



PROJECTS OF THE  
VOLUNTEERS OF THE  
ENVIRONMENT AGENCY  
OF ICELAND  
(UMHVERFISSTOFNUN)  
IN 2020

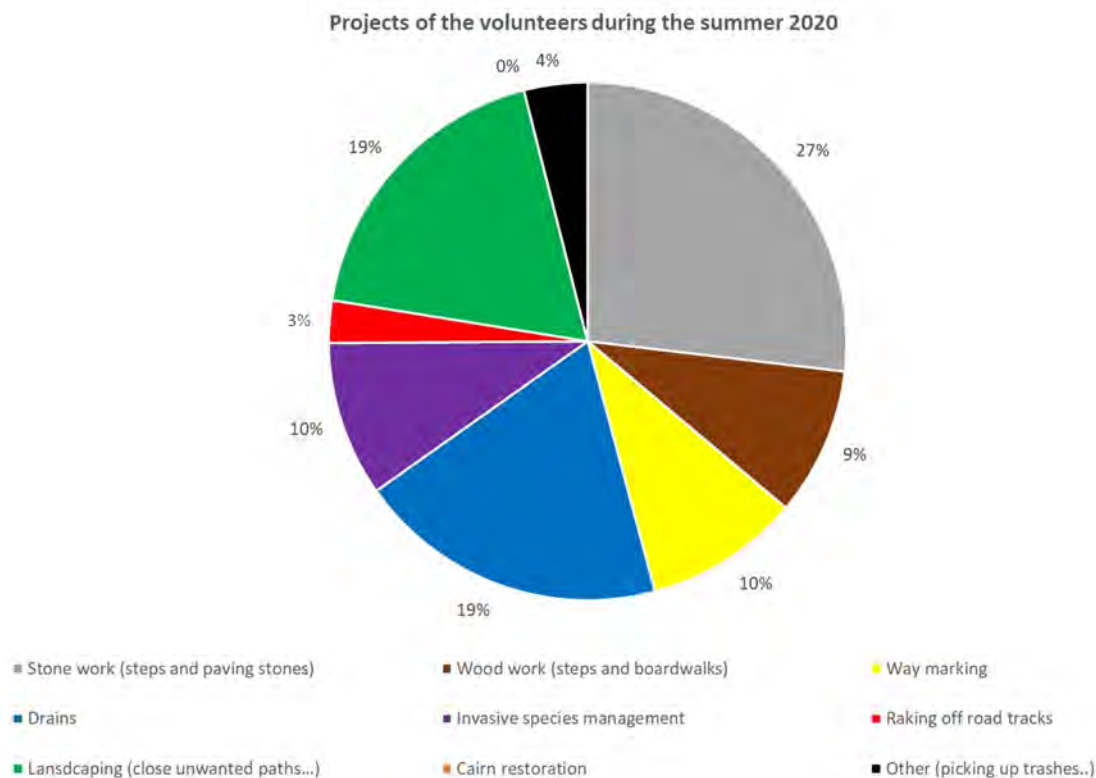


The volunteers of the environment agency worked in 30 protected areas all around Iceland, in the National Park of Snæfellsjökull (more specifically in Lóndrangar and Djúpalónssandur), in Mývatn, in the nature reserves of Hornstrandir, Vatnsfjörður, Þjórsárdalur, Fjallabak, Kerlingarfjöll, Gullfoss, Hólmanes, Svarfaðardalur, Ingólfshöfði, Varmárósar, Húsafell, in the natural monumets of Dimmuborgir, Hverfjall, Grábrók, Hraunfossar, Eldborg í Hnappadal, Húsafell, Geysir, Dynjandi, Skógafoss, Háifoss, Eldborg í Bláfjöllum, Eldborgir undir Geitahlið, Borgir, in the Reykjanes country park and in many other areas registered on Náttúruminjaskrá like Látrabjarg, Stampar og Keilir.

**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).
- 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, Rauðisandur, Reykjanes).
- Assisting the staff in 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 (returners and leaders) 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 2020. The chart below is presenting the type of work the volunteers has been doing.



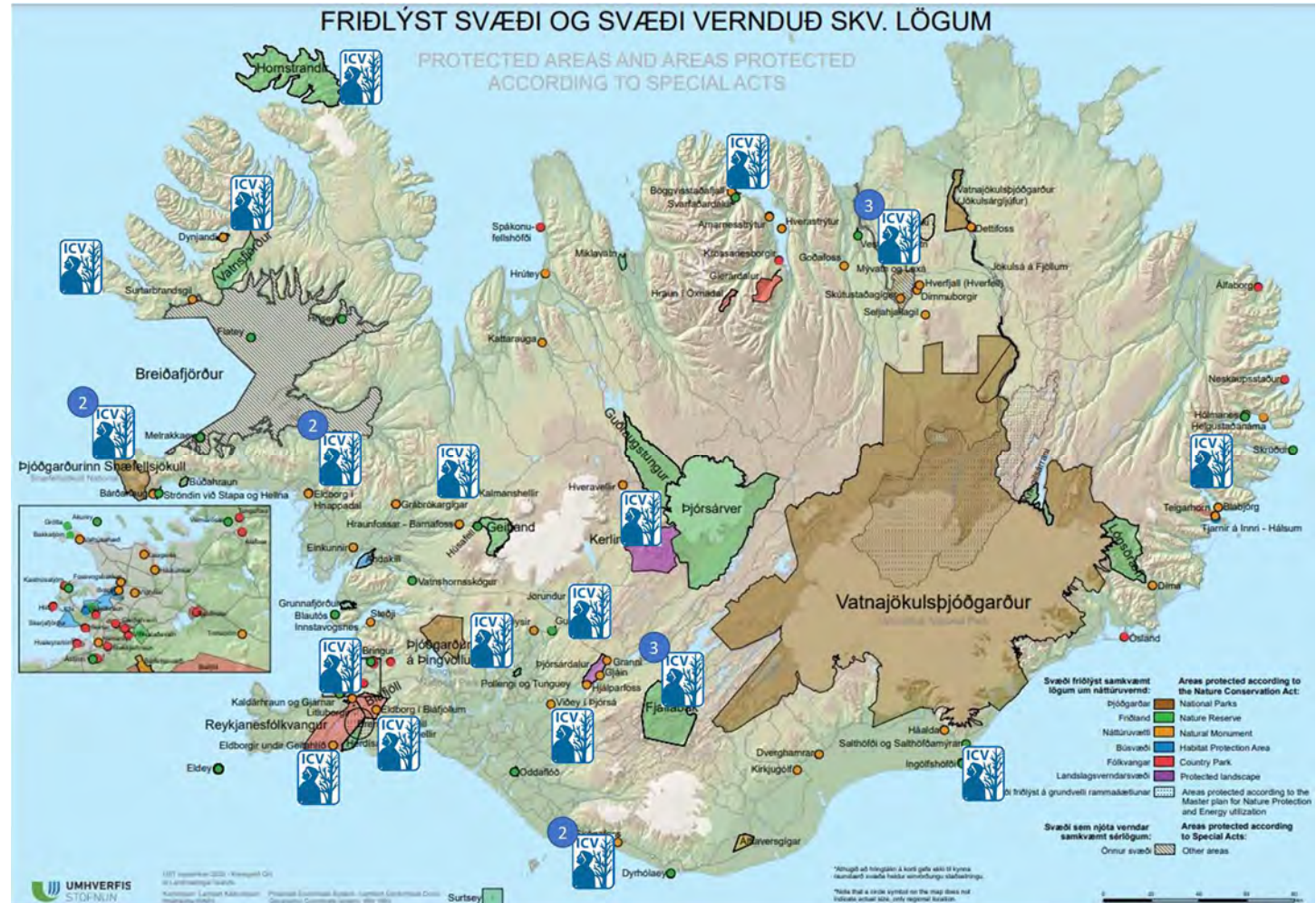
Below and for each protected area are the assessment, what has been done and some pictures.

*Projects made by the volunteers during summer 2020*



Location of the constructions and work made by the volunteers in 2020		
SITES	w.w	w.d.
Preparation/Coordination	1,8	9
Leaders training	5	25
SNÆFELSJÖKULL ÞJÓÐG.	14	70
ELDBORG Í BIÁFJÖLLUM	1	5
ELDBORG UNDIR GEITAHLIÐ	4,4	22
ELDBORG Í HNAÞP.	8	40
MÝVATN	15,2	76
SVARFAÐARDALUR	8	40
VATNSFJÖRÐUR	4,4	22
LÁTRABJARG	5,4	27
HORNSTRANDIR	8,4	42
HRAUNFOSSAR	2,8	14
GRÁBROK	0,8	4
HÚSAFELL	0,8	4
ÞJÓRSÁDALUR	10,2	51
KERLINGARFJÖLL	5,4	27
GULLFOSS	4,4	22
GEYSIR	5,4	27
FJALLABAK	11,2	56
SKÓGAFOSS	9,8	49
HOLMANES	4,4	22
INGÓLFSHÖFÐI	4,8	24
ÁSTJÖRN	3	15
STAMPAR	1	5
KEILIR	0,4	2
BORGIR	0,1	0,5
LAUGARÁS	0,8	4
VARMARÓRAR	0,2	1
Working weeks/days	141,1	705,5
UST SITES	131,8	659
OTHERS	2,5	12,5
Preparation and training	6,8	34

## LOCATIONS OF THE PROJECTS MADE BY THE VOLUNTEERS IN 2020





# Snæfellsjökull National Park

Number of volunteer's teams: 2

Working days: 70

Team leader(s): Kerry Ireland, Christopher Long, Robert Price, Lucía Escribano Morales & Irene Lopes Cordeiro de Noronha Correia  
Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Jón Björnsson / Linda Björk Hallgrímsdóttir

28.06 – 04.07



## Assessment/Problem

**Djúpalónssandur:** Work had to be done in the hiking trail, Draugakleif, which is at the east of Nautastigur and goes down to Djúpalónssandur. Some unwanted path needed to be closed and some steps had to be fixed  
**Lóndrangar:** some wooden steps need to be added to the steps that were done in 2018 and to improve the safety of the visitors.

## Project

- Steps were repaired on the footpath down to Djúpalónssandur. Unwanted paths were closed.
- Wooden steps were built by Lóndrangar (the steps are now connecting the one that were done in 2018).





## Eldborg í Hnappadal, nature monument

Number of volunteer's teams: 2 (2 teams of 4 volunteers)

Working days: 40

Team leader(s): Irene Lopes Cordeiro de Noronha Correia & Lars Scharfe

Expert (or Ranger): Þórhildur María Kristinsdóttir

21.06 – 27.06

02.08 – 08.08



### Assessment/Problem

In 2018 began a work of restoring the steps from the hiking path until the crater. This work needed to be continued in order to improve the safety of the visitors, as the hiking trail can be challenging at the top of the crater with high and difficult steps to walk on.

### Project

- Continuation of the restoration of the steps up to the crater. The hiking trail to the crater was restored which improved its safety.







## Hraunfossar, nature monument / Húsafellsskógur, nature reserve / Grábrók, nature monument

Number of volunteer's teams: 1 (4 volunteers' team)

Working days: 22

Team leader(s): Joanne Evans

Expert (or Ranger): Þórhildur María Kristinsdóttir

16.08 – 22.08

### Assessment/Problem

**Hraunfossar/Barnafoss** : renewal of the drains underneath the hiking trail to resist to the formation of ice during winter.

**Grábrók** : closing scars by the path and closing unwanted path with moss transplantation

**Húsafellsskógur** : Birch has grown and needed to be cut. Some old trees had fallen over the hiking trail.

### Project

- A drain was built on the hiking trail in Hraunfossar
- Moss transplantation by the path in Grábrók
- Cutting trees by the path in Húsafell





## Vatnsfjörður, nature reserve / Dynjandi, nature monument



**Number of volunteers teams:** 1 (1 four men team)  
**Working days:** 22  
**Team leader(s):** Lucía Escribano Morales  
**Expert (or Ranger):** Edda Kristín Eiríksdóttir

**05.07 – 11.07**

### Assessment/Problem

**Dynjandi:** Drains needed some maintenance and restoration. Stone steps needed to be repaired due to damage caused by water erosion. A drain had to be repaired to work properly as well as stone steps just right above it. The path needed to be widened if possible, by putting stones at the right place. Gravel could be added in between the wooden steps.


**Hörgsnes:** The steep grassy ridge on the footpath made it very slippery. On the way from Klettinum Hörg to Gíslahelli, the hiking trail needed to be widened as well as 7-8 woodensteps (the material can be found on the workplace). Below Gíslahelli, some old wooden steps needed also to be fixed.

### Project

- Wooden steps were built on the hiking path of Hörgsnes and the material to fill in the gaps was extracted by carving in a tree at Þingmannaheiði
- Drain was built on the natural trail by Dynjandi waterfall
- The volunteers helped the rangers with landscaping the surroundings of the parking lot and the hiking trail by Dynjandi





	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Látrabjarg, other site</h2> <p style="text-align: center;"> <b>Number of volunteers' teams:</b> 1 (the volunteers didn't work one day due to weather conditions)  <b>Working days:</b> 27  <b>Team leader(s):</b> Lindsay Selmes  <b>Expert (or Ranger):</b> Edda Kristín Eiríksdóttir    <b>12.07 – 18.07</b> </p>
--	---

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment/Problem</b></p>	<p><b>Keflavík:</b> the beach by Keflavik needed to be cleaned of all the trashes</p> <p><b>Rauðisandur:</b> The lupine patch that was controlled in the past years nearby the sheep grazing is now spreading. Lupines needed to be cut and pulled with the roots to contain the spreading.</p>
--	---

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Project</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beach cleaning in Keflavík</li> <li>• Lupines was cut and pulled in Rauðisandur and the plastic of the straw bale was removed</li> </ul> <p>On the Friday morning, the volunteers didn't work due to the weather conditions.</p>
---	---





# Hornstrandir, nature reserve

Number of volunteers' teams: 1 (for 10 days)  
Working days: 42  
Team leader(s): Irene Lopes Cordeiro de Noronha Correia  
Expert (or Ranger): Kristín Ósk Jónasdóttir

05.07 – 14.07



## Assessment/Problem


**Hesteyri:** the hiking trails in Hesteyri needed to be widened. The hiking trail has to be drained by the village as well as a small wooden bridge needed to be built.

## Project

- Maintenance of the path (steps and drains) in Hesteyrarfjörður.
- A bridge was built on the way to the village
- Several hiking paths were widen in Hesteyri





	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Svarfaðardalur, nature reserve</h2> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Number of volunteers' teams:</b> 1 + 2 volunteers for 2 days and 3 volunteers for 3 days  <b>Working days:</b> 40  <b>Team leader(s):</b> Danny Lake  <b>Expert (or Ranger):</b> Davíð Ó. Hansson / Arna Hjörleifsdóttir</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>16.08 – 22.08</b>  <b>23.08 – 29.08</b></p>
---	--

<p><b>Assessment/Problem</b></p>	<p>The hiking trail between Hánefsstaða and Húsabakka needed to be fixed. A path had to be done through the woodland. Trees needed pruning and cutting and the hiking trail needed some material. A new path needed to be done until the footbridge.</p>
----------------------------------	--

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <p><b>Project</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction of a wooden bridge</li> <li>• Maintenance of the hiking trail</li> <li>• Construction of wooden steps</li> <li>• Landscaping and closing of unwanted paths</li> <li>• Pruning some of the trees</li> </ul> |
|-----------------------|--|





# Mývatn, nature monument



**Number of volunteers' teams:** 3 (1 team of 4 volunteers)  
**Working days:** 76  
**Team leader(s):** Lucía, Christopher Long & Danny Lake  
**Expert (or Ranger):** Davíð Ö. Hansson / Arna Hjörleifsdóttir

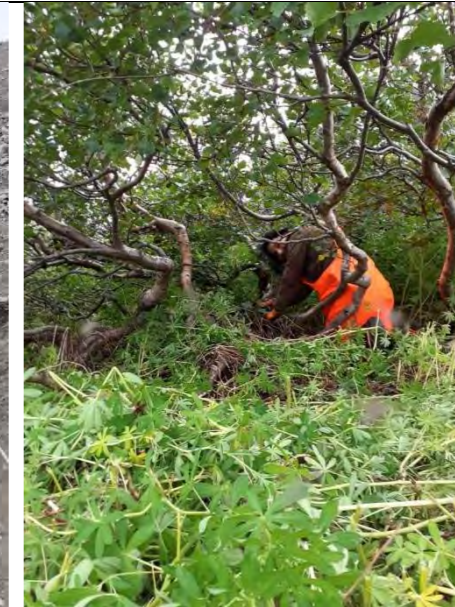
**12.07 – 18.07**  
**19.07 – 25.07**  
**09.08 – 15.08**

## Assessment/Problem

**Hiking paths in Vindbelgjarfjall:** Improvements needed to be made on the hiking trail (steep slope) and on the wooden steps. They indeed needed to be fixed and better defined. The drains needed to be cleaned and repaired. The hiking trails needed to be marked at the top.  
**Skútustaðagígur:** The hiking path through the wetland had to be repaired. The path was moved in 2019 but there was still 10 meters very wet.  
**Lupines and Angelica** on the protected areas of Mývatn and Laxá river are spreading.

## Project

- Pulling lupines by Sandvatn
- Drains were built on the hiking trails up to Vindbelgjarfjall
- The stones steps were widened and restored by Gatklett in Dimmuborgir
- The view point was defined by the „Church“ in Dimmuborgir
- The hiking trail in Hverfjall was repaired and marked so as to improve visitor's safety





# Hólmanes, nature reserve

**Number of volunteers' teams:** 1 (four volunteers' teams)  
**Working days:** 22  
**Team leader(s):** Kerry Ireland  
**Expert (or Ranger):** Lára Björnsdóttir

**19.07 – 25.07**



## Assessment/Problem

The area of Hólmanes needed to be better defined. Some maintenance had to be done on the paths.

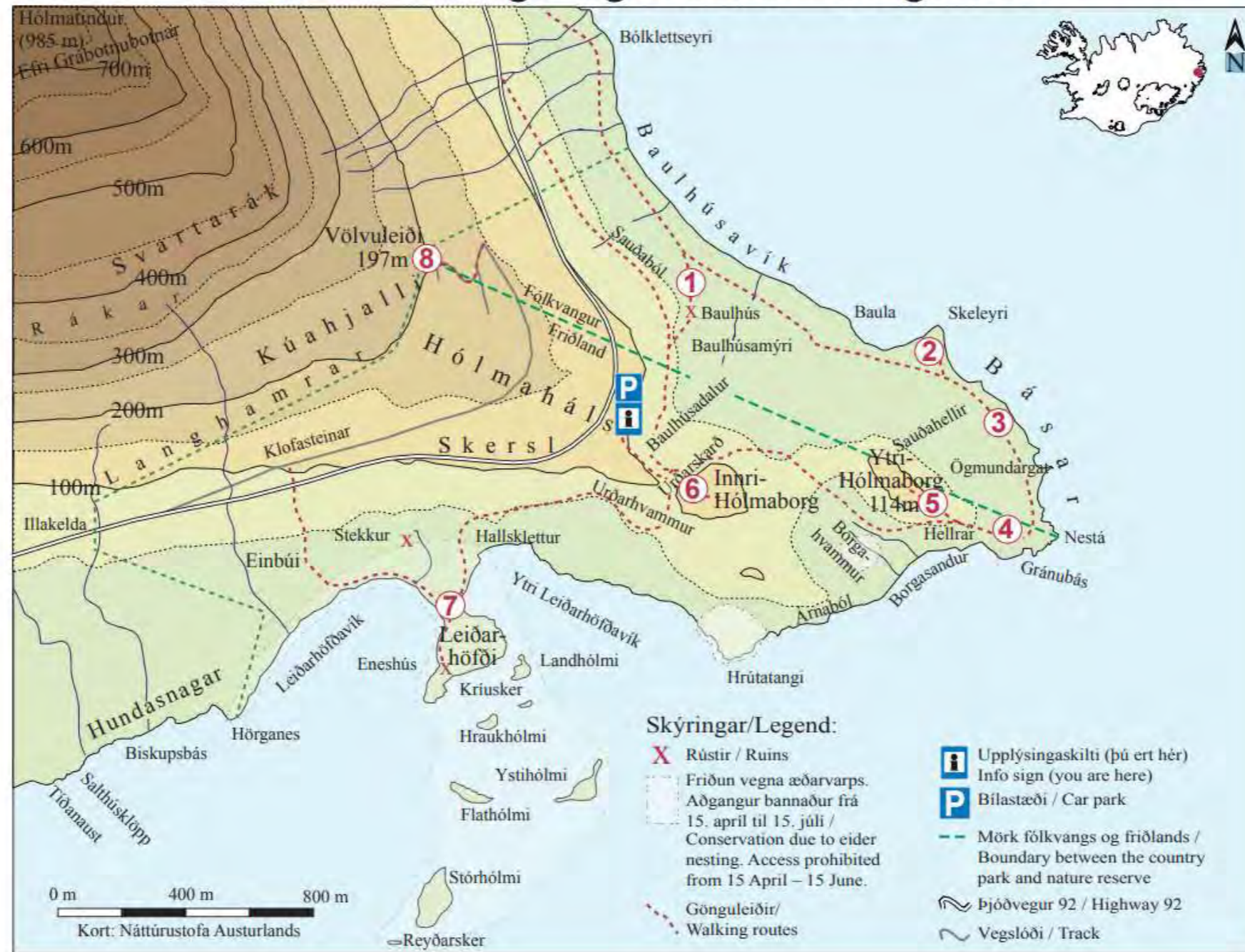
## Project

- Path was fixed (stone steps and gravels were added by Hólmborg) as the steps were too high.
- Drains on the path down to Hólmanesi were fixed
- The unwanted paths were closed and landscaped, the track from Urðarhvammur to Leiðarhöfði was closed until a better path is found.
- Way marking was done on the path from Ytri Hólmborg until Básar, hiking trail from numbers 4 to 3 on the map (see the map below).
- The volunteers assisted the ranger to set up a counter by the path nearby the parking lot






# Hólmanesfólkvangur og friðland - Gönguleiðir





	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Ingólfshöfði, nature reserve</h2> <p style="text-align: center;"> <b>Number of volunteers' teams:</b> 1 (the volunteers didn't work one day due to weather conditions)  <b>Working days:</b> 24  <b>Team leader(s):</b> Kerry Ireland  <b>Expert (or Ranger):</b> Magnús Freyr Sigurkarlsson         </p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>26.07 – 01.08</b></p>
--	---

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Assessment/Problem</b></p>	<p>The hiking trail needed to be defined so as the nesting areas of Puffins and Skuas wouldn't be disturbed by unwanted paths that has increased in the past years. It is necessary to move and mark a new path, away from the cliffs and the nesting area, as the old path has become too dangerous. It is also important for the path to be clearly defined by removing rocks and gravels.</p>
--	--

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Project</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stones were cleared from the path and used to define the new path by the cap and to extend the old path to improve the safety of visitors.</li> <li>• The walking path was marked around the island.</li> </ul> <p>On Friday, the volunteers couldn't work due to the weather conditions.</p>
---	--





## Skógafoss, nature monument

Number of volunteers' teams: 2 (1 four volunteers' team)

Working days: 49

Team leader(s): Jacob Williams & Danny Lake

Expert (or Ranger): Magnús Freyr Sigurkarlsson

19.07 – 25.07

26.07 – 01.08

### Assessment/Problem

**Skógaheiði:** The situation in Skógaheiði has improved considerably thanks to the volunteers work in the past year, especially by creating a path along to Skógargil. This work needed to be continued on the path along the gorge with drains, maintenance and landscaping.

**Kvernufoss:** By Kvernufoss waterfall and Kvernugljúfur canyon, the traffic had increased significantly in the past years and there was no clear management of the visitors. It was important to decide of a main path, define and mark it.

### Project

- Unwanted paths were closed as well as landscaped both by Skógaheiði and Kvernufoss
- In Skógaheiði, several drains were done mainly with stones and gravel. In many places, the path was landscaped to fit better to the surroundings and many unwanted paths were closed by the main hiking trail.
- Stone steps were built by Kvernufoss waterfall on the main path







## Geysir, nature monument

**Number of volunteers' teams: 1**  
**Working days: 27**  
**Team leader(s): Lindsay Selmes**  
**Expert (or Ranger): Valdimar Kristjánsson**

**09.06 – 16.06**

### Assessment/Problem

The path in Laugarfell needed to be repaired: the edges of the path needed to be fixed, drains had to be built, gravel by the path needed to be prevent from erosion.

### Project

- Stone steps were built at the beginning of the hiking trail up to Laugarfell from Konungshver, which were made in 2019 and were in poor conditions.
- The edges were loaded along the path up to the new path to the viewing point.
- Many drains were made on the hiking path.





# Gullfoss, nature reserve

Number of volunteers' teams: 1 (1 four volunteers' team)

Working days: 22

Team leader(s): Lars Scharfe

Expert (or Ranger): Valdimar Kristjánsson

19.07 – 25.07



## Assessment/Problem

There are a lot of wet areas on the hiking path down to Gullfoss and puddles had formed as there were no drains. The gravel on the path down to the waterfall was gone due to erosion.

## Project

- Renovations were made and 4 drains were built on the path down to the waterfall (Gullfoss). The edge of the paths are defined with stones to prevent fine gravel to wash off the path in case of heavy rain.





## Þjórsárdalur, protected landscape

**Number of volunteers' teams:** 1 four volunteers' team + 2 teams for 2 days

**Working days:** 51 (27 + 24)

**Team leader(s):** Richard Connell, Kerry Ireland & Christopher Long

**Expert (or Ranger):** Hákon Ásgeirsson

**26.07 – 01.08**

**07.08 – 08.08**

### Assessment/Problem

Maintenance and way marking of the paths needed. By Háifoss, the path by the edge of the cliff was not well defined and the section suffered from erosion due to water. Some wild and unwanted paths were created and needed to be closed. In addition, the viewpoints were in poor condition and needed to be fixed. In Gjáin, the path was in a bad condition by a small river and the vegetation was damaged. On the hiking path between Háifoss and Stangar, the way markers had to be renewed.

### Project

- In Háifoss, stone drain-steps were built, and the viewpoints were repaired.
- In Gjáin, the hiking path was repaired by one of the bridge.
- The hiking trail between Háifoss and Stangar was waymarked (the project was not finished as it takes a lot more time)





# Fjallabak, nature reserve



**Number of volunteers' teams:** 3 (2 volunteers' teams worked only 2 days due to weather conditions)  
**Working days:** 56  
**Team leader(s):** Kerry Ireland, Christopher Long & Joanne Evans  
**Expert (or Ranger):** Hákon Ásgeirsson

**02.08 – 08.08**  
**09.08 – 15.08**

## Assessment/Problem

In Landmannalaugar, the path from the parking lot was in poor conditions and unwanted path had formed. The fences along the campsites in Landmannalaugar and Landmannahellir were old and needed to be renewed. There were as well some unwanted paths from the campsite in Landmannahellir that needed to be closed.

## Project

- Maintenance on the path and closing by landscaping the unwanted paths in Landmannalaugar.
- Restoration of the fences alongside the campsite in Landmannalaugar and Landmannahellir
- Landscaping and closing the unwanted paths in Landmannahellir.

2 volunteers' teams worked only 2 days due to weather conditions.





## Kerlingarfjöll, protected landscape / Hveravellir, nature monument



**Number of volunteers´ teams:** 1 (the volunteers didn´t work one day due to weather conditions)

**Working days:** 27

**Team leader(s):** Christopher Long

**Expert (or Ranger):** Daníel Freyr Jónsson

**26.07 – 01.08**

### Assessment/Problem

Some steps needed to be fixed on the path in Hveradalur. Many paths needed to be fixed in Hveradalur in Kerlingarfjöll as well as maintenance on the wooden steps.

### Project

- Off road driving tracks were raked by Kjalvegur road.
- Wooden steps were fixed in Kerlingarfjöll.

On Friday, the volunteers didn´t work due to weather conditions.





## Laugarás, nature monument

Team: 4 volunteers

Working days: 4

Expert (or Ranger): René Biasone, Julie Kermarec, Ásta Davíðsdóttir

16.06



### Assessment/Problem

There is a lot of lupine in the area and the aim is to eradicate it according to protection and management plan of the area.

### Project

- Lupine was pulled by the main path and within the indigenous vegetation





## Eldborg í Bláfjöllum, nature monument

**Team:** 1 team leader + 1 team of 4 summer workers

**Working days:** 5

**Team leader:** Lars Scharfe

**Summer workers:** Júlíus Flosason, Dagur Júlíusson, Karen Egilsdóttir & Tye Brooks

**Expert (or Ranger):** René Biasone, Julie Kermarec, Ásta Davíðsdóttir

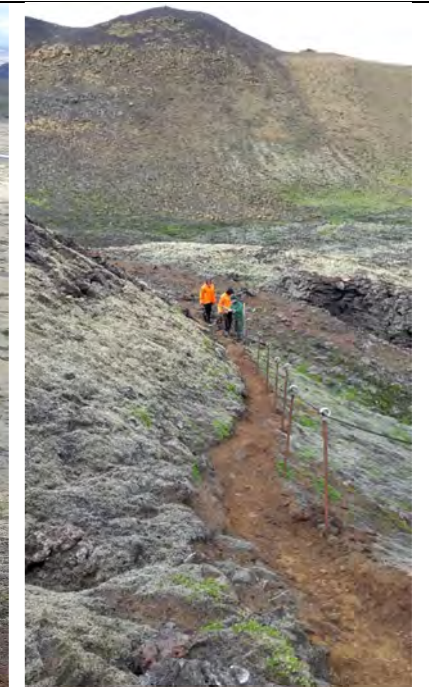
**05.07 – 11.07**

### Assessment/Problem

Steep and uncomfortable path by the crater. The metal steps were not used by the visitors as the steps were too uncomfortable to walk on. Visitors started creating unwanted paths or trampling on the moss by the steps. The signpost by the parking lot was damaged due to the weather.

### Project

- A handrail was put up by the side of the steps – stairs so the visitors can hold the rope and be safe while getting down the path
- Way markers were repainted and added to mark the path going around the mountain called Drottning
- The signpost was straightened
- Unwanted paths were closed with moss and stones
- Chain mats (that were used as stairs) were partially removed from the area





## Stóra Eldborg undir Geitahlíð, nature monument

**Team:** 1 team of 5 volunteers + 1 team of 4 summer workers

**Working days:** 22

**Team leader:** Lea Matscheroth

**Summer workers:** Júlíus Flosason, Dagur Júlíusson, Karen Egilsdóttir & Tye Brooks

**Expert (or Ranger):** René Biasone, Julie Kermarec, Ásta Davíðsdóttir

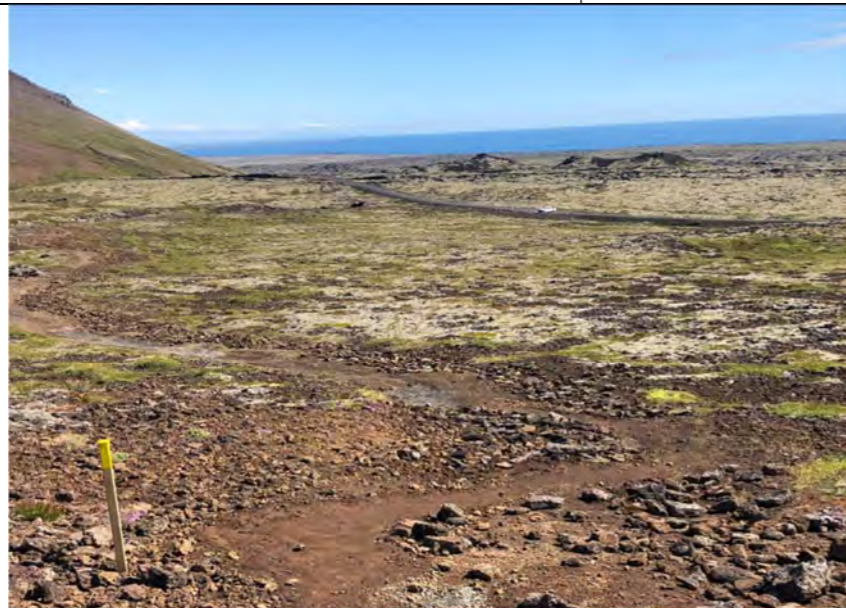
**12.07 – 16.07**

### Assessment/Problem

Off road driving on the walking path – some visitors were driving until the crater which created a lot of damages on the vegetation and the geological monument. The parking lot was not well marked and not big enough for the visitors to park. The traffic on the hiking trail had to be stopped to protect the area and for visitors to enjoy their experience as well. Many unwanted paths by the crater that needed to be closed to improve the safety of visitors.

### Project

- The main path was transformed into a nice hiking trail with gravels. The path was also shaped with more natural curves.
- The unwanted paths were closed with rocks and landscaping
- Way markers were put by the path and signs were set on the parking lot
- Poles were set on the steepest part of the path by the crater to help the visitors to walk safely
- The parking lot was redefined with big stones. Some gravel was also added.





	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Stampar, other site</h2> <p style="margin: 5px 0;"><b>Team:</b> 1 team of 5 volunteers + 1 team of 4 summer workers</p> <p style="margin: 5px 0;"><b>Working days:</b> 5</p> <p style="margin: 5px 0;"><b>Team leader:</b> Lea Matscheroth</p> <p style="margin: 5px 0;"><b>Summer workers:</b> Júlíus Flosason, Dagur Júlíusson, Karen Egilsdóttir &amp; Tye Brooks</p> <p style="margin: 5px 0;"><b>Expert (or Ranger):</b> René Biasone, Julie Kermarec, Ásta Davíðsdóttir</p> <p style="margin: 5px 0;"><b>17.07</b></p>
---	---

<b>Assessment/Problem</b>	The path from the parking lot was not well marked leading to unwanted paths by the crater as well that were damaging the geological monuments.
<b>Project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The main path was cleared of rocks which were used to mark the path by its sides</li> <li>The unwanted paths were landscaped and closed mainly by raking and putting up stones</li> </ul>





## Varmárósar, nature reserve

**Team:** 1 volunteer + 1 team of 4 summer workers

**Working days:** 1

**Summer workers:** Júlíus Flosason, Dagur Júlíusson, Karen Egilsdóttir & Tye Brooks

**Expert (or Ranger):** René Biasone, Julie Kermarec, Ásta Davíðsdóttir

06.08



### Assessment/Problem

Large spreading of invasive species on this area that needed to be controlled.

### Project

- The spread of invasive vegetation was prevented by removing roots as much as possible





## Borgir, nature monument

**Team:** 1 volunteer + 1 team of 4 summer workers

**Working days:** 1

**Summer workers:** Júlíus Flosason, Dagur Júlíusson, Karen Egilsdóttir & Tye Brooks

**Expert (or Ranger):** René Biasone, Julie Kermarec, Ásta Davíðsdóttir

**07.08**



### Assessment/Problem


A lot of lady's-mantle (*Alchemilla mollis*) is growing over the indigenous vegetation of the area and needs to be controlled.

### Project

- Lady's-mantle was pulled as much as possible with the roots to control its spreading





	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Keilir, other site</h2> <p style="margin: 5px 0;"><b>Team:</b> 1 volunteer + 1 team of 4 summer workers  <b>Working days:</b> 2  <b>Summer workers:</b> Júlíus Flosason, Dagur Júlíusson, Karen Egilsdóttir &amp; Tye Brooks  <b>Expert (or Ranger):</b> René Biasone, Julie Kermarec, Ásta Davíðsdóttir</p> <p style="margin: 5px 0;"><b>13.08 – 14.08</b></p>
---	--

<b>Assessment/Problem</b>	The path was in poor conditions with many unwanted paths. The main path was also really wide due to the visitors trampling on moss searching for the path as it was not marked. There are a lot of damages on the moss in this area.
---------------------------	--

<b>Project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Way markers were put up on the path through the lava field</li> <li>The unwanted paths were closed with signs and stones as well as landscaping</li> </ul>
----------------	---

