



The Thin Green Line

From the President

Firstly, I would like to give a very warm welcome to Werhner Atoche Montoya (pictured above) as the newly appointed South America Regional Representative for the IRF. As a Peruvian Ranger, he is already very active and will play an instrumental role in working with South American Associations and with the IRF Executive in furthering the cause of Rangers within South America and around the world. Welcome Werhner.

One important thing to share with our Ranger colleagues is that through the collaborative arrangement between IRF and The Thin Green Line Foundation (TTGLF) and the hard work of IRF Executive Officer, Louise Reynolds, over the past 12 months, The Fallen Ranger Fund has supported the families of 53 Rangers (52 men, 1 woman) killed in the line of duty. This support has helped them to avoid falling into a generational cycle of poverty by: keeping children in school or further education; meeting immediate basic needs (food and housing); and setting up livelihoods/small businesses as an ongoing source of income. Total direct beneficiaries include 51 women, and 221 dependents (including 161 children in some form of education). 61% of the funding was spent in Africa, 33% in Asia and 6% in Latin America. Thank you to our Ranger family and those who give funds and stand with the Rangers and their families in these times. We send our thoughts and condolences to all the families and colleagues of Rangers recently lost. We will do everything we can to get meaningful support to you.

Also, a big welcome to our new Ranger Associations and IRF members:

- Asociación Nacional de Guardaparques Siglo XXI (Costa Rica) – Regular Member
- Asociación De Guardaparques Del Ecuador (Ecuador) – Regular Member
- Asociación Para La Resiliencia Del Bosque Frente a La Interoceánica – Arbio (Peru) – Associate member
- The European Ranger Federation – Associate Member
- Game Rangers Association of Africa – Nigeria – Regular Member
- Keith Swenson (Mongolia) – Associate Member
- Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association (KWCA) – Associate Member
- Pablo Waisman (representing Union Federal de Guardaparques) – Provisional Member

The IRF is getting stronger and stronger as more new Ranger Associations form and join the IRF world Ranger family. We also have several associations up for voting to join the IRF family and some 41 in waiting – from Africa to Timor-Leste. What an achievement by all!

The IRF is busy with many projects to forward the interests of Rangers around the world, including redrafting the IRF's Constitution and developing a strategic plan. Importantly, too, we can announce the tentative dates for the next World Ranger Congress in Nepal, 11-17 November 2019. As Rohit and the team work on the on-ground logistics, we will keep you up to date with registration and support applications for those who need it.

Stay safe and stay strong as one united Ranger family.



Regional News

Africa

Chris Galliers: A new African Ranger Insurance has been launched. The Game Rangers Association of Africa (GRAA) recognises that for Rangers to confidently perform their duties in the field, they need adequate insurance protection, knowing that if they are wounded in the line of duty that they will receive satisfactory support. Apart from their own welfare, Rangers also seek to have their families supported, should an unfortunate event occur. The GRAA also understands that the cost, methods of payment and the time it takes to finalise these are significant factors affecting Africa's Rangers. With this in mind, the GRAA has partnered with SATIB Insurance Brokers to create a unique product for Rangers across Africa. It offers 24/7 cover, even when Rangers are off duty and can serve as a primary or additional source of cover to Rangers. The GRAA has received funding to provide this insurance to 800 Rangers in Africa for the next three years. This may lay a foundation for the development of a similar product for other IRF regions, especially Asia.

A call out for proposals for hosting the first African Ranger Congress, and for volunteers to be on a coordinating committee, has been sent out. Gabon have offered to be a host so they will provide a proposal; other interested countries are Kenya and South Africa. A draft Congress Plan will be shared with African Rangers for comment; the aim is to host it in September 2018.

Asia

Rohit Singh: The IRF World Ranger Congress brings Rangers together from all over the world and provides them the opportunity to learn new skills, share knowledge and create partnerships. The congress is also a forum for the creation of recommendations on issues that affect Rangers. Preparations are well underway, with the tentative dates being 11-17 November 2019 and the venue being decided shortly. I recently met with Wildlife Conservation Association of Nepal (Ranger Association of Nepal) to discuss the logistics of the congress. There are four themes that will be the framework for the congress, with all activities relating to these themes.

I am supporting both Indonesia and Pakistan with the creation of their Ranger Associations and will be working hard to bring as many RFA members into the IRF as possible prior to the World Ranger Congress.

Central America

Leonel Delgado: Communication through WhatsApp with Central America Ranger Associations and Rangers and other Rangers in Latin America is going well.

Preparations and planning for the II Latin American Ranger Congress, which will be held in Panama between 15-19 October 2018, are moving ahead.

With support from TTGLF and SIWA Foundation, the first tactical technical course for Rangers was offered to 20 Costa Rican Park Rangers. The course was held in September 2017 and included lectures, on the field training and much more. Each Ranger was also supplied with equipment that is essential for their roles.

Lastly, I assisted the Costa Rica Ranger Association with their IRF membership application, they have now been approved as a regular member.

Europe

Frank Grütz: I have been working with the rest of the European Executive Committee in preparing the registration of the European Ranger Federation (ERF) under the German Association's Law, getting approval for a tax-privileged status in Germany and on a draft proposal for the Standing

Rules. The ERF is now a registered NGO under the German Association's Law and an Associate IRF Member.

I have been supporting AIGAP (the Italian Ranger Association) in re-activating their Ranger Association and as well as helping the Ranger Association of Ireland (RAI) to re-establish.

I participated in the Countryside Management Association Congress 2017 in North Wales by presenting about the achievements of the ERF and IRF in 2017. During the congress I had a meeting with Lorcan Scott (RAI), Gordon Miller, Ian Brooker and Roger Cole (all CMA) to discuss the re-activation of RAI and how we can support them in becoming an active IRF member again.

Initial preparations for the 5th European Ranger Congress in the Bavarian Forest, Germany are underway.

I have also been involved in strengthening the relationship with our Twinning partner, the Israel Nature and Heritage Foundation, in creating a plan for cooperation.

North America

Bill Westerfield: The Park Law Enforcement Association (PLEA) annual conference will be held 27th February - 1st March 2018 in San Marcos, Texas. The PLEA conference theme is Emergency Action Planning, due the variety of natural events we have encountered in the United States over the last year. We have had floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, and wildfires. While each of these events are unique they all share some common elements which we can use for planning for the future.

The Association of National Park Rangers 40th Rendezvous, which I attended, had twenty breakout sessions, covering many subjects and ideas for National Park Service (NPS) employees and those interested in the Rangers and mission of the NPS.

Additionally, I have reached out to the North American member associations with limited results. I will continue to attempt to contact all of them.

Oceania

Peter Cleary: Since our Council of Australian Rangers Association (CARA) meeting, the Tasmanian Rangers Association (TRA) has been successful in its application to host the next meeting which will most likely be in September 2018, in the Central Highlands.

The first twinning agreement within Oceania has been signed between the Solomon Island Rangers Association (SIRA) and the Queensland Rangers Association (QRA). This formalises what has already been occurring between the two associations, including Ranger exchanges, training and equipment support. Through the network with the Global Leadership Foundation, the Association of Rangers and Conservationists Victoria (ARC Vic) was able to supply approximately 22 kilograms of second-hand uniforms to three Rangers groups within the islands. TTGLF assisted with the transportation; The Nature Conservancy (TNC) have also been party to this ongoing relationship, with Jolene McLellan and Brent Masters making this collaboration a reality.

In 2018, we hope to engage and incorporate our Australian Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) Ranger groups within already existing state associations where possible and form more IRF twinning agreements. ARC Vic is working with the newly formed Fijian Rangers Association (FRA) to mimic our first successful twinning relationship and plans are afoot to engage New Caledonia.

The creation of the Ranger Association in Timor-Leste is well under way, and the Rangers of Aotearoa New Zealand (ROANZ) are currently working hard to form their Ranger Association.

South America

Marcelo Segalerba: There were several natural events in the region in the last three months of 2017, preoccupying South American Ranger families. Earthquakes affected Chile, Argentina, Ecuador, Colombia and Peru. However, these events showed solidarity between Rangers, with messages of good will being exchanged.

Communication via WhatsApp continues to be an effective way to organise events, promote interaction and encourage dialogue between South American Rangers.

Many National Ranger Days were celebrated, countries included Bolivia, Peru and Argentina and in October 2017, Paraguayan Rangers held an event honouring fallen Rangers with a tree planting ceremony.

Some advancements were made in several countries furthering the cause of Rangers, including advancements in Brazil regarding Federal Law that recognises and regulates the Ranger Profession, another Ranger course was completed by the Amapá Ranger Association (AGPA) in Brazil and a third Ranger certification for evaluation by the Ministry of Education in Bolivia, promoting the Ranger profession, was officially recognised.

Finally, a Global Protected Area Staff Survey was initiated in November 2017 to gather data from employers of Latin American Rangers.



New IRF South America Regional Representative

Werhner Atoche Montoya has 14 years' experience in the protection of natural resources, biodiversity and environmental sustainability of protected areas. He's worked in three protected areas that make up the Northwest Biosphere Reserve: Cerros de Amotape National Park, Tumbes National Reserve and Angolo Game Reserve, as well as in an ecologically important wetland (Ramsar Site) in Los Manglares de Tumbes National Sanctuary. His duties have included control and surveillance, flora and fauna monitoring, tourism, interpretation of nature, combat and mitigation of forest fires, environmental education, GPS management, conflict resolution, rescue and first-aid. He has actively participated in the management processes of these areas with a focus on involving the local communities that he identifies as key to sustainability and the achievement of the conservation objectives of the protected areas. He has also been heavily involved in a joint project between Peru and Ecuador, the "Promotion and Sustainable Binational Development of the Peruvian-Ecuadorian Border Mangroves".

In 2013, he was chosen by the head of Cerros de Amotape National Park and his colleagues as the best employee of the park, he was awarded a prize and diploma by the National Service of Natural Protected Areas by the State (SERNANP). Please join us in welcoming Werhner to the team. To find out more about the International Executive Team members visit: <http://www.internationalrangers.org/our-team/>.

Honouring our Brave Colleagues

We honour the following Fallen Rangers who have recently died in the line of duty; we honour the sacrifice that you made to protect the world's natural heritage:
Ningaraju, two un-named Malian Rangers, Girish Chandra Biswal, Uttam Sarkar André de Villiers,

Lankeswar Lakhar, Kanis J. Muyente, Awunge Robert Ngoe, Kariyan, Safeer Hussain (Shah), Theun Soknay, Kior Kulwa, Usman A. Yahaya, two anti-poaching guides in Cameroon, Ngwenya and six un-named Rangers from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

IRF Initiatives



Pictured here are members of the Portuguese and Spanish Ranger Associations.

The IRF Twinning Program

The Associação Portuguesa de Guardas e Vigilantes da Natureza (Portuguese Ranger Association) has paired up with both the Croatian Association of Supervisors and Guardians of Nature (Croatia Ranger Association) and the Asociación Española de Agentes Forestales y Medioambientales (Spanish Ranger Association) through the IRF Twinning Program.

There has been a close friendship between the associations of Spain and Portugal for many years, which has led to a very close collaboration between the two associations.

A friendship began between the Croatian and Portuguese Rangers when the President of the Croatia Ranger Association attended the XX National Meeting of the Portuguese Rangers in Portugal in February 2017.

The twinning programs are intended to improve information exchanges between the associations, to foster the exchange of experience and knowledge, to implement a strong collaboration for future training initiatives and to work towards solutions to the problems affecting the profession in the region.

The focus of the twinning programs for 2018 is training, the associations will conduct fieldwork together in the various areas of Rangers roles. Another focus will be the security challenges that the Spanish Rangers are facing, the Portuguese Rangers will work closely with their colleagues to see how they can support them.

Are you an IRF Member who needs/can offer support to another member? If so, visit this link to get involved:

<http://www.internationalrangers.org/twinning-program/>.

Member Update

Another eight new members have been welcomed into the world Ranger family, namely:

- Asociación Nacional de Guardaparques Siglo XXI (Costa Rica) – Regular
- Asociación De Guardaparques Del Ecuador (Ecuador) – Regular
- Asociación Para La Resiliencia Del Bosque Frente a La Interoceánica – Arbio (Peru) – Associate
- The European Ranger Federation – Associate
- Game Rangers Association of Africa – Nigeria – Regular
- Keith Swenson (Mongolia) – Associate
- Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association (KWCA) – Associate
- Pablo Waisman (representing Union Federal de Guardaparques) – Provisional

We also have around 41 potential new members that we're working closely with, assisting them in creating new Ranger associations and/or with their membership applications.

TTGLF provides a start-up grant of USD \$500 to newly formed Ranger Associations to assist with the legal formation and administration costs, they have recently approved grants for three newly created Ranger Associations in the Congo, Kenya and Timor-Leste.

IRF Funding

You may know that as the IRF's official charity arm, TTGLF not only provides funding to many IRF member projects in the field and employs the IRF Executive Officer, but it also gives assistance to the International Executive Committee (IEC) members to ensure that they have the capacity to represent the IRF within their region and to ensure that they can undertake key IRF functions.

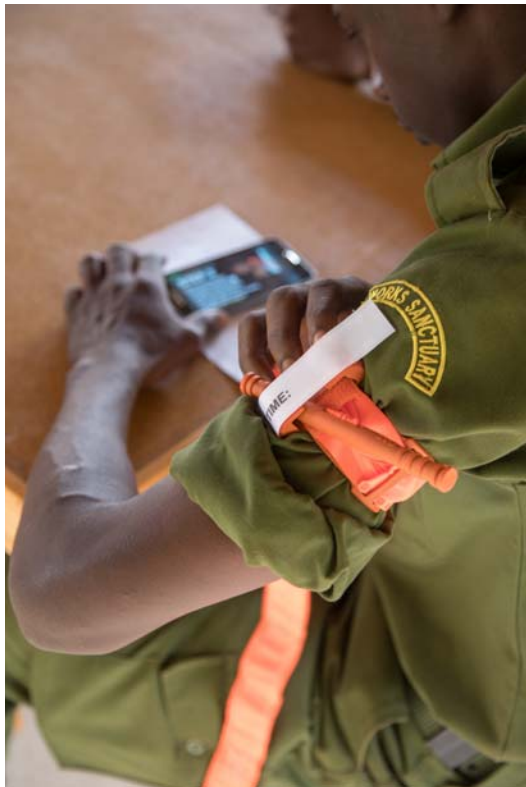
Three IEC members have recently been supported: Florin Halastauan as IRF Vice President to attend the 10th Anniversary of the Swiss Rangers, Frank Grütz to attend the annual Countryside Management Association Conference in the UK and Leonel Delgado for his travel to Panama relating to the next Latin America Congress.

In the News



E-learning for Rangers under development

The Ranger Campus Foundation spent the last year developing iOS and Android versions of their Ranger Academy e-learning platform, with help from TTGLF who partly funded the project. With the specific requirements of Rangers in mind, the platform has the capability to work offline and several Rangers can share one device. Rangers worldwide are currently testing the beta version and are providing feedback for the final product. The content being developed covers fundamental skills and knowledge and will be multilingual and in the form of instructional videos as much as possible.



Pictured above: A Wildlife Works Ranger applying a tourniquet following a test lesson on Ranger Academy in September 2017.



Indigenous Ranger Exchange

TTGLF are thrilled to have recently taken a group of Indigenous Rangers from Ranger groups from various parts of northern Australia to connect with their Maasai Community Ranger colleagues in Kenya, Africa. This world-first Ranger program is all about sharing knowledge, culture and spirit across continents, forming life-long bonds between custodians of the land in Australia and Africa. To help shine a light on the plight of Rangers and to provide some rock-star entertainment along the way, their good friend (and rock star) Dan Sultan took part in this special journey too. Later this year TTGLF will premiere a feature film on the Indigenous Ranger Exchange. Watch this space. Check out the story here: <https://youtu.be/jWjEcPDRQhg>.



Ranger Rendezvous attendees received thank you notes from friends and relatives of Barbara Curtis, a resident of Warrensburg, MO. Curtis is pictured in the foreground with ANPR Treasurer Tom Banks, who arranged for her to attend the Rendezvous and distribute the notes to the Rangers

ANPR celebrates 40th annual Ranger Rendezvous

The Association of National Park Rangers (ANPR) held its 40th annual Ranger Rendezvous conference in Estes Park, Colorado, in October 2017. True to the theme, "Resilience, purpose and the next chapter," many conference discussions centered on the ways that park leaders and staff can address the demands of increased visitation despite limited resources.

Highlights included panel discussions, breakout sessions and keynote presentations by National Parks Service (NPS) Intermountain Regional Director Sue Masica, National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) Director of Legislation and Policy Ani Kame'enui, Midwest Region Program Director for the Office of Indian Affairs Reed Robinson and Yellowstone Superintendent Dan Wenk. Masica encouraged attendees to focus on viable long-term planning and prioritisation in their individual parks: "We have to continue to do in the parks what we do day in and day out but narrow down what we can do to make positive change happen."

Kame'enui stressed the importance of building a base of support for the parks: "While the future of our National Park system may not be entirely clear, our mission to protect the parks unimpaired for this and future generations



TTGLF Funded Project

Here's an example of another successful TTGLF project:
 Location: Vietnam
 Partner organisation: Endangered Primate Rescue Center
 Amount funded: USD\$19,200

Funds provided by TTGLF helped to:

- Provide equipment for community Rangers
- Provide clothing for community Rangers
- Reinstate salary payments of Rangers

Funding was also supplied to allow Rangers to attend an official meeting between members of the Endangered Primate Rescue Center, the provincial Forest Protection Department and the Van Long Management board.

Thanks to the funding provided by TTGLF, the Endangered Primate Rescue Center were able to stop two incidents of logging in the region, three incidents of small eye net fishing, two incidents of electro fishing, confiscation of wildlife and the confiscation of an illegal firearm.

These victories in the field all contribute to the protection of the endangered primates in the area and ensure that their natural habitat is sustained into the future. The active presence of Rangers in the region also discourages individuals who are considering a poaching related activity.

Need funding? Visit this link to apply: <https://www.thingreenline.org.au/our-projects/front-line-projects/>.



Honouring a Fallen Ranger

Edilson Aparecido da Costa Silva, a former hunter, had turned his life around to become a "Guarda Ambiental" (Environmental Guard) in Serra da Capivara National Park, Brazil. He used his skills, experience and knowledge of the area, gained as a hunter, to help preserve the flora and fauna in the area. On 18th August 2017, he was tragically

is not."

The ANPR Rick Gale President's Award was presented by President Jan Lemons to ANPR leader Meg Weesner (IRF Treasurer) for her work on the World Ranger Congress and other leadership roles.

The 30th Stephen Tyng Mather Award for 2017 was presented to Frank Hays and Debra Hughson by Kame'enui on behalf of NPCA. Hughson is Chief of Resources for Mojave National Preserve. She was honored for her efforts for using science as a tool to protect the Great Basin. Hays most recently served as Associate Regional Director for natural and cultural resource stewardship and science for the NPS Northeast Region. He passed away unexpectedly in March 2017. Hays' wife, Norma Booth, accepted the award.



Timor-Leste's First Ranger Association

Jenny Macaffer, a long time TTGLF supporter, travelled to a remote part of Timor-Leste in 2014 along with the Friends of Lospalos group from the Mornington Peninsula, Victoria, Australia. The area she visited consists of the only national park in Timor-Leste, Nino Konis Santana National Park, which not only includes important flora and fauna but also some very sacred archaeological sites. Here she met the Rangers, and with the help of an interpreter, she was able to hear their story. The Rangers were originally set up with the help of the UN but since Timor-Leste became an independent nation they haven't received any support and are very isolated due to the location of the park.

The Rangers face many challenges, including issues with Indonesian poachers on the coast and around Jaco island, being victimised in their own villages for trying to preserve the forests and wildlife and having no resources. Following her trip, she decided that she wanted to help so in September 2017, she provided USD 181 of her own funds for the 14 Rangers. With these funds they purchased 14 head torches and 14 raincoats plus three books about the national park for training purposes and to assist with promoting the park.

However, she knew that she could do more, that's when she approached TTGLF and the IRF. Since then, TTGLF has provided a USD500 grant to the Rangers to help them start the very first Ranger association in Timor-Leste with the IRF providing guidance and sample documents to support with the formation process. Fredy Sampaio, from the Friends of Lospalos group, has been acting as an interpreter and is playing a vital role in assisting the Rangers form the association. They recently had their first general meeting which was a great success as many of them had not attended a formal meeting before. We look forward to welcoming them into the world Ranger family.

TTGLF Project Support Call Out

The Thin Green Line Foundation (TTGLF) will be soon accepting applications for the next round of

shot and killed while on patrol with three colleagues.

Edilson and his three colleagues were in one of the guard support bases in the region of the city of João Costa. There they noticed the presence of unidentified people in the park, so they set out to track them down. During the two-kilometre walk they came across eight traps set up illegally to catch wildlife. When they came face-to-face with the hunters they were shot at and had to run away to flee the scene. Tragically Edilson was shot and died later whilst in hospital.

According to the guards, this is not uncommon in the area, the hunters seek any kind of animal such as armadillos, swine hogs etc.

The late Edilson leaves behind a wife and five children, including five-year-old twins. We honour the sacrifice that Edilson and so many others have made in the line of duty to protect the world's wildlife and wild places.

If you have a friend, family member or colleague that has died or has been killed in the line of duty (who is not included in the IRF Honour Roll or has not been supported by the TTGLF Fallen Ranger Fund) please contact the IRF Executive Officer, Louise Reynolds on executiveofficer@internationalrangers.org.

TTGLF, through its Fallen Ranger Fund, provides funding to families of those that have died/ are killed in the line of duty. In the last year, the Fallen Ranger Fund has provided a total amount of USD 86,206.17 to families to assist with schooling, further education, meeting immediate basic needs like food and housing and setting up livelihoods/small businesses as an ongoing source of income. To find out more visit: <https://www.thingreenline.org.au/our-projects/widow-orphan-support/>.

Upcoming Events:

April 2018 – IRF/TTGLF Awards winners to be announced

31st July 2018 – World Ranger Day – hold your own event to raise funds for Rangers

September 2018 – Council of Australian Rangers Association (CARA) Meeting, Tasmania

September 2018 – African Ranger Congress

Spring 2018 – TTGLF Indigenous Ranger Exchange Film Premiers, around Australia.

15-19th October 2018 – Latin America Ranger Congress, Panama

November 2019 – IRF World Ranger Congress, Nepal

Ranger Support Projects. New forms and guidelines will be distributed and uploaded through IRF networks and the TTGLF website in early April. Watch this space for further information.



French Ranger Association Annual Meeting

In October 2017, members of the French Ranger Association (FRA) attended the National Natural Reserve (NNR) "Gorges de l'Ardèche" (Ardèche River Canyons) to participate in their annual event.

It started on Friday evening with the "Rangers dinner", where existing members had the chance to meet new ones and exchange stories and current news. On Saturday, the Rangers, led by Charles Bascle, a now retired Ranger, hiked in the NNR and visited the small village of Aiguèze. It was the opportunity to talk about different issues, especially about how to deal with visitors and tourists in Summer. In the afternoon, the group was welcomed by Charlotte Meunier, Deputy Director of the NNR and Vice President of French Natural Reserves. She introduced the National Natural Reserve "Gorges de l'Ardèche" (Ardèche River Canyons) and there was a discussion about how the relationship between French Natural Reserves and the French Ranger Association can be formalised. Then it was time to launch the Annual General Assembly which ended with the traditional "Potlatch".

On Sunday, the French Rangers went to the NNR Visitors house through the canyons road with sensational viewpoints of the canyons. After a quick visit of the NNR House, they had the chance to get a guided tour of the "La Madeleine Cave".

Since formation (2010), the FRA has a growing presence in the Ranger professional network and the number of participants keeps rising reaching 27 members in 2017.

Do you have any suggestions?

Thank you to everyone who assisted with the creation of the newsletter, image credit Seijbel

Photography as part of the Ranger Academy Program. If you have any events, stories of interest or feedback please contact the IRF Executive Officer, Louise Reynolds via email:

executiveofficer@internationalrangers.org.

If you need to contact a member of the IRF Executive team visit the website

(<http://www.internationalrangers.org/contact>)