



Field report

September 2023

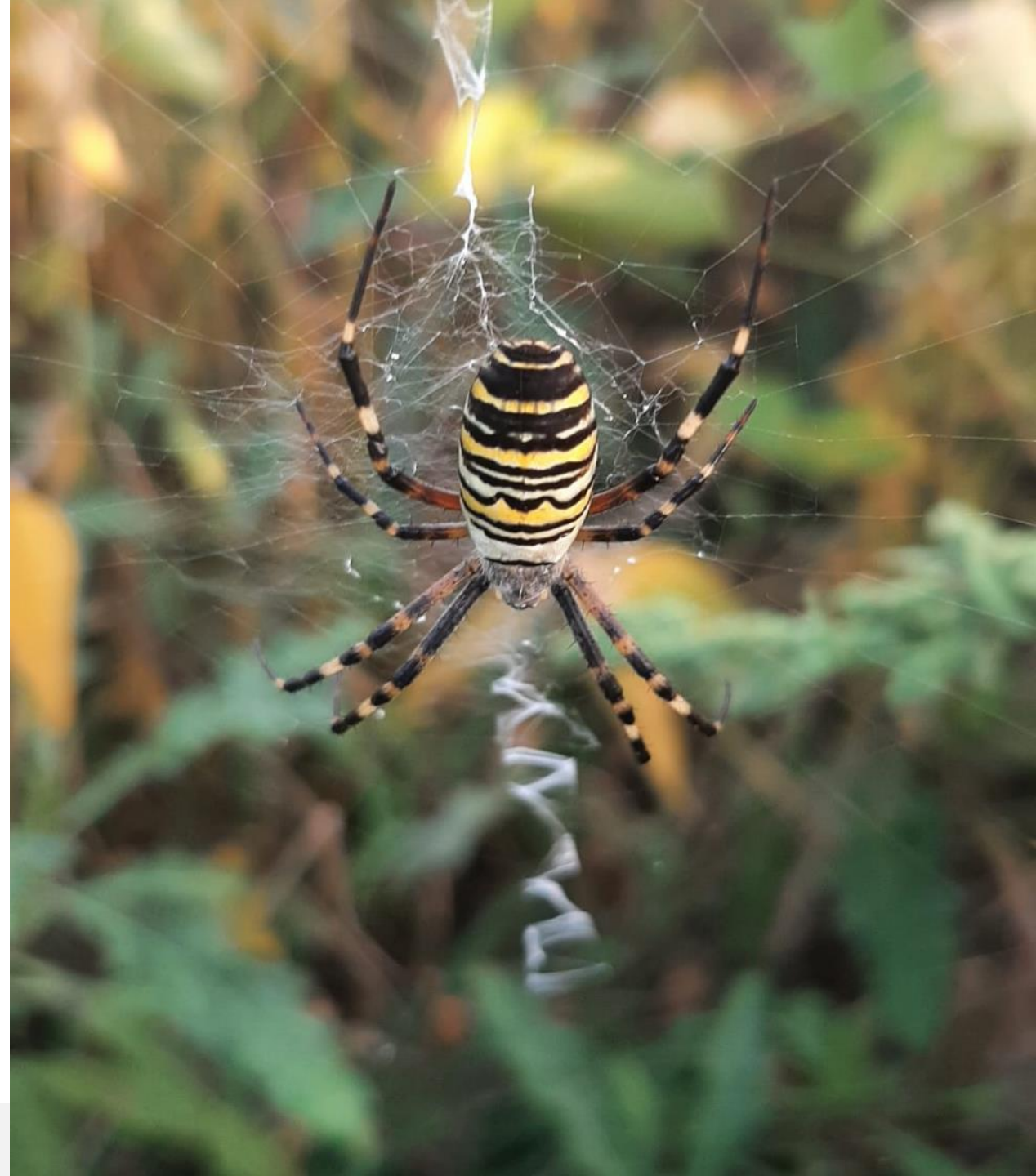


Creating the largest forested National Park in Europe



Main activities summary

- 01 Forest conservation and management
- 02 Ecological restoration
- 03 Wildlife conservation
- 04 Conservation enterprise programme
- 05 Communication & community outreach

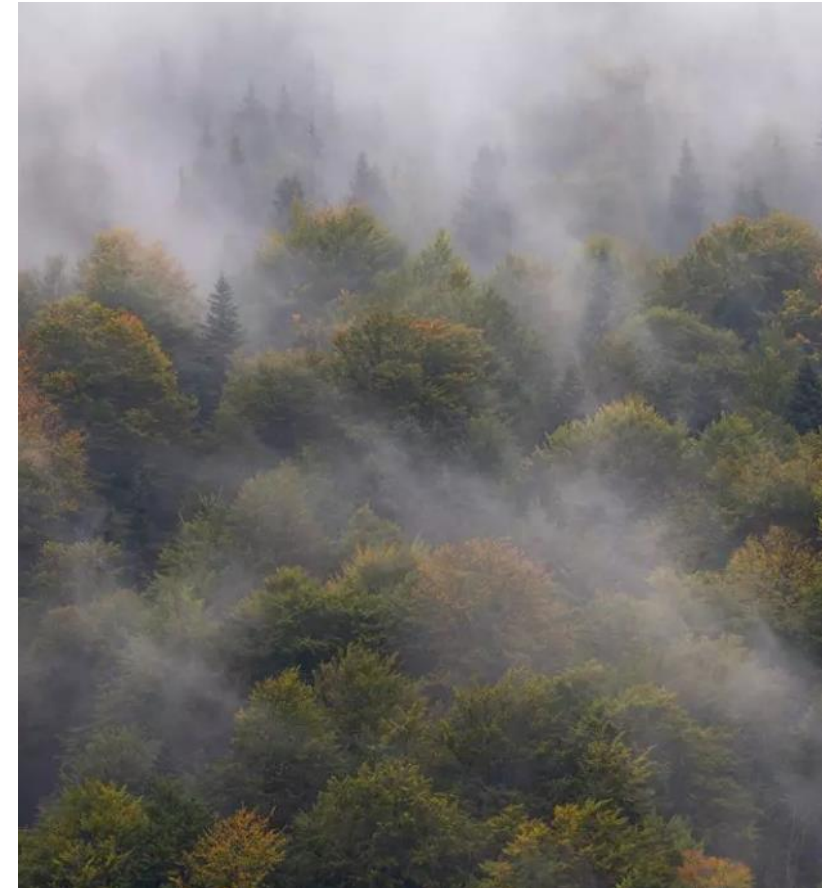
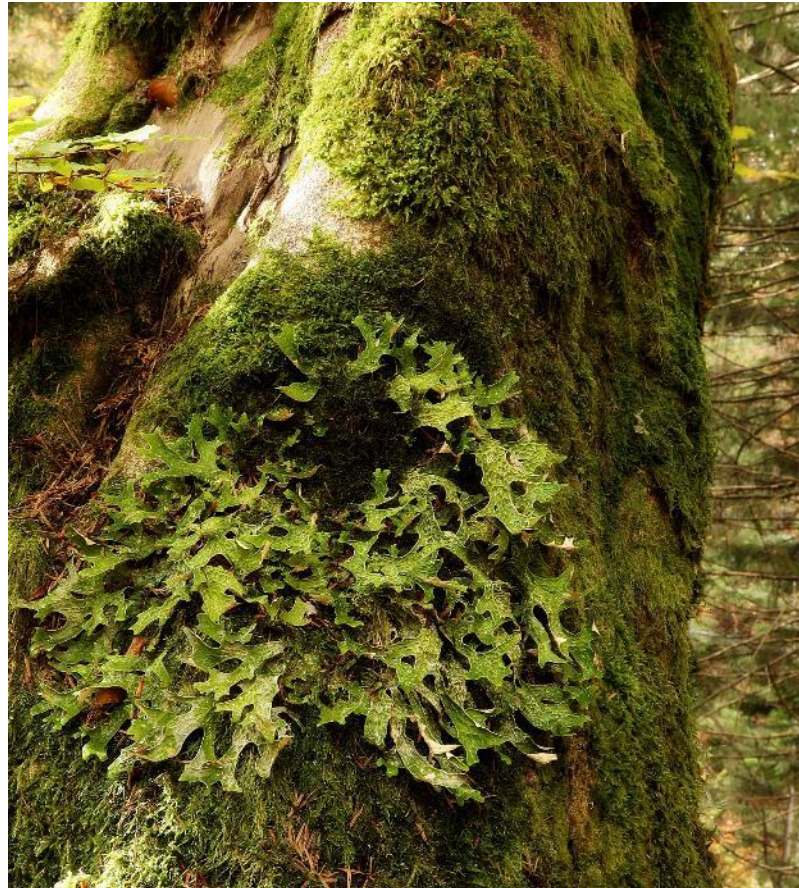


01

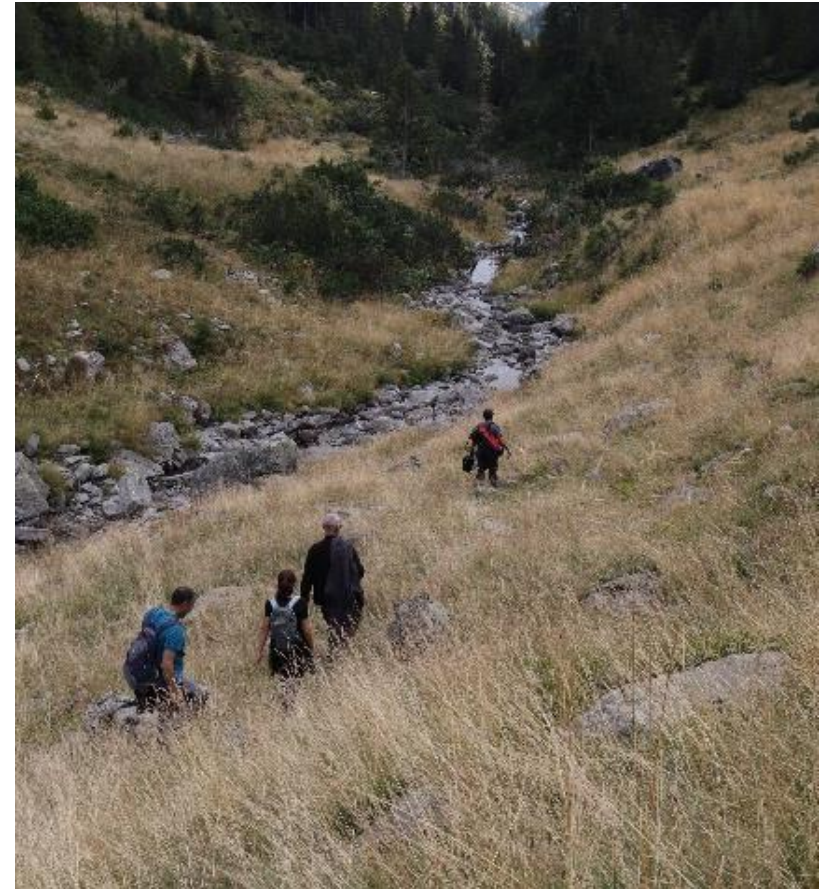
Forest conservation and
management



During September we were able to purchase a further 3.25 ha of land, fully protected for future generations.



Images from the project area







02

Ecological restoration



- In September, we restored the forest floor on more than 1,000 metres of logging tracks at the Groapele restoration site.
- We have started preparing for the autumn planting season; which is usually short. We are hoping for good weather conditions so that we can replant 50 hectares of forest.



Green houses and tree nurseries

- Thanks to our great local employee, we weed by hand. We never use herbicides or pesticides.
- After the final weeding of the season, we took an inventory of the saplings in our nurseries.
- We plan to use saplings from our own nurseries for this autumn's planting.



Removing the invasive alien (IAS) plant species

- We continued our efforts to eradicate invasive alien species. We focused on daisy fleabane (*Erigeron annuus*) and Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*) in the Dâmboviței and Dragoslovenilor valleys, and cleared over 15 km.
- To monitor progress, we carried out fixed-point photography and botanical surveys in five sample areas along the Dâmbovița valley.
- The results are encouraging! Due to CARPATHIA's ongoing removal efforts in previous years, we have seen a reduction in invasive alien plant cover compared to 2022.



- We have initiated the first round of monitoring on 10 plots, at the Groapele ecological restoration site. Our focus is on assessing the impact of restoration activities on degraded habitats and tracking changes in understory vegetation cover.



- *Athyrium distentifolium* - a rare subalpine fern species was identified by our biologist at a new site in our project area.
- Our biologist also discovered a new site for the EU Habitats Directive listed species *Tozzia carpathica* in the Dragosloveni valley. This species thrives in well-preserved alder valley corridors.



Athyrium distentifolium



Well-preserved alder corridor in the Dragosloveni Valley, home to *Tozzia carpathica*

03

Wildlife conservation



Wildlife reintroductions

- Six new bison arrived in the Făgăraș Mountains. Four of them are in the Lerești enclosure and two in the Nucșoara enclosure. The 6 specimens come from reserves in Germany. After the quarantine and acclimatisation period, they will be released into the wild to form new herds.
- The reintroduction and release areas are far away from villages and are carefully studied to provide optimal living and feeding conditions for the species.



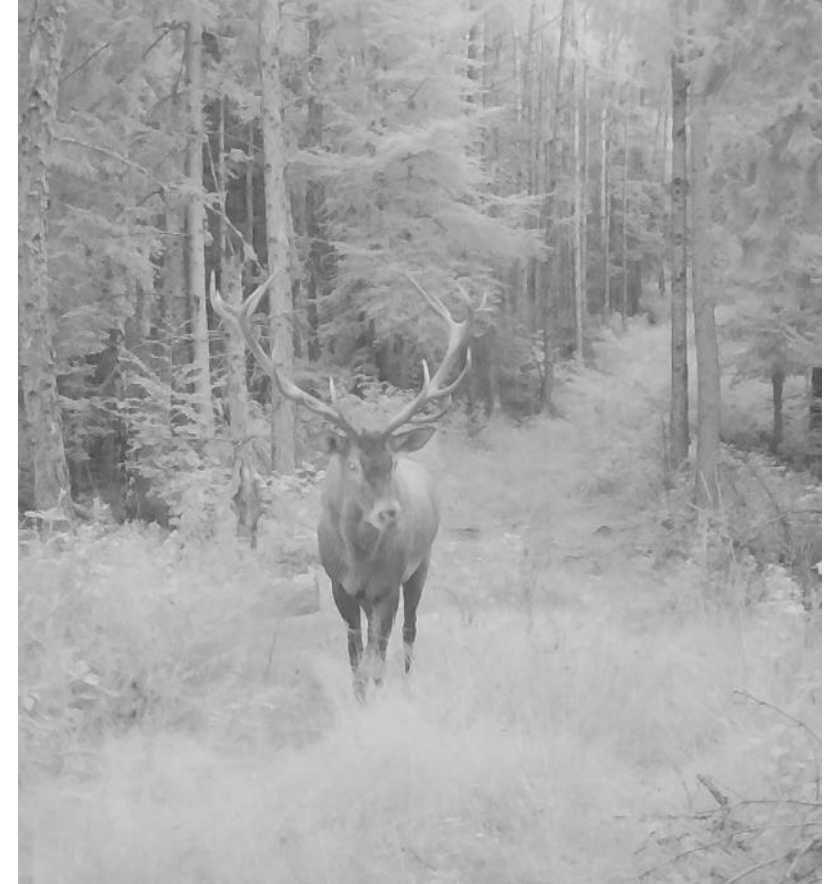
Wildlife monitoring

- Intensive red deer monitoring has reached a high point. The completion of 127 camera trap checks and the final red deer DNA sampling season, has resulted in the collection of 60 scat samples. We would like to thank the wildlife monitoring team and our invaluable volunteers for their tireless efforts.
- We have started our new winter monitoring of the Eurasian lynx. Camera traps are being strategically placed in the field by our team and the CARPATHIA Rangers. This will bring a promising and deeper understanding of temporal changes in the lynx population.



Wildlife monitoring

- We installed camera traps to help monitor the red deer rut.
- From September through to October our rangers spent a lot of time in the field monitoring the red deer rut. They could hear a lot of roaring males with the valleys full of life again.



Wildlife management

- During the last months, brown bears have caused severe damage to livestock in local communities at the edge of our wildlife concessions. The reasons are complex and reflect a lot of issues in global warming and different land-use.
- In response to these incidents, our intervention teams were out in the field continuously, working tirelessly to keep the bears away from villages. They also installed electric fences at identified hotspots to minimize conflict and increase community safety as a proactive measure. Furthermore, we tested an AI-based alarm system to detect bear activity.
- These efforts underline our commitment to balancing the coexistence of wildlife and local communities in our conservation project.



Wildlife images&video

Wild boar

Red deer

Eurasian lynx

Wolf



Wildlife images



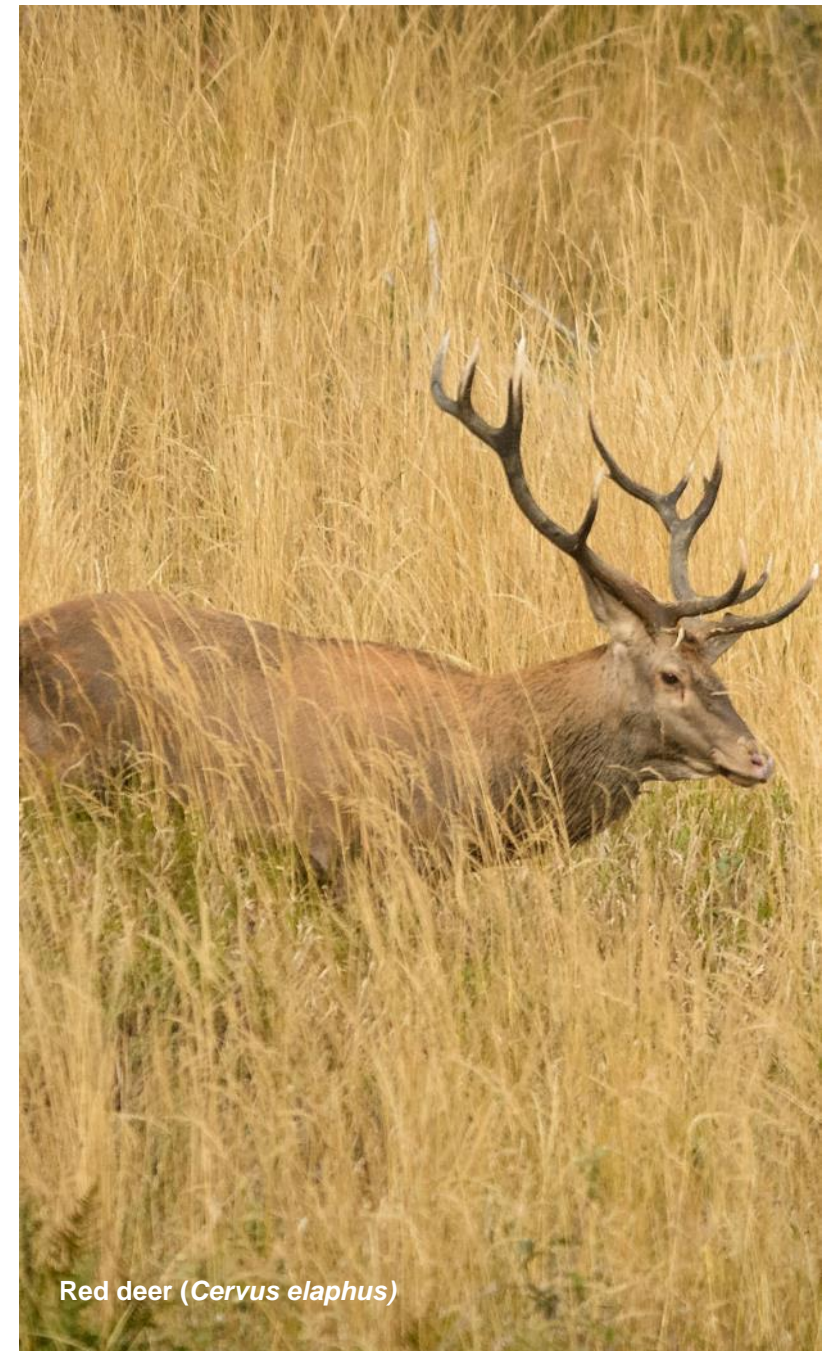
Brown bear (*Ursus arctos*)



European badger (*Meles meles*)



A wild road of brown bear, European badger, red fox, roe deer and dog tracks.



Red deer (*Cervus elaphus*)



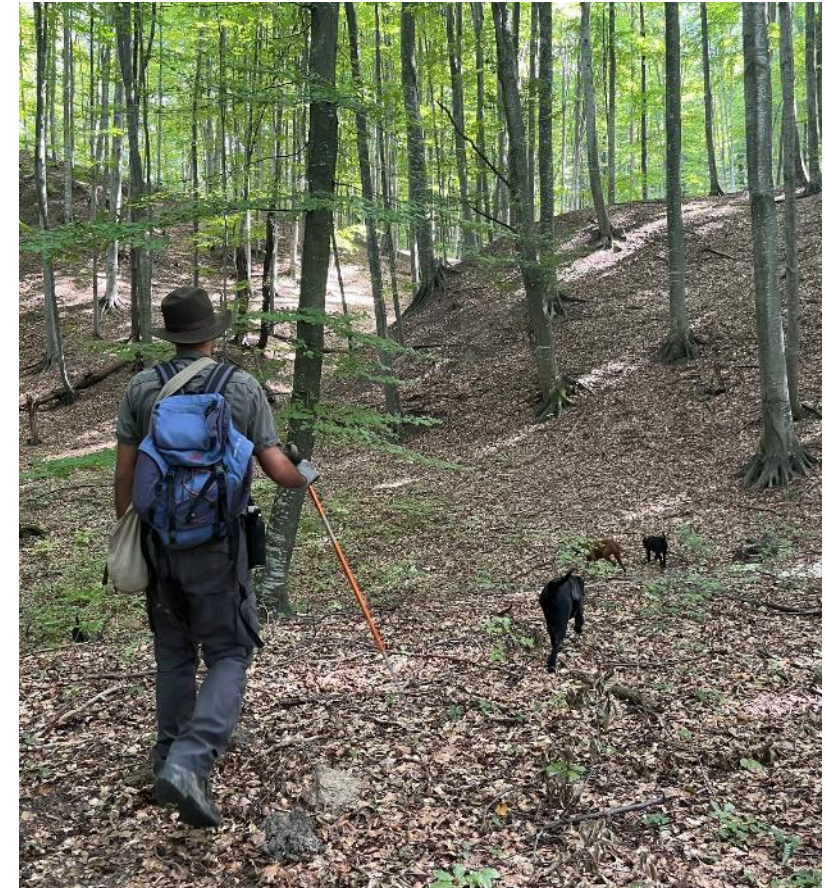
04

Conservation Enterprise Programme



Food HUB

- In the Făgăraș Mountains, stories taste like truffles.
- Part of the Roadele Munților Food Hub, [Luna's Premium Truffles](#) is a small local business that has been thriving for 14 years, adding the irresistible aroma of truffles to our culinary heritage.
- We support over 30 local producers in the [Roadele Munților food hub](#), promoting their work and stories. They care deeply about the relationship between their community, nature and clean food.
- We will soon launch the Roadele Munților website, which will feature an exclusive online shop tailored to local producers. This platform will not only showcase their products, but also tell the stories behind these unique small local businesses.



The advisory programme for small entrepreneurs in the Făgăraș Mountains

- We are pleased to announce the approval of a new Local Gastronomic Point as part of our free consultancy programme for small entrepreneurs in the Făgăraș Mountains.
- The new Local Gastronomic Point, owned by the Nicolae family from Rucăr, offers authentic, slow-cooked food and local stories to guests looking for dishes made with farm fresh ingredients.



Cobor Biodiversity Farm

- Our farm is a perfect blend of high nature value grasslands, biodiversity conservation, organic farming, and a pleasant tourist and business destination. Added to this is the charismatic Transylvanian Grey Cattle, a breeding facility for Carpathian Shepherd Dogs and the best place for horse livery in the region.



Cobor Biodiversity Farm

- Discover the hidden joy in the warm sunset colours on our farm.
- Enhance your experience! Join us for enchanting dinners at [Cobor Biodiversity Farm](#), where you can savour the very best of our local ingredient.
- Let the magic of sunset unfold across your plate.



Cobor Biodiversity Farm

- We preserve both the sweet as well as, strong, savoury flavours of vegetables. We've bottled pickles and jarred artisan aubergine zacusca for the winter. Waiting for you to savour!



Wildlife hides

Witness the majestic presence of the bear, the resilient spirit of the wild boar, the regal stride of the bison and the graceful beauty of the stag.

In the autumn, once the leaves change colour, [the red deer rut season](#) is a true spectacle and needs to be experienced at least once in a lifetime.

At [Travel CARPATHIA](#), our commitment to sustainable tourism is absolute - an experience that not only immerses you in nature, but also benefits local communities without harming the environment.



05

Communication &
community outreach



Alpin Film Festival

- In September we took part in the [Alpin Film Festival](#) - an international cultural event of film, book and photography about mountain culture and education.
- We were a partner of the festival and prepared two photo exhibitions from the Făgăraș Mountains and the [Forest of Immortal Stories in Nucșoara](#).
- We awarded the Carpathian Trophy for the best film promoting the Carpathians to the film Ultima Transhumanță.



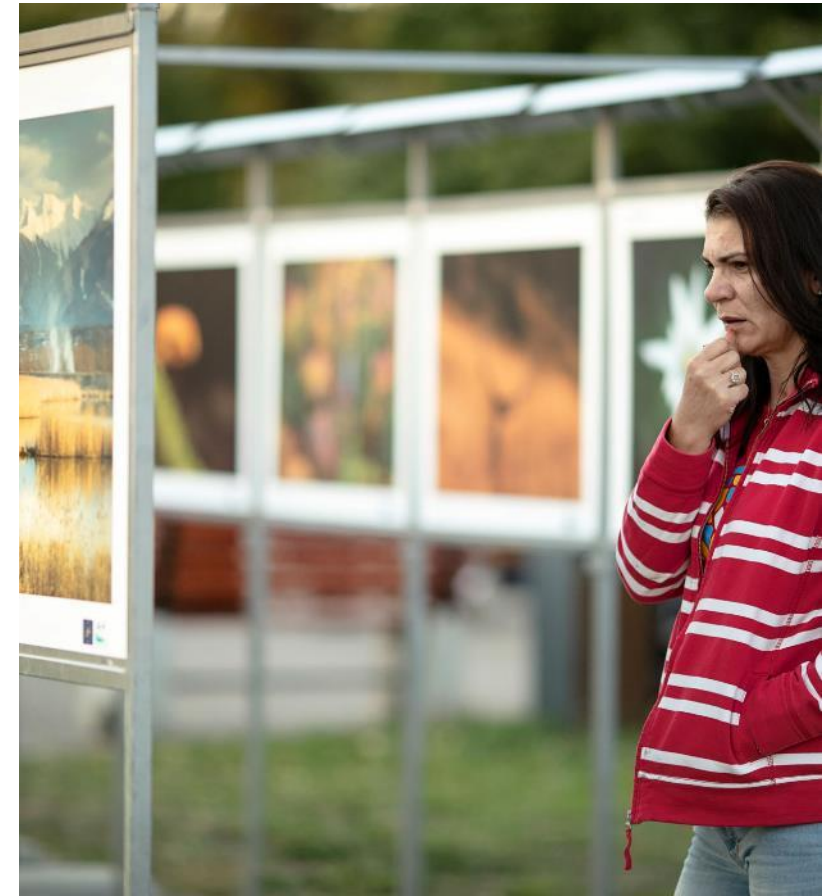
CULMEA: Film and environmental education festival

- We spoke to the youth about nature, wildlife and how children can get involved in conservation at the [CULMEA](#) Festival. A festival that uses film education to support children and young people who want to learn more about the environment and protecting the planet.



From the Făgăraș Mountains to the Cartfest

- We were present at [CARTFEST](#), a cultural festival with theatre, concerts, day-long educational activities for both children and adults. Film screenings, lectures, debates and book launches were also showcased.
- We presented a visual story about the wildy beautiful Făgăraș Mountains of Romania.



Carpathia Fund - community aid

- We are pleased to share with you the progress and initiatives of our first ever project with Carpathia Fund-community aid: "The Learning Garden".
- In Țara Făgărașului, the project team has developed a small educational centre where creative and educational camps for children and young people are organised.
- With the support of the Carpathian Fund for Communities, they plan to develop this centre by creating an 'educational garden' where children can learn about the principles of permaculture and sustainability.
- The funding programme is developed by Foundation Conservation Carpathia and implemented in Țara Făgărașului by the Țara Făgărașului Community Foundation.



CARPATHIA Nature Education Programme

- The Junior Ranger programme continues with new activities in the Făgăraş Mountains.
- The future looks greener and beautiful!
- With these future rangers. Our mountains remain strong in the face of the children's enthusiasm to learn about nature. We are happy to be able to offer this learning opportunity to children in the surrounding communities.



Local community support

- Well done to ACS Zimbrii Lerești (the Bison Lerești football team) for winning game after game this season! We are happy for the victories they bring to the community and that we can support such a united and responsible team.
- By supporting the Zimbri Leresti football team, we inspire young people to follow their passions and contribute to the development of the community, taking pride in the area they live in and nature around them.



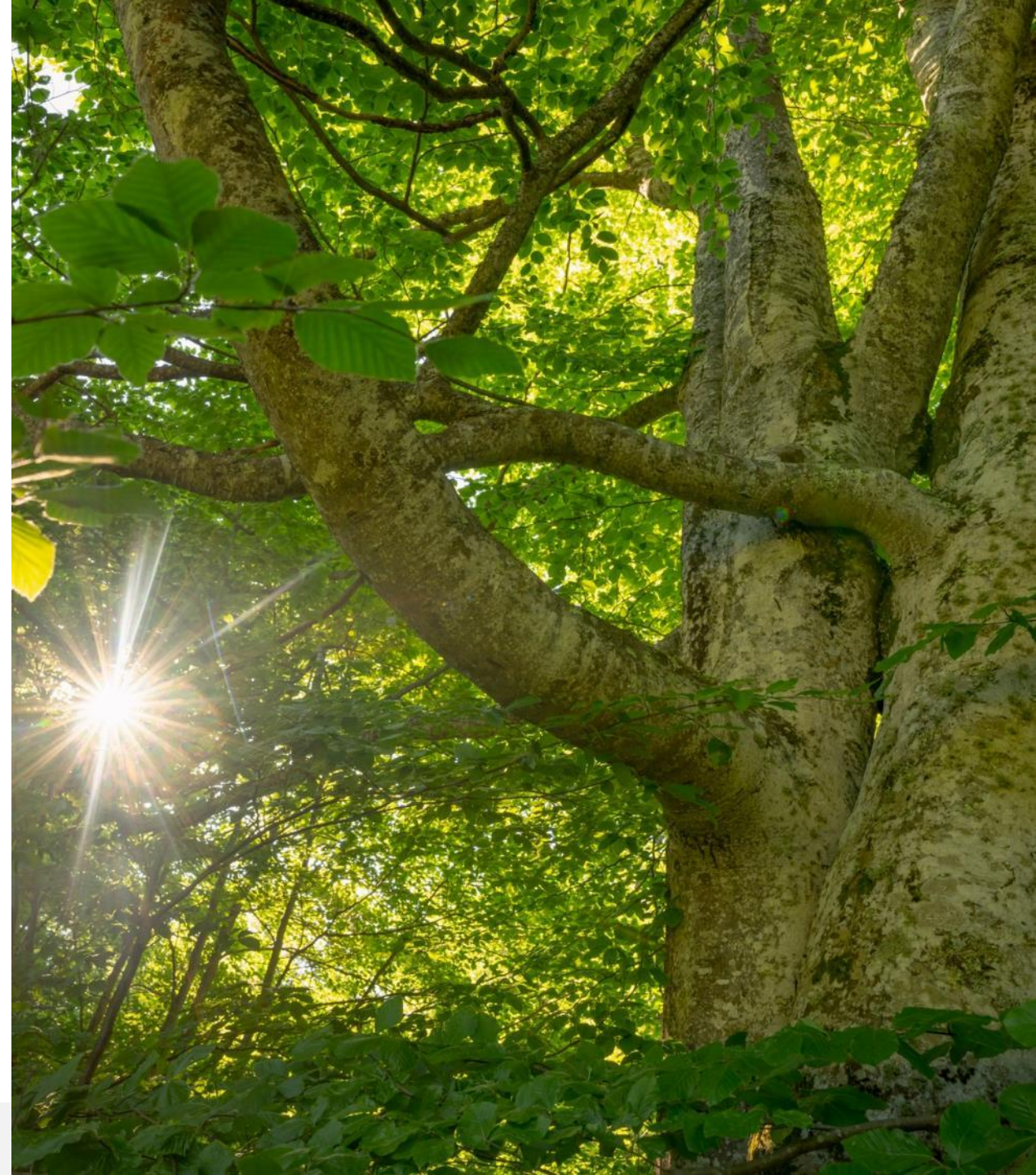
International visits

- 7 journalists and camera crews from abroad visited us to document the CARPATHIA project and our plan to create a National Park in the Făgăraș Mountains. Transforming this unique mountain range into a world-class wilderness, an icon of nature conservation in Europe and an emblematic National Park on our continent.



The Forest of Immortal Stories

- Explore the enchanting 'Forest of Immortal Stories' where thousands of majestic beech trees await adoption. Forging a deep connection with nature, history and the local community.
- Join this extraordinary journey by adopting a beech tree today and make a meaningful contribution to our shared environment.
- Discover your tree and be part of its timeless story - click [HERE](#) to claim your tree now!
- Your tree awaits you!



Results

27,027 ha

of forest under permanent protection and safeguarded for future generations

78,000 ha

protected for wildlife, with no sport or trophy hunting

1,991 ha

bought and restored (clear-cuts, alpine pastures, spruce monocultures)

4,056,554

trees planted in clear-cuts, riparian galleries and restoration areas of spruce monocultures

250

locals which make a living from the CARPATHIA project

2,200

students and teachers involved in environmental education projects

20+

local producers are part of the Food Hub Roadele Munților





Join us in:

- Creating the largest forested National Park in Europe.
- Annual restoration of the original ecosystem of over 100 ha of clear-cuts.
- Protecting wildlife across a total of 78,000 ha.
- Sustainable development of local communities.
- Environmental education projects.



FOUNDATION
CONSERVATION
CARPATHIA

Calea Feldioarei 27A, Brasov – Romania
info@carpathia.org



PHOTO CREDITS: Dan Dinu, Zsolt Miholcea, Liviu Ungureanu, Călin Șerban, Ionuț Crețu, Mihai Tatusescu, Oliviu Pop, Adrian Pătrulescu, Claudiu Țoanță, Adrian Aldea, Ben Pipe, Adrian Aldea, Mihai Zotta, David Zărnovan, Gabriel Dudu, Laviniu Terciu, Alex Popa, Jozsef Laszlo, George Soare, Radu Micu, Fundația Comunitară Țara Făgărașului, Georgiana Andrei, Victoria Donos, Alexandru R. Crețu, Daniel Mîrlea.

Cover: Călin Șerban