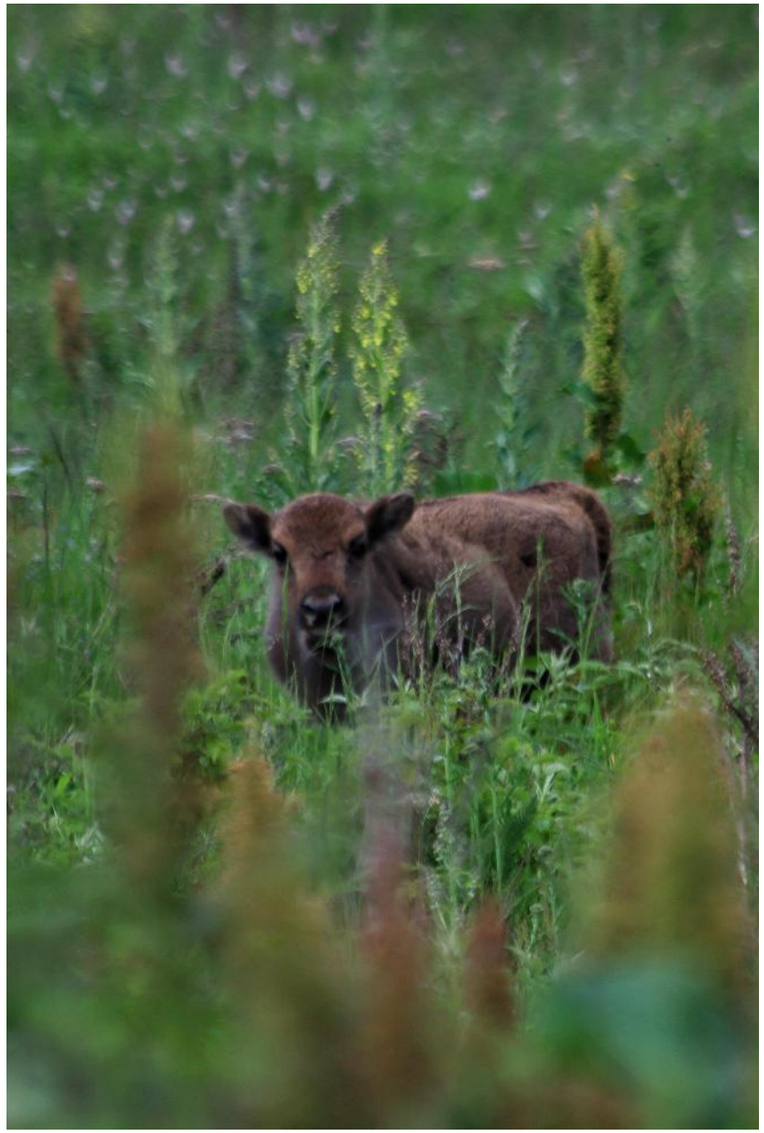
It forms dense thickets that smother and displace native plants. It can also damage railway embankments, building foundations, roads and flood defences.

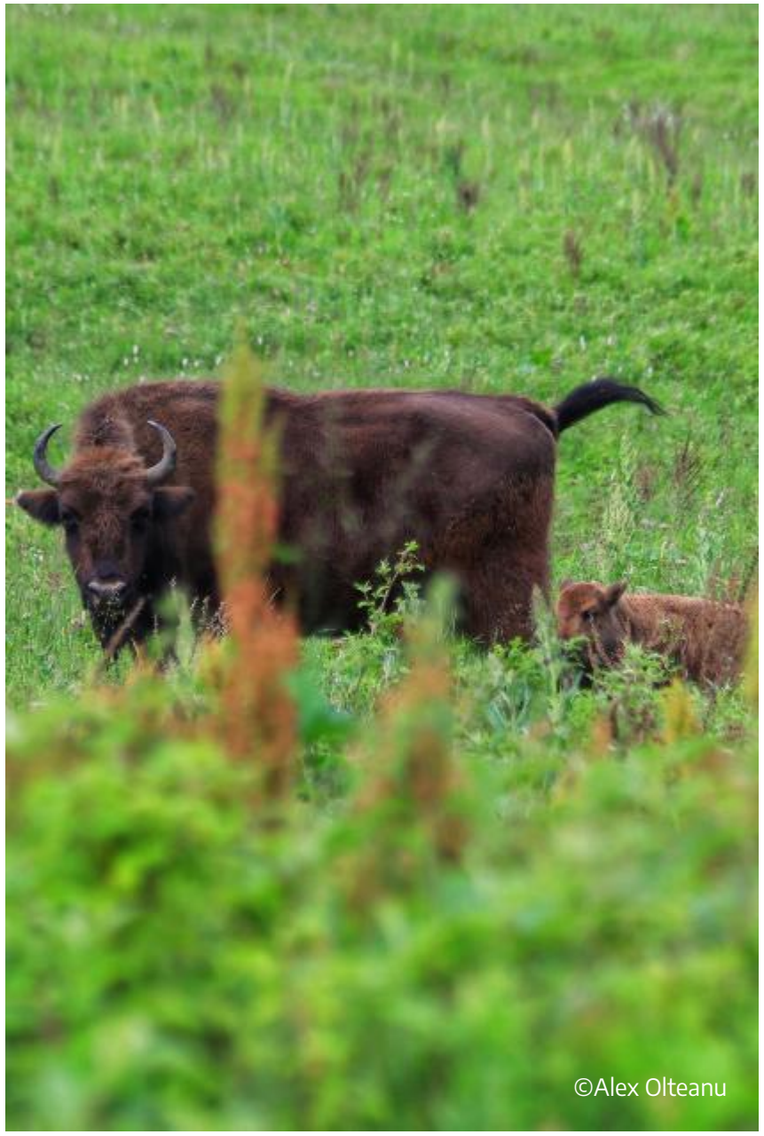


Its roots can reach depths of up to 3 metres and spread as far as 30 metres. A rhizome fragment just 1 cm long is enough to grow into a new plant.

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia


3
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FOR NATURE
Wildlife
Reintroductions
©Alex Popa





Summer holidays, bison style in the Făgăraș Mountains: grass, forest and plenty of space to roam.

7

bison calves were born in the wild in the Făgăraș Mountains this year.

They are doing well and growing up undisturbed.

We keep an eye on them from a distance while preparing to welcome new bison from Sweden and Germany this autumn.

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

10

beaver families now live in the southern Făgăraș Mountains.

This summer, **reproduction** has also been confirmed at **two locations**.

By building dams, beavers slow down the flow of water and create wetlands that retain water for longer. During dry periods, this helps maintain water reserves and soil moisture, while during rainy periods their dams can help reduce the impact of floods.



© Foundation Conservation Carpathia



The Griffon Vultures are doing well in their acclimatisation aviary.

Our team monitors their health and behaviour at least once a week, cleans the aviary weekly and provides food and fresh water twice a week.

More than 300 people visited the vultures at the acclimatisation site between April and the end of July.

Guided visits continue on Saturdays, in small groups and with prior booking. The vultures can also be watched live online.

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

- In July, our vulture monitoring team took part in a training session on fitting GPS transmitters to Griffon Vultures, a procedure that requires precision, patience and plenty of preparation before it can be put into practice.

- The training was led by Hristo Peshev from Wild Flora and Fauna, a partner of the Vulture Conservation Foundation, together with Dr Borka Levente from Milvus Group and Vets4Wild.









© Foundation Conservation Carpathia



5

Human-Wildlife Conflict Reduction

© Sebastian Mastahac









Compensation

In June, three sheep and six lambs were provided to villagers in Bughea, Valea Mare Pravăț and Stoenești, replacing livestock lost to wolf and bear attacks.

Our private in-kind compensation programme allows us to respond quickly, with our teams making sure people receive replacement livestock as soon as possible and are not left to bear the loss themselves.

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Interventions

In June and July, our wildlife intervention teams:

- responded to 29 emergency calls from local residents;
- daily monitored and patrolled high-risk areas;
- assisted with assessing damage caused by wildlife;
- extracted 4 bears following intervention procedures;
- relocated 1 bear.

64 human–wildlife interventions, including conflict response, wildlife presence alerts and preventive actions

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

Prevention

12

electric fences **installed and maintained** around sheepfolds and other vulnerable areas

7618 kg

of animal waste collected and sent for incineration, reducing potential food sources that attract bears close to settlements





© Foundation Conservation Carpathia





© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

#OurFieldTeam

Nicolae Lupuleț, or Nicușor, as we call him, is from Rucăr and has been roaming these forests since he was a child.

He has been part of one of our wildlife intervention teams since 2019. He has installed electric fences, responded when wild animals came too close to villages, and is out in the field whenever living alongside wildlife becomes difficult.

After years of fieldwork, Nicușor knows that prevention works: electric fences used properly, responsible management of animal waste, and removing food sources that draw bears closer to people.

“What I like about Carpathia is that we protect nature and wildlife, but we also look after people, villages and local traditions.”
Nicolae Lupuleț, gamekeeper



6

Research and Impact Monitoring

© Alex Popa



Lynx Monitoring Study

We are preparing for the next stage of our lynx monitoring study.

We have installed monitoring cameras in the study areas to identify the routes used by lynx and determine the best locations for the monitoring that will begin this autumn.

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

Bear Diet Study

From 1 April to mid-July, we collected another 87 samples for our bear diet study, and the work continues.

Studying their diet helps us better understand what bears eat and the circumstances that lead them to search for food near human settlements.



© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

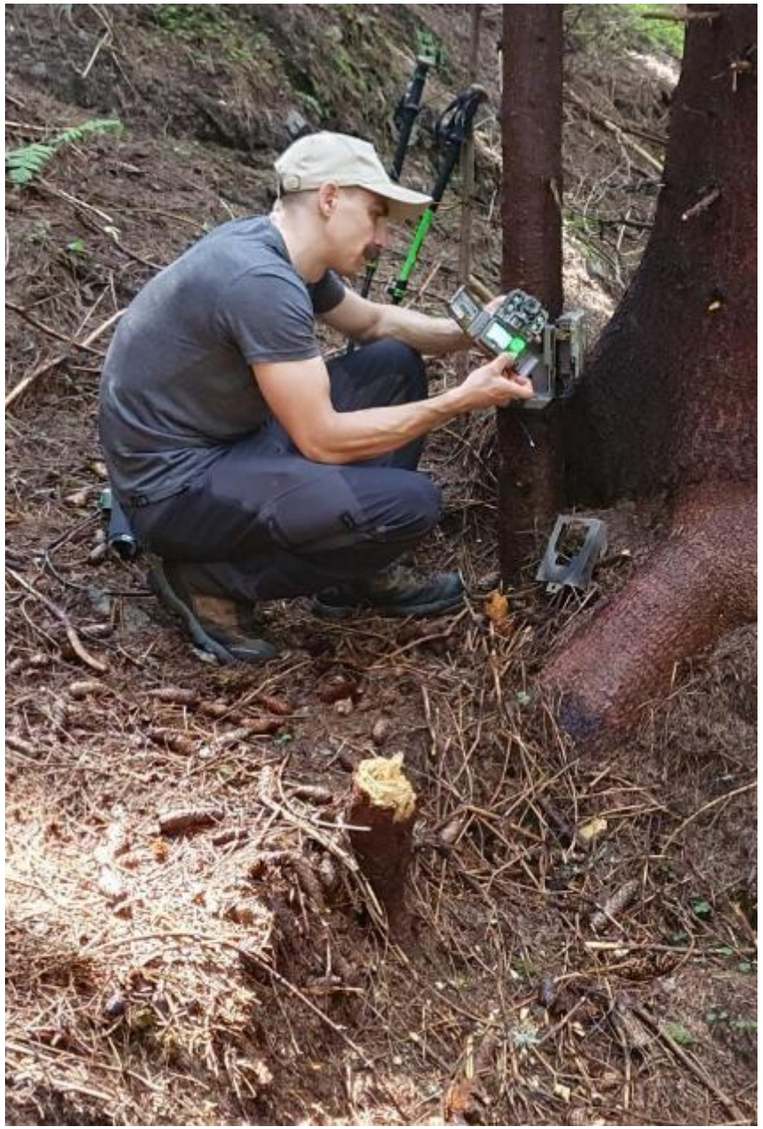
Ungulates monitoring

Around 2 million wildlife images have now been collected as part of our ungulates monitoring study.

We are testing DeepFaune, an AI-based tool that helps identify the animals captured by our monitoring cameras and classify the images by species. The next step is to validate the results, before our team moves on to data analysis.







© Foundation Conservation Carpathia



Communication

© Fisheye.ro

Făgăraș Fest, 7th edition

From 10th to 12th July, we made the Moașa Valley in Sebeșu de Sus our home for three days.

Făgăraș Fest welcomed over 7,000 visits across the three festival days.

The river offered a welcome place to cool off, the trails came alive, and the meadow filled with people eager to discover the Făgăraș Mountains.

Together with Racovița Municipality, we organised the 7th edition of Făgăraș Fest.

Thank you to everyone who joined us!



© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

Făgăraș Fest in numbers



3,550
Unique participants



51
Guided tours



1,200
Guided tour participants



26
Artisans and local producers



367,185
Economic impact on the local community



126
People in the organising team (including volunteers)

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

The festival's contribution to Racovița commune

20K Euro direct impact, excluding participant spending

7,060 Euro

Accommodation booked by the organisers in Racovița commune

5,718 Euro

Revenue generated by a local producer participating in the festival

3,696 Euro

Donation to the local municipality

3,685 Euro

Fees for day workers, a local teacher, and a local MC & DJ

43 tents

At the village campsite and with local hosts

100 Euro

Purchases at the local store and other expenses

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia



Economic Impact of Făgăraș Fest 2026

€ 367,185
spent in the local community by participants*

+

€ 130,000
budgeted for event expenses (excluding organisers' salaries)

*Average spend per person: € 117, according to the feedback survey

We launched a national campaign promoting Romania's National Parks

The campaign explains, in a simple and accessible way, what a national park is, why these places are so valuable, and why we need to protect them for generations to come. An invitation to discover them and visit them responsibly.

Discover Romania's 13 national parks at www.parcurinationale.ro/en/

The campaign was developed in partnership with the Ministry of Environment, Waters and Forests, with the support of the Romanian Ranger Association.



© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

In June, we joined LYNX Festival, Romania’s only nature film festival, now in its fourth edition, which we are delighted to support as partners and friends.

More than 4,000 people attended film screenings, coming together around nature, photography, conversations and activities for children.









© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

8

Community Relations



©

Inspiration for future champions from the Făgăraș Mountains

Our community outreach team took 13 children from our table tennis programme to the European U21 Championships in Cluj-Napoca.

There, they watched some of Europe's best young athletes compete and had the chance to experience top-level table tennis up close.

We would like to thank the Romanian Table Tennis Federation and the International Table Tennis Federation for making this experience possible.









© Foundation Conservation Carpathia



At the Sustainability & CSR Excellence Awards, organised by Piața Magazine, we received two awards:

- The RetuRO Award, in the Sustainability Stand Up category, for our Junior Ranger programme.
- The Piața Magazine Award for our Făgăraș Mountains Conservation Project.

Our Corporate Partnership Director, Ana Maria Atonoaie, proudly accepted both awards on behalf of the Foundation and our Junior Rangers.

Thank you!

© Fundation Conservation Carpathia

Support for entrepreneurs in the Făgăraș Mountains

Together with AFIN (Social Finance Association), we launched a pilot programme for entrepreneurs in communities around the Făgăraș Mountains.

AFIN provides the loans, while Foundation Conservation Carpathia promotes the programme and subsidises part of the interest, making financing more accessible to local entrepreneurs.

The programme supports green businesses with a positive social and environmental impact.



© Foundation Conservation Carpathia


9
PENTRU NATURĂ ȘI OAMENI
Conservation Enterprise Programme
© Alex Popa

Travel Carpathia

In June, 140 guests discovered the Făgăraș Mountains with Travel Carpathia.

Among them were students from Bridgend College and the College of West Anglia, visiting from the UK.

For some of them, we planned a longer encounter with the mountains: an Extended Wildlife Tour, a few days immersed in the rhythms of the wild, following mountain trails, encountering wildlife and hearing the stories of the people working to protect these places.









© Foundation Conservation Carpathia









In July, the Făgăraș Mountains once again welcomed guests curious to see for themselves what wilderness looks like here.

We welcomed 100 guests to Poiana Tămaș wilderness camp, including 15 students from Greenhead College in Huddersfield, UK.

Another 107 guests made their way to the wildlife hides.

Up there, the mountains ask for a little patience: you keep quiet, watch and wait to see who appears.

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia









At the foothills of the Făgăraș Mountains, Equus Silvania is a place to slow down, get on a horse and discover the landscape at a different pace.

In June and July, 99 guests stayed here.

Equus Silvania offers much more than horse riding. Guests can explore the mountains on foot, watch wildlife from our hides, and enjoy local food and the quiet rural landscape.

© Fundația Conservation Carpathia

12 pairs of hiking boots through the Făgăraș Mountains

In July, Monika Lohmann travelled from Germany with her family and friends: 12 people looking for a holiday filled with hiking, wilderness and adventure.

Their guide was Alex Păun, who welcomed them with a “Let’s go wild!” They thought he was joking. He wasn’t.

Over six days, they explored Comisu hide, Valea Vladului, Poiana Tămaș wilderness camp and Equus Silvania.

They picked blueberries, drank fresh spring water, crossed a stream over a beaver dam, and spotted bears, bison and deer.



© Foundation Conservation Carpathia













© Foundation Conservation Carpathia

Back home, Monika wrote to us:

“*We have travelled to many places around the world, but the Făgăraș Mountains are truly special and worth protecting. We hope future generations will also have the chance to discover them and fall in love with them.*”

Thank you for visiting, for the photos, and for letting us share your story!

Photo credit: the Lohmann family





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Căsuța Letiției is the newest Local Gastronomic Point supported through our Roadele Munților programme

Căsuța Letiției has joined our network of Local Gastronomic Points and will soon be added to our map of gastronomic experiences in the southern Făgăraș Mountains.


© Iulia Naum

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia



© Victoria Donos



If your summer travels take you to the southern Făgăraș Mountains, make sure to stop by our first visitor centres, Casa Zimbrului (Bison House) and Casa Castorului (Beaver House).

Alongside the stories of these two architects of nature, you'll also find zacuscă, jams, honey and other treats made by small producers from communities around the mountains.

And if your travels don't bring you our way this summer, you can also find these products on Roadele Munților Făgăraș.

© Foundation Conservation Carpathia



We're partners of Climate Change Summit 2026

From 13th to 17th October, Climate Change Summit returns to Bucharest for its fifth edition, with an important question: how do we build the infrastructure we need for the future?

Energy, food, technology, finance and governance, as well as nature as essential infrastructure will be at the heart of this year's conversations.

Foundation Conservation Carpathia is an organisational partner of Climate Change Summit.

Find out more about the programme and register on the Climate Change Summit website: https://climatechange-summit.org/

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Results

4,913,229

trees planted

79,000 ha

protected for wildlife, with no sport or trophy hunting

353 people from local communities

earn income from CARPATHIA project activities

28,690 ha

of forest under permanent protection and safeguarded for future generations

10,572

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

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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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