

PROJECTS OF THE VOLUNTEERS OF THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY OF ICELAND (UMHVERFISSTOFNUN) 2023

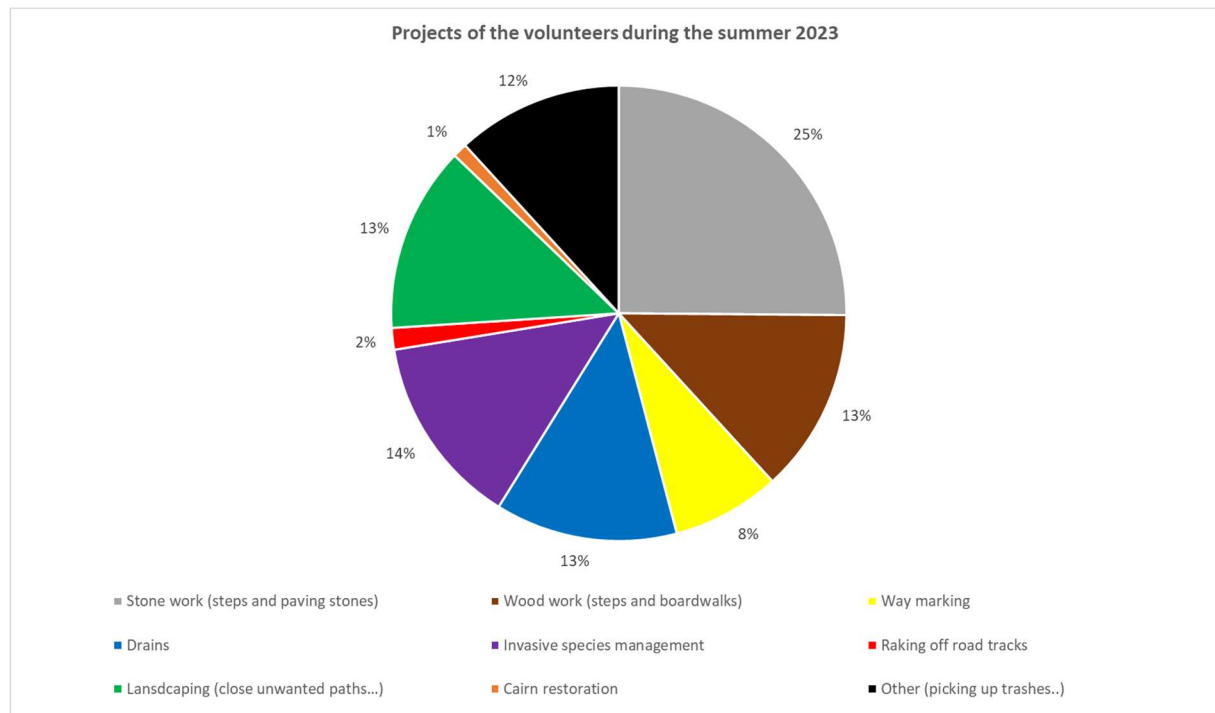


The volunteers of the environment agency worked in 26 protected areas during the summer 2023 all around Iceland: in the National Park of Snæfellsjökull (more specifically in Lóndrangar and Djúpalónssandur) and the Vatnajökull National Park (in Nýdalur and Skaftafell), við Mývatn, in Mývatn, in the nature reserves of Dyrhólaey, Fjallabak, Gróttu, Gullfoss, Herdísarvík, Hólmanes, Hornstrandir, Svarfaðardalur and Vatnsfjörður, in the protected landscapes of Gerpissvæði, Þjórsárdalur and Kerlingarfjöll, in the protected habitat of Andakíll, in the natural monuments of Dimmuborgir, Eldborg í Hnappadal, Eldborg undir Geitahlíð, Geysir, Litluborgir, Skógafoss, Tröllaborn, in the Reykjanes country park in Vigdísarvallaleið and in many other areas registered on the nature conservation register of Iceland (Náttúruminjaskrá) such as Glymur, Hengifoss, Múlagljúfur and Rauðisandur.

The projects of the volunteers in nature protection and habitat restoration are diverse:

- Marking, maintaining and restoring natural trails by way marking, building steps and drains with stones or wood.
- Restoring landscapes and ecosystems (closing unwanted paths, raking off road tracks made by off road driving).
- Landscaping (restoring hiking trails in a way that they fit naturally in the landscape).
- Restoring vegetation for example where there were some unwanted paths
- Biodiversity: eradication of invasive species.
- Restoration of historical cairns (with the supervision of an expert from Minjastofnun, the Cultural Heritage Agency of Iceland).
- Cleaning natural and untouched areas (Hornstrandir, Reykjanes).
- Assisting the staff of the protected areas (from which lessons are learned) for example by assessing the conditions of natural hiking trails, counting guests in protected areas, assisting the ranger in fauna / flora inventories.
- Diverse educational work or nature interpretation
- Presentation and training (volunteers with a lot of experience share and thus pass on their knowledge to the new volunteers, e.g., in terms of team management).

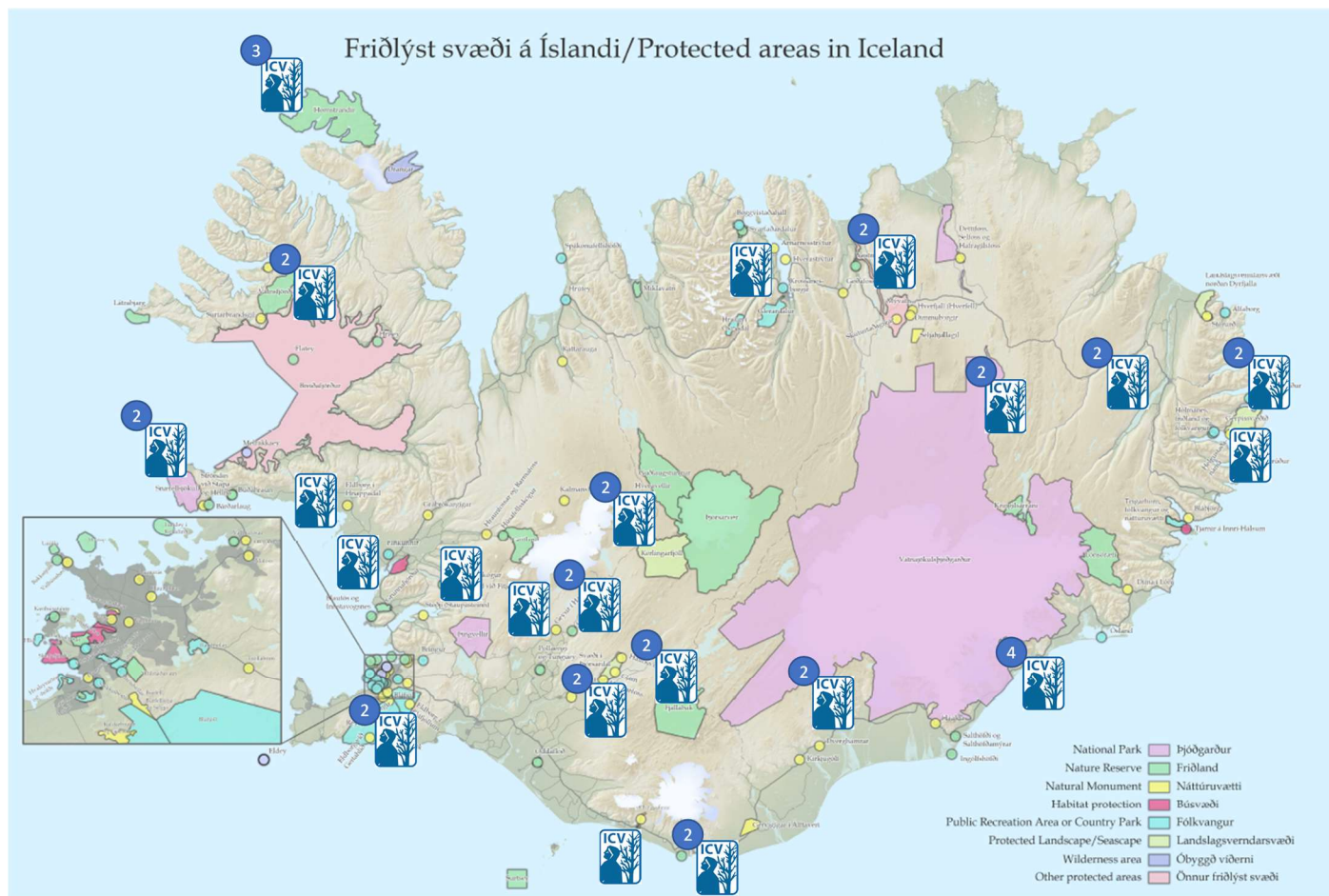
This report is describing the volunteers’ work during the summer 2023. The chart below is presenting the type of work the volunteers has been doing.



Report of the volunteers’ projects 2023

Location of the work done by the volunteers during summer 2023		
SITES	w.w	w.d.
Preparation/coordination	1,8	9
Leaders' training	2,4	12
SNÆFELSJÖKULL ÞJÓÐG.	10,6	53
ELDBORG UNDIR GEITAHLIÐ	1	5
LITLUBORGIR	1,2	6
HERDÍSARVÍK	1,8	9
TRÖLLABÖRN	0,8	4
GRÓTTA	1,4	7
ÁSTJÖRN	1,8	9
SANDVATN / MÝVATN	9,8	49
SVARFDÆLA	5,4	27
VATNSFJÖRÐUR	9	45
HORNSTRANDIR	12,4	62
ELDBORG Í HNAPPADAL	4,4	22
ANDAKÍLL	5,4	27
ÞJÓRSÁRDALUR	8,4	42
KERLINGARFJÖLL	9,8	49
GULLFOSS	9,8	49
GEYSIR	4,4	22
FJALLABAK	8,4	42
SKÓGAFOSS	5,4	27
DYRHÓLAEY	9,8	49
HÓLMANES	5,4	27
GERPISSVÆDI	9,8	49
REYKJANESFÓLKVANG	1,8	9
BORGIR	4	20
RAUÐISANDUR	2	10
GLYMUR	3,4	17
HENGIFOSS	9,8	49
MÚLAGLJÚFUR	17,6	88
SKAFTAFELL	9,6	48
NÝIDALUR/KISTUF.	7,8	39
Working weeks/days	196,4	982,0
UST SITES	136,2	681
OTHER SITES	56	280

LOCATIONS OF THE VOLUNTEERS' PROJECTS 2023



Snæfellsjökull National Park

Number of volunteers' teams: 2
Working days: 53
Team leader(s): Sophie Aziz, Kelly Powell & Roger Whysall
Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Hákon Ásgeirsson

04.06 – 10.06



Assessment/problem

Malarrif - Lóndrangar: Work was done on a footpath that runs from Malarrif to Lóndrangar. The problem is that the path can be wet and people get off the path.

Djúpalónssandur: The path had been eroded and the soil/gravel had been washed away. The stones in the path had to be rearranged to make them stable again and to put gravel/soil back between the stones.

Project

- Steps were repaired and built on the footpath in Djúpalónssandur.
- Wooden steps were built at Lóndrangar.



Andakíll, protected habitat

Number of volunteers' teams: 1

Working days: 27

Team leader(s): Nicky Kraft

Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Þórhildur María Kristinsdóttir

25.06 – 01.07



Assessment/problem

There is a lot of invasive species in the area that is spreading (lupine...).

Project

- Lupine and cow parsley were trimmed and removed with roots, in collaboration with the Agriculture University of Iceland



Eldborg í Hnappadal, natural monument

Number of volunteers' teams: 1

Working days: 22

Team leader(s): Kelly Powell

Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Þórhildur María Kristinsdóttir

11.07 – 17.06



Assessment/problem

Several steps need to be repaired. Then improvements need to be made to the path to reduce and prevent further disruption.

Project

- Continued renovation of steps up to the crater. Hiking trail to the top of the crater restored and safety improved.



Rauðisandur and Vatnsfjörður, nature reserve

Number of volunteers' teams: 2

Working days: 55

Team leader(s): Danny Lake & Nicky Kraft

Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Edda Kristín Eiríksdóttir

25.06 – 01.07

02.07 – 08.07

Assessment/problem

Rauðisandur: Lupine is spreading in the area and needs to be cut.

Penna: the paths need improvement such as adding stone steps and repairing the way markers.


Hörgsnes: shape the part of the path that lies on gravel with stones, possibly need to bend the path a bit and then re-mark.

Pingmannaheiði: install signs in this area. There are also signs at Hörgsnes and in Vatnsdalur that need to be installed.

Project

- Lupine was cut down and removed with roots in Rauðisandur.
- Stone steps were built.
- Unwanted paths were closed with landscaping.
- Paving stones were made by the signs in Dynjandi.



	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Hornstrandir, nature reserve</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">Number of volunteers' teams: 3 Working days: 62 Team leader(s): Nicky Kraft, Lea Matscheroth & Grace Taylor Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Kristín Ósk Jónasdóttir</p> <p style="text-align: center;">02.07 – 08.07 09.07 – 15.07 23.07 – 29.07</p>
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<p>Assessment/problem</p>	<p>Repair of footpaths needed like drains made of stone at Hornsvík. The cairns between Atlaskarður and Skálakambur and at Látra in Aðalvík – Fijótavík need to be restored.</p>
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<p>Project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repairs were made to footpaths (stone steps and drains) in and around Hornvík and in Veiðileysfiður. • Fallen cairns were restored and reloaded with stones and other cairns tightened.
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Svarfaðardalur, nature reserve

Number of volunteers' teams: 1

Working days: 27

Team leader(s): Sophie Aziz

Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Dagbjört Jónsdóttir

11.06 – 17.06

Assessment/problem

The hiking trails need a lot of maintenance.

Project

- Maintenance of the hiking trails and construction of steps at Hrísatjörn in the Svarfðæla Nature Reserve.



Mývatn and Laxá, nature reserve and Dimmuborgir, natural monument



Number of volunteers' teams: 2
Working days: 49
Team leader(s): Kelly Powell & Lyn Evans
Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Dagbjört Jónsdóttir

02.06 – 08.07
09.07 – 15.07


Assessment/problem

Lúpína og skógarkerfill á verndarsvæði Mývatns og Laxár - Sandvatn.

Project

- Lupine was mowed on the north bank of Sandvatn and on Geiteyjarströnd by Mývatn.
- Repair of footpaths in Dimmuborgir and at Vindbelgjarfjall.



	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Hólmanes, nature reserve</h2> <p style="margin: 5px 0;">Number of volunteers' teams: 1 Working days: 27 Team leader(s): Daniel Smith Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Lára Björnsdóttir</p> <p style="margin: 5px 0;">16.07 – 22.07</p>
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Assessment/problem	Invasive species (lupine) are spreading in the area, it is important to eradicate the patches that are present in the Hólmanes nature reserve as part of a continuous project conducted in recent years.
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Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lupine was taken with the roots in the nature reserve. Some lupine was also cut and mowed.
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Gerpiðsvæði, protected landscape

Number of volunteers' teams: 2

Working days: 49

Team leader(s): David Millar & Verena Stammberger
Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Lára Björnsdóttir

23.07 – 29.07

30.07 – 05.08

Assessment/problem

Repair of the paved path out need to be carried out in Barðsnes in Viðfjörður. The hiking trails in the area need maintenance. The path needs to be clearer from the town of Viðfjörður in addition to repairing drains and clearing debris from the path out to Barðsnes.

Project

- The lupine was uprooted and mowed.
- Work with rangers to dig up and repair an old road and restore it to its original condition where the road is partially paved.
- Several drains were built.



Skógafoss, natural monument

Number of volunteers' teams: 2

Working days: 27

Team leader(s): Anna Lefering

Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Ragnheiður Björk Sigurðardóttir

18.06 – 24.06

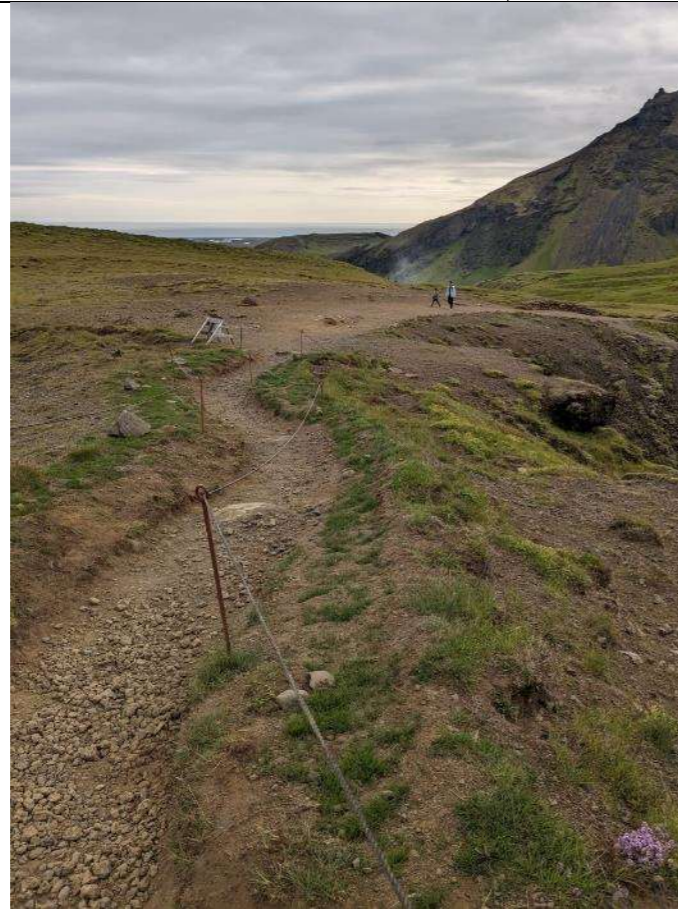


Assessment/problem

Skógaheiði: Work needs to continue on the path, closing off unwanted paths and repairing the path itself. Drainage and landscaping around a new path on Skógaheiði need to be done.

Project

- Fence was installed along the path where the path was too narrow and where there was a lot of traffic off the path.
- Sowed grass seed in damaged areas.
- Damage repaired by removing vegetation from nearby areas and patching.





Dyrhólaey, nature reserve

Number of volunteers' teams: 2

Working days: 49

Team leader(s): Lee Dunn & Léa Petrizzelli

Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Ragnheiður Björk Sigurðardóttir

23.07 – 29.07

30.07 – 05.08

Assessment/problem

The hiking trail needs to be widened to improve the safety of the visitors.

Project

- Some stone steps were built by the existing steps to widen the path. The 2 teams that worked on the trail succeeded in making a wider and safer path from Láey to Háey.



Gullfoss, nature reserve

Number of volunteers' teams: 2

Working days: 49

Team leader(s): Danny Lake & Lee Dunn

Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Valdimar Kristjánsson

18.06 – 24.06

16.07 – 22.07



Assessment/problem

The hiking trail from Gullfoss to Brattholt needs to be repaired. The unwanted paths need to be closed.

Project

- Some unwanted paths were closed with landscaping.
- Several drains were made.



Geysir, natural monument



Number of volunteers' teams: 1
Working days: 22
Team leader(s): David Millar
Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Valdimar Kristjánsson

02.07 – 08.07


Assessment/problem

Repairs need to be made on the path in Laugarfell, especially new drains.

Project

- Drains were built on the path to Gullfoss in several places.



	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Þjórsárdalur, protected landscape</h2> <p style="text-align: center;"> Number of volunteers' teams: 2 Working days: 42 Team leader(s): Paula Ortega López Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Daníel Freyr Jónsson </p> <p style="text-align: center;"> 18.06 – 24.06 06.08 – 12.08 </p>
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Assessment/problem	The protected area needs a lot of repairs and to be restored in several areas.
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Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large drains were built by the waterfall Haífoss. • Repairs on the hiking trail.
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Fjallabak, Nature reserve

Number of volunteers' teams: 2

Working days: 42

Team leader(s): Imke Demitz

Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Daniel Freyr Jónsson

06.08 – 12.08



Assessment/problem

Maintenance of footpaths and other infrastructure. The exact routes that will be worked on will be in the area of Landmannahellir, Rauðufossar, Stútur, Laugahraun, etc. Some posts need to be painted on Laugavegur.

Project

- Posts were painted.
- Footbridges were carried to Vondugiljaauri and installed over streams, in addition to landscaping along the footpath at the same location.
- Some necessary maintenance was done on the footpath at Námskvísl in Landmannalaugar.



Kerlingarfjöll, protected landscape



Number of volunteers' teams: 2
Working days: 49
Team leader(s): Paula Ortega López & Jacob Williams
Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Valdimar Kristjánsson
13.08 – 19.08

Assessment/problem

Steps need to be repaired in Hveradalir.

Project

- Wooden steps in Kerlingarfjöll that needed maintenance were repaired - wooden boxes were built.



Vigdísarvallaleið, Reykjanes Country Park

Number of volunteers' teams: 1

Working days: 9

Team leader(s): Imke Demitz & Lea Matscheroth

Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): René Biasone, Ásta Davíðsdóttir, Julie Kernarec

31.07

Assessment/problem

A lot of off-road driving tracks on Vigdísavellaleið needs to be erased.

Project

- The off-road driving tracks were raked.



Eldborg undir Geitahlíð, natural monument

Number of volunteers' teams: 1

Working days: 5

Team leader(s): Imke Demitz

Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): René Biasone, Julie Kermarec, Ásta Davíðsdóttir

01.08


Assessment/problem

Archaeological sites are being damaged on the crater floor due to foot traffic. Trails are scattered throughout the area. Signs need to be added to the circular route.

Project

- Trails were closed on the sides of the crater and at its summit with landscaping.
- Signs were added to the new hiking path going around the crater.
- Signs were repainted.



	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Herdísarvík, Nature reserve</h2> <p style="text-align: center;"> Number of volunteers' teams: 2 Working days: 9 Team leader(s): Imke Demitz & Lea Matscheroth Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): René Biasone, Ásta Davíðsdóttir, Julie Kermarec </p> <p style="text-align: center;">03.08</p>
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Assessment/problem	The shore needs to be cleaned every year.
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Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A big beach cleaning was organised and many trashes were collected.
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Tröllabörn, natural monument

Number of volunteers' teams: 1

Working days: 4

Team leader(s): Lea Matscheroth

Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): René Biasone, Ásta Davíðsdóttir, Julie Kermarec

01.08



Assessment/problem

The lupine in the area needs to be eradicated. A hiking trail through the area needs to be better marked.

Project

- A trail was way-marked.
- The lupine was uprooted.



Litluborgir, natural monument

Number of volunteers' teams: 1

Working days: 4

Team leader(s): Lea Matscheroth

Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): René Biasone, Ásta Davíðsdóttir, Julie Kermarec

02.08

Assessment/problem

There are a lot of unwanted paths in the area that need to be closed. The vegetation is damaged due to trampling.

Project

- A path was marked.
- The unwanted paths were closed with poles and ropes.



Ástjörn, nature reserve, natural monument

Number of volunteers' teams: 2

Working days: 9

Team leader(s): Imke Demitz & Lea Matscheroth

Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): René Biasone, Ásta Davíðsdóttir, Julie Kermarec

04.08



Assessment/problem

The lupine is expanding within the nature reserve.

Project

- The lupine was uprooted.



Gróttu, nature reserve

Number of volunteers' teams: 1

Working days: 5

Team leader(s): Imke Demitz

Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): René Biasone, Ásta Davíðsdóttir, Julie Kernarec

02.08



Assessment/problem

Angelica and cow parsley are expanding in the nature reserve and need to be removed.

Project

- Angelica and cow parsley were removed with roots.



Dyngjufjallaleið, Vatnajökull National Park

Number of volunteers' teams: 2 (one team with 3 volunteers)

Working days: 39

Team leader(s): Imke Demitz & Verena Stammberger

Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Sigurður Erlingsson & Anna Þorsteinsdóttir

06.08 – 12.08

13.08 – 19.08



Assessment/problem

On Dyngjufjallaleið (F910) there is a lot of off-road driving and unwanted paths. It is both regular off-road driving and off-road that widens the road. It is poorly marked, and it needs to be fixed to make only one road the clearest as possible and as well as prevent unwanted paths. The correct path is often impassable, which causes off-road driving.

Project

- Large rocks were moved from the road.
- The road F910 was marked from Fjallsend to Surtluf læðu.
- The road was marked with stones.



	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Skaftafell, Vatnajökull National Park</h2> <p style="text-align: center;"> Number of volunteers' teams: 2 Working days: 48 Team leader(s): Roger Whyshall Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Hrafnhildur Ævarsdóttir </p> <p style="text-align: center;">11.06 – 17.06</p>
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<p>Assessment/problem</p>	<p>Eystragil (S5/S6): some steps need to be added to the bridge from 2022 - ice bank is still forming at the bridge so it needs to be improved before next winter. Some stone steps are needed on east and west side of bridge from 2022 to connect the bridge to the trail.</p>
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<p>Project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wooden steps were built on the east side of new bridge in Eystragil and on the way from Svartifoss to Eystragil. • Several drains and steps were built on the path at Eystragil near new bridge.
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Múlagljúfur

Number of volunteers' teams: 4 (one team with 3 volunteers)
 Working days: 88
 Team leader(s): Anna Lefering, David Millar Kelly Powell & Daniel Smith
 Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Árdís

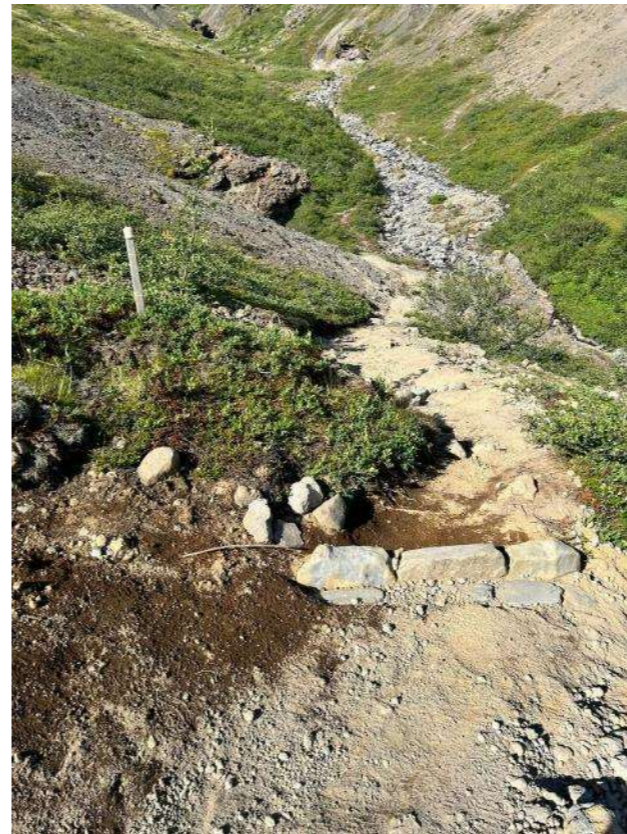
18.06 – 24.06
 25.06 – 01.07
 09.07 – 15.07
 16.07 – 22.07


Assessment/problem

A very popular area that needs maintenance, drains, steps and landscaping to close off the trails.

Project

- Several drains were built out of stone and timber.
- Unwanted paths were closed.



	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Hengifoss</h2> <p style="text-align: center;"> Number of volunteers' teams: 2 Working days: 49 Team leader(s): Léa Petrizzelli & Kelly Powell Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): </p> <p style="text-align: center;"> 25.06 – 01.07 23.07 – 29.07 </p>
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<p>Assessment/problem</p>	<p>The path has become too large in many places and vegetation has begun to disappear under the pressure of trampling. The viewpoint at Litlanesfoss has become very damaged, heavily trampled onto and vegetation has disappeared over a large area.</p>
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|-----------------------|---|
| <p>Project</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poles and ropes were installed to close unwanted paths. • Platforms that were damaged after the winter were repaired. • A new footpath was made around a large boulder that could not be moved. |
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Glymur

Number of volunteers' teams: 1

Working days: 17

Team leader(s): Lea Matscheroth

Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Arnheiður Hjörleifsdóttir

06.08 – 12.08

Assessment/problem

The hiking trail up to Glymur can get very busy and is very challenging. The municipality has been working with the landowners of Stóra-Botn to maintain and improve the trail. The goal is to continue this work with an emphasis on safety and nature conservation.

Project

- Several drains and steps were built on the trail.
- The loaded wall at the viewing platform was heavily reloaded, as it had begun to collapse and was leaning outwards.
- The unwanted paths were closed.
- Signs were installed.
- The volunteers were assisted by the manager of the area for the rock sawing and drilling.

