



Junior Ranger
Parks Dinarides



PROGRAM

**“JUNIOR RANGERS IN PROTECTED AREAS
OF THE DINARIC ARC”**



Junior Ranger

Parks Dinarides

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Parks Dinarides – Network of protected areas of Dinarides

The Parks Dinarides network consists of 105 protected areas from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia, Kosovo*, North Macedonia, Slovenia, and Serbia. The Parks Dinarides members also include natural persons, nature lovers and friends of the network since its foundation. The official association “Parks Dinarides – network of protected areas of Dinarides” was founded in Podgorica at the end of 2014 and the headquarters of the network is in Podgorica.

The goal of the organization is to express and realize the common interest of improving nature protection and sustainable development through its activities and to enhance cooperation between the protected natural resources of the Dinaric Arc countries. This cooperation is primarily related to the improvement of the natural and cultural values of the protected natural resources of the Dinarides, their promotion and support for the requirements of protected natural resources, and the application of good practices of sustainable development and management.

Thematic areas on which the organization's activities are based include:

- Biodiversity protection and development of protected areas;

- Sustainable regional development and quality of life;
- Cooperation with international organizations and institutions;
- Raising environmental awareness for sustainable development;
- Branding of protected Dinaric areas.

Through the development and implementation of the **Junior Rangers in Protected Areas of the Dinaric Arc program** we wish to contribute to the raising of environmental awareness and encouraging young people gravitating towards protected areas to actively participate in conservation and activities carried out in protected areas.

The program is based on the practices and activities carried out in the European protected areas, at the initiative of the EUROPARC Federation.

Objectives of the Junior Ranger Program:

The Junior Ranger Program in European protected areas was launched at the initiative of the EUROPARC Federation about 20 years ago. It is designed to implement practical park ranger activity programs and is aimed at young people living within or close to the protected areas.

The objectives of the Junior Ranger Program are:

- To create a network of young people participating in nature conservation and acting as advocates for their protected area.

- To raise awareness of the natural, cultural, social and economic values of protected areas.
- To strengthen friendship and social responsibility among young people by involving them in achieving common nature conservation objectives.

In addition, the program supports broader European cooperation between partner protected areas, sharing information and experiences.

The overarching purpose of the program is to promote community support for protected areas, provide opportunities for local youth to be engaged in the activities of the parks in order to learn more about them. The primary target group is therefore young people who live in local communities near the parks.

YOUNG PEOPLE AS AMBASSADORS OF THEIR PROTECTED AREAS IN THE DINARIC ARC PARKS

The Junior Rangers in Protected Areas of the Dinaric Arc program is aimed at educating young people about the role, values and activities of the local protected area, its importance for leisure, local employment, economy and tourism. Working with young people is an investment in the future. Young people can be our future volunteers or professional security guards, experts, land owners, maybe even decision-makers (politicians), and maybe one of them will also be a

future sponsor. They are the ones who know, understand and support the ideas of nature and park protection.

Along with nature protection, preservation of cultural values, research and promotion of development in harmony with nature, education is the most important task of protected areas. The Junior Rangers in Protected Areas of the Dinaric Arc program is in a way a combination of all of the above, and the most important role in its implementation belongs to protected area employees. Working with young people also increases the knowledge, confidence, satisfaction and motivation for the rangers' work.

The Junior Rangers in Protected Areas of the Dinaric Arc program will be implemented in Lovćen National Park (Montenegro) and the focus of the program will be the inclusion of young people in the work process with rangers. Young people will gain real work experience in nature protection. The program provides a wide range of activities that include: field activities, flora and fauna research, communication with local residents and park visitors, visits to other protected areas. Feedback will be given to park management and employees, especially rangers.

The goal is for young people to better understand the concept of nature protection and protected areas, which implies increased support for the ideals of protected areas and the benefits they can bring to local communities and society. Young people will share the experience and knowledge gained through the Junior Rangers in Protected Areas of the Dinaric Arc program with their parents, school friends

and others in their local community, which implies further positive effects.

The program is intended to be fun, but it is actually a school of life that teaches us how to live with nature and preserve it as much as possible for future generations.

THE JUNIOR RANGERS IN PROTECTED AREAS OF THE DINARIC ARC PROGRAM¹

The main objectives of the program:

- To involve young people living in communities within or close to the park,
- To inform young people about the purpose of the national park and the importance of protected areas,
- To present the role of rangers and involve young people in their work,
- To involve parents, teachers, etc.,
- To build community support.

The Junior Rangers in Protected Areas of the Dinaric Arc program template includes the following criteria and recommendations:

- lasts from 5 to 8 days;
- develops different skills of the participants;
- 10-15 young people are included in the program;
- • gives responsibility to young people;
- young people must be of a similar age (13–16 years);
- includes parents and other groups;

- the program must be well structured;
- meets the needs of young people;
- clear thematic focus;
- delivered with enthusiasm;
- activities are mainly carried out in the field;
- clear responsibilities of the staff leading and implementing the program;
- in case of unfavourable weather conditions, backup, but adequate, indoor activities must be prepared;
- when preparing the program, it is necessary to consider upgrading the program (follow up);
- group ethics are supported.

Program development:

- develop a framework program – draft program
- clear thematic focus
- selection of topics
- selection of activities

The Junior Rangers in Protected Areas of the Dinaric Arc program with a pilot project in Lovćen NP, Montenegro, consists of the following thematic units:

- Actions in the protected area with rangers;
- Research activities in the park;
- Illegal activities in the park;
- Park ecosystem services;
- Education about other protected areas.

¹ The program is modeled on the EUROPARC Junior Ranger Program



Thematic unit I

Actions in the protected area with rangers

Actions in the protected area with rangers include a series of activities that are carried out in order to better understand nature protection and improve the condition in the area, and include a theoretical and a practical part. As part of this thematic unit, the following activities will be carried out in Lovćen NP:

Theoretical part – Presentation of the work of rangers in protected areas

Method: the physical protection unit in the protected area will prepare a presentation for the participants on the topic of introducing rangers, what they do, what activities they carry out, etc.

Objective: introducing participants to the work of rangers and their importance in nature protection.

Practical part – Activities to improve the park infrastructure

Activity 1.1. Arranging a barefoot walking path

Method: A group of 15 participants with a mentor will collect material from nature (pine cones, stones, moss and lichens) to add to the site, i.e. to form a barefoot walking path. The participants will prepare photo documentation and, together with the mentor, present the achieved results in the form of

a poster.

Objective: to involve young people in specific activities in the field in order to strengthen the volunteer spirit and develop a sense of community and contribution to society.

Resources: it is necessary to provide participants with gloves and bags for collecting materials from nature.

Activity 1.2. Painting of outdoor leisure furniture in front of the Visitor Centre at Ivanova Korita

Method: A group of 15 participants will have the task of painting the furniture in front of the Visitor Centre at Ivanova Korita. Participants will prepare photo documentation and, together with their mentors, present the achieved results in the form of a poster.

Objective: to involve young people in specific activities in the field in order to strengthen the volunteer spirit and develop a sense of community and contribution to society.

Resources: gloves, paint brushes, and dark green paint.

Activity 1.3 Waste cleaning action in the wider area of the Ivanova Korita locality

Method: A group of 15 participants will have the task of collecting waste in the area of Ivanova Korita. Waste will be collected separately: glass, plastic, metal, paper. At the end, an analysis of the collected waste will be made and the participants will learn about the issue of waste management through a presentation. After the activity, participants will prepare a poster with the mentors on the mentioned topic to



present the achieved results.

Objective: to involve young people in specific activities in the field in order to strengthen the volunteer spirit and develop a sense of community and contribution to society.

Resources: gloves (made of thicker material) and bags for collecting waste.

Activity 1.4. Survey of visitors to the protected area

Method: 15 participants will have the task of conducting a survey among park visitors at the Ivanova Korita locality – Njegoš Mausoleum. The lecturers will provide the participants with preprepared questionnaires. After the survey, the participants will process the data with their mentors and present them in the form of a poster.

Objective: to collect data on the views of park visitors regarding various topics, learn about information relevant to the protected area management, and the use of this data.

Resources: printed questionnaires, ballpoint pens.

Activity 1.5. Setting up camera traps for large mammal research

Method: 15 participants will have the task of setting up camera traps at three locations in the park with their mentors. Participants will prepare photo documentation and, together with their mentors, present the achieved results in the form of a poster.

Objective: to educate participants on methods of monitoring large mammals, and the use of collected data.

Resources: three camera traps.

Thematic unit II Research activities in the park

Research activities in the park include the involvement of young people in activities carried out by park employees in order to monitor the condition of certain changes in nature and collect field data. The activities carried out include the following:

Activity 2.1. Investigation of the presence of large mammals

Method: active research on a fixed transect by finding traces of large mammals.

Objective: to educate participants about the importance of monitoring large animals and the utility value of the data in order to protect them.

The most commonly used method for monitoring mammals is the transect method. This method involves monitoring and recording all traces of the presence of mammals along a defined transect. This includes tracking droppings, hair, finding shelters/dens, prey remains, footprints, bones and other traces. Using this method, children will research mammals in the surroundings of Ivanova Korita with a biologist. They will learn to recognize the traces of the presence of certain species, they will gain knowledge about the biology and ecology of certain species of mammals and the importance of their preservation in the entire ecosystem.

Activity 2.2. Monitoring of bats

Method: Netting and ultrasonic detection – with the children, at dusk, nets will be placed in pre-defined points. After that, ultrasonic detection will be applied, given the known fact that bats use echolocation – a natural sophisticated system – for orientation and hunting. This method is one of the most common ways of researching bats and plays a significant role as a non-invasive technique for researching their distribution and ecology.

Objective: to educate participants about the importance of monitoring bats and the utility value of the data in order to protect them. In this way, children will learn about the biology and ecology of bats and their importance in the entire ecosystem, and the importance of their protection and preservation.

Resources: To identify bats, a handheld ultrasonic detector (Batlogger M) will be used on selected transects, and in front of buildings where their presence has been recorded. This method requires the use of a special ultrasound detector for bats, and a suitable audio recorder and specialized software tools for analysing the recorded ultrasound signals.

Activity 2.3. Monitoring of certain species of birds

Method: Point observations and creating maps of bird sounds. The point observation method is based on the direct ocular registering of certain species of birds. With this method, observations are made at points where the frequency of species is the highest. This is usually done in places where

the species feed, drink water or nest. Observation is usually carried out at several points within the observed area, and population status and gender differences and age structure are determined, if possible. A visit to the beech and conifer forest would be organized with children in order to get better acquainted with the work methods and the importance of such monitoring.

Objective: to educate children about the importance of bird monitoring and the utility value of the data in nature protection.

Resources – Binoculars, “Collins” determination key.

Activity 2.4. Monitoring of diurnal butterflies

Method: Line transects with selected observation points – monitoring of diurnal butterflies will be carried out using the line transect method. A transect is defined on site and butterflies are counted along that path under acceptable weather conditions. When planning the site itself, the weather forecast will be followed and days without rain, without increased and medium cloudiness (below 50%) and without wind (wind up to 20 km/h) will be selected. Entomological nets will be used to catch butterflies. After catching a butterfly, in case it is easily identified, it will be released from the net, while in cases where the specimen requires additional detailed determination, the specimen will be killed after the catch. For this purpose, a glass jar with a metal screw cap will be used, which is half-filled with cotton balls previously soaked in 96% ethanol. The caught

specimen will be forced from the net into the glass jar, while taking care not to touch it with fingers.

Objective: to educate children about the importance of monitoring daily butterflies and the utility value of the data in nature protection.

Resources: supply of 3 butterfly nets, Tolman T., Collins Butterfly Guide, 2008 key, glass jar with 96% ethanol.

Thematic unit III – Park ecosystem services

Within this unit, young people will learn about ecosystem services. The activities include a presentation, interactive games and activities in the field – communication with the local population.

Activity 3.1. Presentation on ecosystem services

Method: Mentors selected for this area will prepare a PPT presentation on the topic of “Ecosystem Services”. The PPT will be held indoors.

Objective: to educate young people about the importance and services provided by the protected area, i.e. nature conservation.

Resources: laptop, projector screen, video beam.

Activity 3.2. Interactive game “Web of Life: Every Species Counts!”

Method: The group forms a circle. Someone starts by saying

(for example): “I’m a kingfisher and I eat fish” and then throw a ball of yarn to the person playing the “fish”. That person catches the ball, holds it and continues: “I am a fish and I like to eat tadpoles”, and then throws the ball to the participant who plays the tadpole while holding a thread of the ball. That participant might say: “I’m a tadpole and dragonfly larvae like to eat me,” and so on. Do not forget to include some plants, birds or fungi, and even humans, so that the whole web includes more different species. For example, a participant who is an owl can say: “I like to make my nest in the hollow of an old beech.” The connection between species does not have to be solely about nutrition. Finally, when everyone has joined the web and is holding one, two, or three threads (if they have been mentioned more than once), the group can lean back holding only the threads of yarn in their hands. This can have a surprising effect. An ecosystem is like a strong web in which every member is important. To prove this, one or two participants can let go of their threads and the group can try to lean back again. The web has lost some of its strength. After that, two or three more participants can release their threads sharing information about why these species have disappeared from the ecosystem. This leads to an even greater weakening of the web, and we may have a situation where the remaining participants even take a full step back because of the loosened threads.

Objective: to understand the interconnectedness of living things in the ecosystem, and understand how the disappearance of some species affects all other species and

the balance in the ecosystem.

Resources: tear-resistant yarn or thin rope, paper and ballpoint pens, adhesive tape.

Activity 3.3. Communication with the local population in the Lovćen NP area

Method: Five groups of 5 participants each will be formed, who will visit the local population with mentors and conduct a survey. Participants will survey the local population based on already prepared questionnaires.

Objective: to contribute to the socio-economic analysis of the local community in Lovćen NP;

Resources: questionnaires, transportation of participants.

Thematic unit IV – Illegal activities in the park

Within this thematic unit, young people will learn about the specific activities of rangers. Within this unit, theoretical and practical activities will be carried out.

Activity 4.1. Presentation of rangers on illegal activities within the park

Method: The mentors selected for this area will prepare a PPT presentation on the topic of “Illegal activities in the protected area”. The PPT will be held indoors.

Objective: to educate young people about illegal activities in the park and introduce them to the work of rangers.

Resources: laptop, projector screen, video beam.

Activity 4.2. Tour of the area in order to conduct surveillance within the protected area

Method: Mentors selected for this area will form three groups of 5 participants each who will rotate according to defined activities such as: surveillance of the area, tree marking control, ticket collection control, checking of camera traps.

Resources: transportation of participants.

Thematic unit V Visit to another protected area

Activity 5.1. Visit to the Biogradska Gora National Park

Method: In cooperation with another park, in this case Biogradska Gora NP, activities will be planned with the aim of presenting the natural values.

Objective: Children will be introduced to the mountain ecosystems of Biogradska Gora NP, glacial lakes, peat habitats, the creation of Biograd Lake (of glacial origin), the summer huts (“katun”) way of life, characteristic flora and fauna.

Introductory communication with Program participants, introduction games

Introductory communication and games with training participants are crucial because they help create a positive and engaging atmosphere, and build mutual trust and cooperation.

Here are a few reasons why introductory games and communication are important:

1. **Break the ice:** Introductory games serve as “ice breakers” that help participants feel more relaxed and less nervous. This reduces the initial discomfort that often accompanies meeting new people or participating in new activities.
2. **Building trust and team spirit:** Games and activities that encourage interaction and teamwork help strengthen team dynamics. When participants take part in fun or challenging activities together, it is easier for them to develop mutual trust and a sense of community.
3. **Motivation and engagement:** Through introductory activities, participants are encouraged to get actively involved and contribute. Games can be fun and motivating, and thus increase the level of energy and enthusiasm in the group, which is important for the productivity and success of the workshop.
4. **Getting to know the participants:** Introductory games help the participants to get to know each other and learn

more about each other, which is especially useful if it is a group meeting for the first time. This creates a sense of community and belonging to the group.

5. **Creating a positive atmosphere:** A good start to the workshop with interesting and relaxing activities can contribute to creating a positive atmosphere where everyone feels welcome and open to participation.
6. **Encouraging creativity and flexibility:** Games often require creative thinking and flexibility. In this way, participants prepare for further work that may require similar skills, such as innovative thinking and adaptation to change.
7. **Discovering group dynamics:** Workshop facilitators can use introductory games and communication as an opportunity to assess group dynamics, identify potential leaders, introverts, extroverts or other important group characteristics that can shape the further course of the workshop.

Finally, introductory communication through games helps to create an open, safe and cohesive environment that is the basis for successful and productive workshop work.

INTRODUCTION GAME: TWO TRUTHS AND A LIE

Objective: for a group where members do not know each other.

Number of participants: 10-35.

Method: All participants write three statements about themselves on an A4 sheet of paper and stick it on their

chest so that everyone can read what is written on the paper. Two statements must be true and one false. Chat with others and learn about their hobbies and little lies!

Resources: A4 sheet of paper, felt-tip pens, adhesive tape.

Duration: 20 minutes (depending on the number of participants, it can last longer).

Note: It is not important that you actually get to know all the participants. It is more important for participants in a large group to start moving, warming up, talking, to get rid of their fears and shyness. You can play it with all ages and create a relaxed atmosphere in the group.

Introduction game: Have you ever...?

Objective: to create a good atmosphere in the group, inform about the previous knowledge and attitudes of the participants, build trust, have fun.

Number of participants: 10-40.

Method: Participants stand in a circle. The educator explains that through the question “Have you ever?” they will state various things that the participants have or have not done. The participants that have done it run into a circle and “high five” each other. The list of questions can help the educator get to know the participants better, and it is good to have 10-15 questions prepared in advance (they can be general or related to the topic of the day).

Resources: 10-15 questions for the activity.

Duration: 10 minutes (it can last longer if the group wishes to continue).

SUMMER SCHOOL AGENDA – “Junior Rangers in Protected Areas of the Dinaric Arc” program

Day I – 05/07/2024

Participants' check-in and rest

Introduction games for participants

Presentation of the “Junior Rangers” program

Questions and answers

Presentation of the work of rangers in protected areas

Questions and answers

Dinner

Socializing with participants, social games

Druženje sa učesnicima, društvene igre

Day II – 06/07/2024

7:00–8:00	Breakfast		
	Group I	Group II	Group III
8:00–11:30	Arranging a barefoot walking path	Painting of outdoor leisure furniture	Waste cleaning action / Analysis of collected waste
11:30–12:30	Creating posters with mentors about the implemented activities		
12:30–14:00	Lunch		
14:00–15:00	Finalizing previously started activities		
15:00–16:30	Surveying visitors to Ivanova Korita and data processing with a mentor (the group that finishes first goes to survey visitors)		
16:30–18:30	The importance of preserving protected areas – Parks Dinarides and Dinarica Association		
	A dream protected area, task for the participants		
18:30–20:00	Dinner		
20:00–22:00	Socializing with participants, social games		

Day III – 07/07/2024

Breakfast		
Introductory lecture – Research in protected areas – National Parks of Montenegro		
Group I	Group II	Group III
Field activity	Field activity	Field activity
Monitoring of diurnal butterflies	Monitoring of birds	Monitoring of large carnivores and setting of camera traps
Lunch		
Creating posters with mentors about the implemented activities		
Visit to the Mausoleum and visitor surveying		
Importance of preserving protected areas – Parks Dinarides and Dinarica Association		
A dream protected area, task for the participants		
Dinner		
Socializing with participants, social games		

Day IV – 08/07/2024

Breakfast
Departure to Biogradska Gora NP
Visit to the Info Centre in Kolašin
Tour of the Biogradska Gora rainforest
Introduction to the rangers' work in the park
Lunch
Return to Ivanova Korita
Creating posters with mentors
Socializing with participants, social games

Day V – 09/07/2024

Breakfast		
Presentation on ecosystem services		
Game – Web of Life		
Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Task – ecosystem services	Task – ecosystem services	Local community surveying
Lunch		
Bushcraft activities		
Creating posters with mentors		

Sports games
Dinner
Socializing with participants, social games

Day VI – 10/07/2024

Breakfast		
Presentation on illegal activities in the park, challenges in the work of the ranger service		
Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
tour of the area as an example of illegal activities	ticket collection control	tree marking control
Lunch		
Group 2	Group 2	Group 3
tour of the area as an example of illegal activities	tour of the area as an example of illegal activities	tour of the area as an example of illegal activities and ticket collection control
Creating posters with mentors		
Sports games		
Dinner		
Socializing with participants, social games		

Packing of participants and breakfast

Official awarding of certificates

Departure of participants

IMPRESSIONS OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

The “Junior Rangers” camp is a beautiful experience that I will always remember and will always cherish. It includes beautiful events, many lessons learned from many different fields, and most importantly new friendships. I entered the camp with little knowledge about the tasks that the rangers carry out, and I left with a lot of new information and interesting facts. My interest in that area was even greater after the camp. The way we all connected was incredible. The same way that the association from Bosnia and Herzegovina visited us and learned something about our areas, we also learned about theirs. It is very nice that these educations have been extended to our areas. This camp is a beautiful experience that I would like to repeat and I also wish that as many children as possible get introduced, educated and acquire new knowledge just like us. I will always remember the moments spent there and I will always tell everyone about them. Finally, I want to thank the organizers and everyone who made our stay at the camp wonderful and wish them the best of luck in the future.

Vjera Perišić, Cetinje Royal Capital

Happiness is in small things and shared moments. I would like to feel that connection with nature again and to be able to learn something new and different again. There are a lot of impressions and memories and I am very happy about it, and above all, I would like this program to be implemented again in the same place with the same people.

Zorana Jovović, Cetinje Royal Capital

At the “Junior Rangers” summer school, I had the opportunity to learn how we can protect nature, both in theory and practice, and about the ranger’s job. Through the activities we had, we learned a lot that we will never forget. We learned how important it is to preserve nature, and how difficult the job of a ranger is, and now whenever we visit a national park again, we will know how much respect they deserve. The program was interactive and educational, and I would recommend it to anyone who loves nature.

Stanko Kaluđerović, Cetinje Royal Capital

My experience with the “Junior Rangers” program is absolutely fantastic. It exceeded all my expectations. As a high school student, I am familiar with a lot of information, but this program introduced me to many more interesting areas and facts. The most interesting part of the camp for me was when we were divided into groups that had different units. I liked the part about birds. There we observed different species with binoculars and recorded their names in Latin. I learned many things about birds that I didn't know: the cuckoo lays its eggs in the nest of other birds, some birds can camouflage themselves and blend with the surroundings, the eagle plucks its feathers and makes a thermal nest... In addition, we visited Lake Biograd in Kolašin, which is adorned with beautiful and dense forests and wonderful nature. They expanded our knowledge on how to preserve it. All of this would not be as interesting without my new friends, both from Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and also the coordinators who facilitated all of this.

Mina Jablan, Cetinje Royal Capital



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#ReLOaD



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