



**UMHVERFIS
STOFNUN**
ENVIRONMENT
AGENCY

PROJECTS OF THE
VOLUNTEERS OF THE
ENVIRONMENT AGENCY
OF ICELAND
(UMHVERFISSTOFNUN)
2022

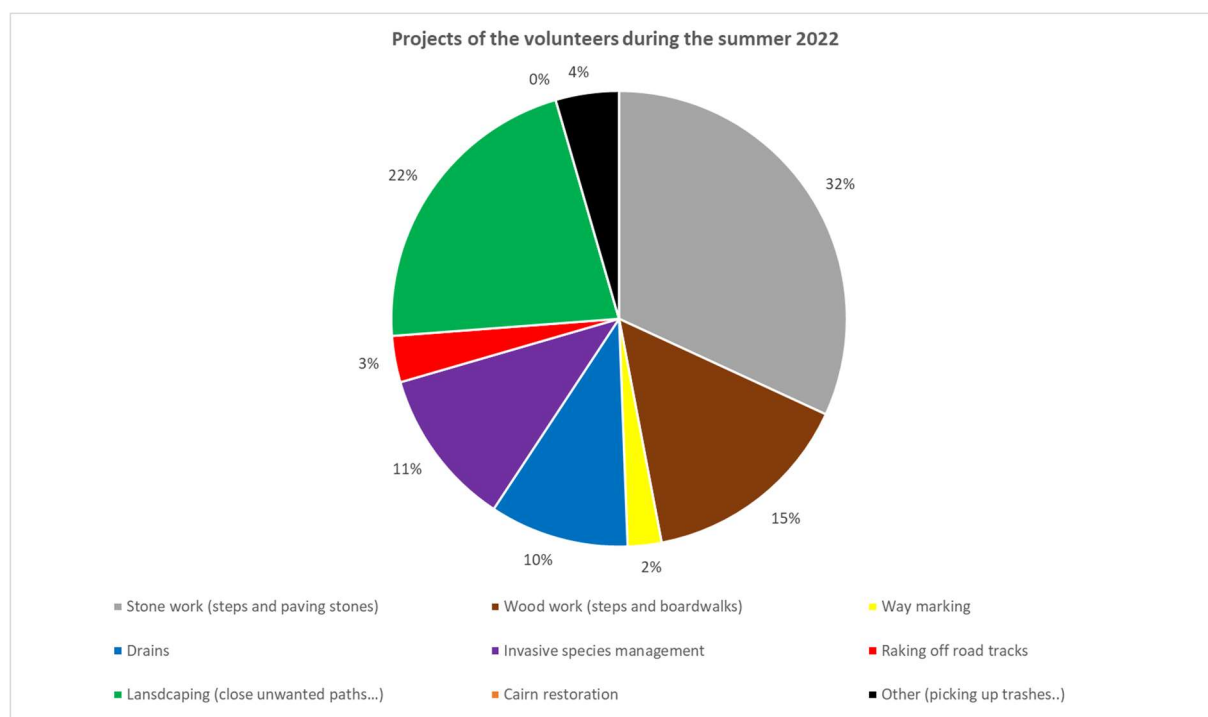


The volunteers of the environment agency worked in 27 protected areas during the summer 2022 all around Iceland, in the National Park of Snæfellsjökull (more specifically in Lóndrangar and Malarrif) and the Vatnajökull National Park (in Jökulsárgljúfur and Skaftafell), in Mývatn, in the nature reserves of Fjallabak, Flatey, Grótta, Gullfoss, Herdísarvík, Hólmanes, Hornstrandir, Húsafell, Svarfaðardalur and Vatnsfjörður, in the protected landscapes of Gerpissvæði, Þjórsárdalur and Kerlingarfjöll, in the protected habitat of Andakíll, in the natural monuments of Búrfellsgjá, Dimmuborgir, Dynjandi, Eldborg by Geitahlíð, Geysir, Grábrók, Hraunfossar - Barnafoss, Skógafoss, and in many other areas registered on the nature conservation register of Iceland (Náttúruminjaskrá) such as Rauðisandur and Eldfell in Heimaey.

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

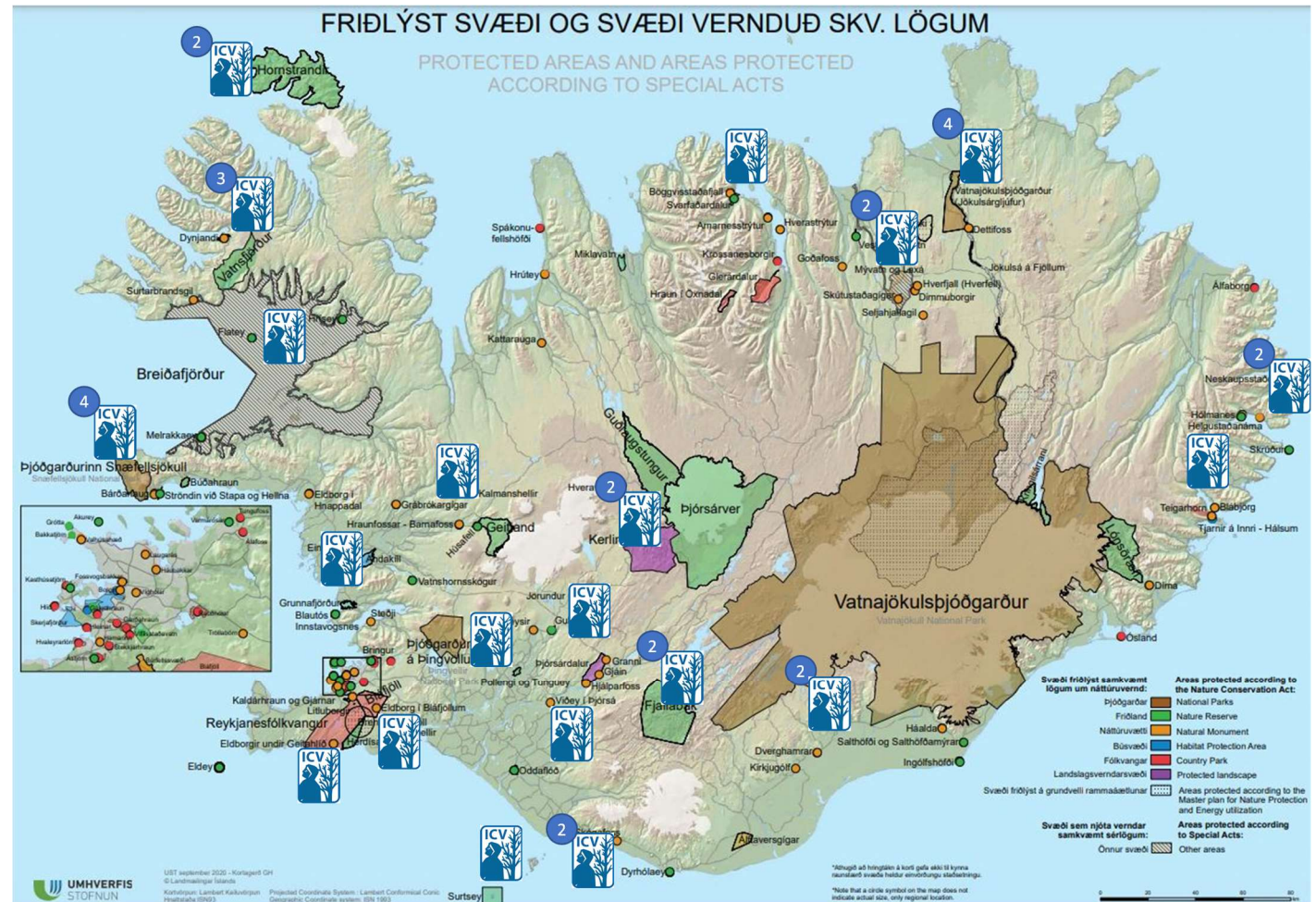
- Marking, maintaining and restoring natural trails by way marking, building steps and drains with stones or wood.
- Restoring landscapes and ecosystems (closing unwanted paths, raking off road tracks made by off road driving).
- Landscaping (restoring hiking trails in a way that they fit naturally in 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 2022. The chart below is presenting the type of work the volunteers has been doing.



Location of the constructions and work made by the volunteers in 2022		
SITES	w.w	w.d.
Preparation/Coordination	4	20
Leaders' training	2	10
SNÆFELSJÓKULL ÞJÓÐG.	26,6	133
ELDBORG UNDIR GEITAHLIÐ	1,6	8
BÚRFELL, BÚRFELLSGJÁ	11,2	56
HERDÍSARVÍK	0,4	2
TRÖLLABÖRN	1,4	7
GRÓTTA	4,6	23
HAMARINN	0,4	2
SANDVATN / MÝVATN	4,4	22
MÝVATN	1	5
HVERFJALL	4,4	22
DIMMUBORGIR	1	5
SVARFDÆLA	5,4	27
VATNSFJÖRÐUR	7,6	38
DYNJANDI	2,2	11
RAUÐISANDUR	2,4	12
FLATEY	7,4	37
HORNSTRANDIR	9,8	49
HRAUNFOSSAR-BARNAFOSS	2,6	13
GRÁBROK	2	10
HÚSAFELL	1	5
ANDAKÍLL	4	20
ÞJÓRSÁDALUR	3,2	16
KERLINGARFJÖLL	10,8	54
GULLFOSS	6,2	31
GEYSIR	4,6	23
FJALLABAK	10,8	54
SKÓGAFOSS	10,8	54
HÓLMANES	5,4	27
GERPISSVÆDI	11	55
VESTMANNAEYJAR	5,4	27
SKAFTAFELL - VJP	10,8	54
JÖKULSÁRGLJÚFUR - VJP	19,6	98
Working weeks/days	206	1030,0
UST SITES	161,8	809
OTHERS	38,2	191
Preparation and training	6	30

LOCATIONS OF THE VOLUNTEERS' PROJECTS IN 2022



Snæfellsjökull National Park

Number of volunteers' teams: 4

Working days: 133

Team leader(s): Robert Price, Verena Stammberger, Gabriele Albani, David Millar, José Andrés Montalvo Escudero & Roger Whysall
Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Hákon Ásgeirsson

05.06 – 11.06
12.06 – 18.06




Assessment/Problem

Malarrif - Lóndrangar: there was a lot of work needed on the trail from Malarrif to Lóndrangar. Unwanted paths had to be closed and many steps had to be repaired. The main problem was that the trail became very wet and the visitors went off the path creating wild trails.

Project



- Stone steps were repaired on the footpath by Malarrif.
- Wooden steps were built on the path up to Lóndrangar



	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Andakíll, habitat protected area</h2> <p style="text-align: center;"> Number of volunteers' teams: 1 (team of 6 volunteers) Working days: 20 Team leader(s): Kerry Ireland Expert (or Ranger): Þórhildur María Kristinsdóttir </p> <p style="text-align: center;">03.07 – 09.07</p>
---	---

<p>Assessment/Problem</p>	<p>A lot of lupines have expanded in the whole area.</p>
<p>Project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lupines and cow parsley were cut in Andakíll, a work done in coordination with the staff of the agricultural university in Hvanneyri.



	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Hraunfossar and Grábrók, nature monuments / Húsafell, nature reserve</h2> <p style="text-align: center;"> Number of volunteers' teams: 1 Working days: 28 Team leader(s): Bonnie Horrex Expert (or Ranger): Þórhildur María Kristinsdóttir </p> <p style="text-align: center;">10.07 – 16.07</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Assessment/Problem</p>	<p>Hraunfossar/Barnafoss: renewal of the drains underneath the hiking trail to resist to the formation of ice during winter.</p> <p>Grábrók: closing scars by the path and unwanted paths with moss transplantation.</p> <p>Húsafell: the trees must be cut by the path.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some stone steps were built in the path in Húsafell nature reserve. • Moss transplantation was done by the path in Grábrók. • Some trees were cut by the path in Hraunfossar and Barnafoss and a drain was repaired.
	

Flatey, Nature reserve

Number of volunteers' teams: 1 (7 manna Number of volunteers' teams)

Working days: 37

Team leader(s): Daniel Smith

Expert (or Ranger): Edda Kristín Eiríksdóttir

17.07 – 23.07

Assessment/Problem

The path inside the nature reserve needs to be fixed as many areas are becoming wet when it's raining. On difficult spots, stones have to be placed to walk up the path. The work needed has the aim to improve the situation on the hiking trail.

Project

- Edges were raised.
- Stone steps were built.
- Simple drains were built in many places of the path.
- Rocks were arranged in some sections as steppingstones, where the path was very wet.



Rauðisandur and Dynjandi, Nature monument

Number of volunteers' teams: 1
Working days: 23
Team leader(s): José Andrés Montalvo Escudero
Expert (or Ranger): Edda Kristín Eiríksdóttir

19.06 – 25.06

Assessment/Problem

Rauðisandur: Lupine is expanding in the area.

Dynjandi: The surroundings of the parking lot in Dynjandi needs to be cleared especially the drains, as vegetation has settled between stones and blocks drainage.

Project

- Volunteers mowed and pulled out lupines (with root) in Rauðisandur.
- Many drains were cleared at the parking lot of Dynjandi.



Surtarbrandsgil og Vatnsfjörður, Nature reserve

Sjálfbóðaliðahópar: 2 (1 þriggja manna Number of volunteers' teams)

Working days: 38

Team leader(s): Verena Stammberger & Robert Price

Expert (or Ranger): Edda Kristín Eiríksdóttir

26.06 – 02.07

24.07 – 30.07

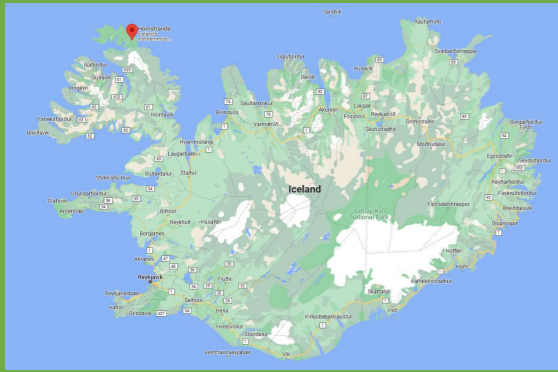
Assessment/Problem

Brjánslækur from the priest's residence to Hundafoss: the gravel path needs repair. The old flagstone that marks the beginning of the path needs to be trimmed and removed, and the gravel path that leads down the slope to the bridge over Hundafoss needs to be repaired. The repair should take place on a section of about 80 m of the path.

Project

- Paving was dug up and the path to Hundafoss repaired
- A wooden bridge was built
- Stone steps and a drain were built in the path





Hornstrandir, Nature reserve

Number of volunteers' teams: 3 (1 fjögurra manna Number of volunteers' teams og 1 tveggja manna Number of volunteers' teams)

Working days: 49

Team leader(s): Danny Lake, Sophie Aziz, Daniel Smith, David Millar
Expert (or Ranger): Kristín Ósk Jónasdóttir og Vésteinn Rúnarsson

19.06 – 25.06
26.06 – 02.07
10.07 – 16.07

Assessment/Problem

The work done during the summer 2021 has to be continued: maintenance of the path and building drains with stones.

Project

- Some repairs were made on the path (drains and stone steps) in Hornvík and Veiðileysufjörður.
- A little bridge was built with timber.



Svarfaðardalur, Nature reserve

Number of volunteers' teams: 1
Working days: 27
Team leader(s): Gabriele Albani
Expert (or Ranger): Ragnheiður Björk Sigurðardóttir
12.06 – 18.06

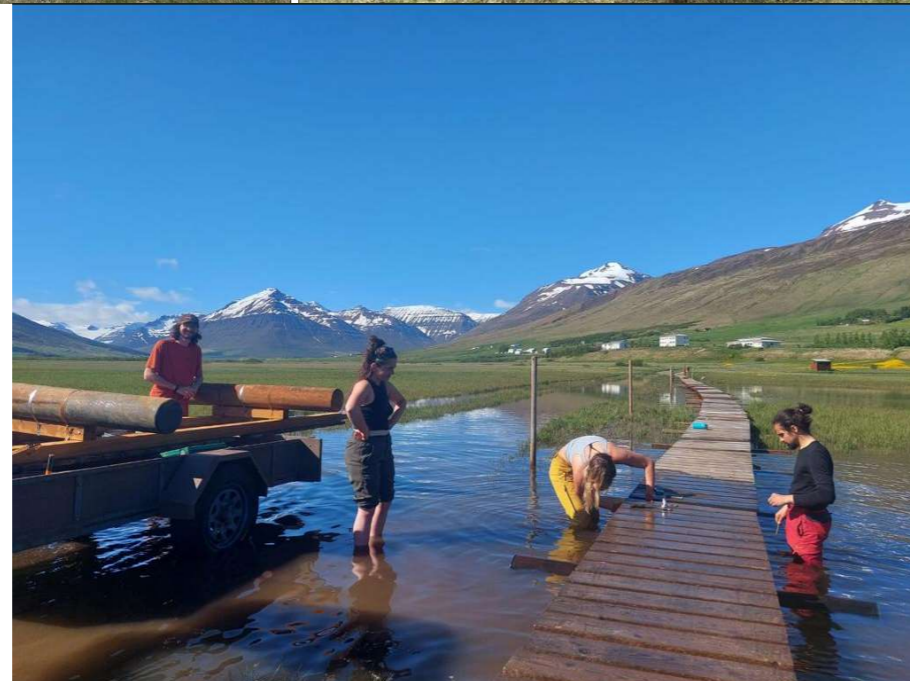


Assessment/Problem

The floating bridge needed to be fixed due to some damages that happened in 2021.

Project

- Repairing the floating bridge – the holes were repaired, and the bridge was put back into place.
- The hiking trail from Húsabakki to Nikurtjörn (7 km long) was waymarked.





Mývatn og Laxá, Nature reserve, Hverfjall, Nature monument and Dimmuborgir, Nature monument

Number of volunteers' teams: 2

Working days: 54

Team leader(s): José Andrés Montalvo Escudero & Andoni Alfaro Leránoz

Expert (or Ranger): Ragnheiður Björk Sigurðardóttir / Hannes Lárus Hjálmarsson

26.06 – 02.07

24.07 – 30.07

Assessment/Problem

Hiking trails in Dimmuborgir: the unwanted paths need to be closed.



Hverfjall: the hiking trail leading to the top of the crater on its south side is very steep and can become quite dangerous for visitors.

Lupines and cow parsley are expanding in the protected areas of Mývatn and Laxá - Sandvatn.

Project

- Lupine was slayed on the northern part of Sandvatn.
- The paths were maintained, and steps were made in Dimmuborgir.
- Some steps were made in the steepest slope of Hverfjall.



	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Hólmanes, Nature reserve</h2> <p style="text-align: center;"> Number of volunteers' teams: 1 Working days: 27 Team leader(s): Andoni Alfaro Leránoz Expert (or Ranger): Lára Björnsdóttir </p> <p style="text-align: center;">17.07 – 23.07</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Assessment/Problem</p>	<p>Invasive plants (lupines) are expanding in the area and it is crucial to control its expansion within the nature reserve like it was done in the previous years.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some drains were built on the hiking path. • Lupines were pulled with roots and in some other area, the lupine was slayed.
	

Gerpissvæði, Protected landscapes

Number of volunteers' teams: 2
Working days: 55
Team leader(s): Bonnie Horrex & Robert Price
Expert (or Ranger): Lára Björnsdóttir

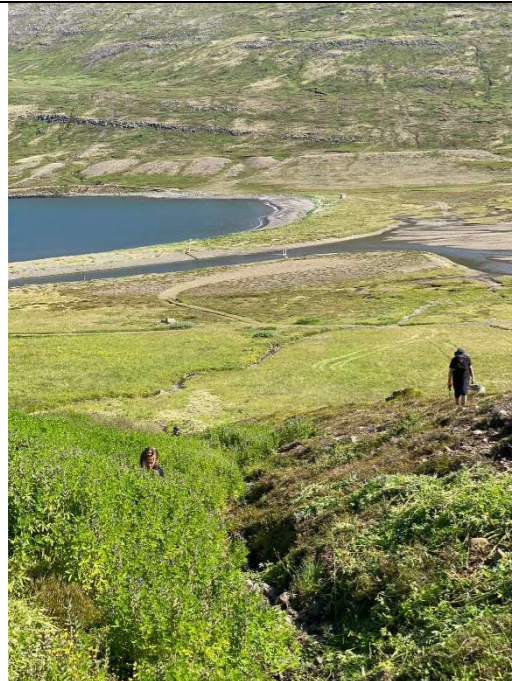
03.07 – 09.07
10.07 – 16.07


Assessment/Problem

The trail out to Barðsnes in Viðfjörður needs some maintenance as well as some other hiking trails in the area. Trails need to be more obvious from Viðfjörður, in addition to fixing drains and clearing landslides from the trails on the way out to Barðsnes.

Project

- Lupines were removed with roots and slayed.
- Common work with Stokkar og steinar (contractor) to repair the old road and bring it back to its original state.
- Several drains were built on this path.



	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Skógafoss, Nature monument</h2> <p style="text-align: center;"> Number of volunteers' teams: 2 Working days: 54 Team leader(s): Robert Price & Andoni Alfaro Leránoz Expert (or Ranger): Daníel Freyr Jónsson </p> <p style="text-align: center;"> 17.07 – 23.07 31.07 – 06.08 </p>
---	---

<p style="text-align: center;">Assessment/Problem</p>	<p>Skógaheiði: the work that has been done in the past years need to be continued by the gorge. Some drains need to be built, some unwanted paths need to be closed. Some landscaping by the new path up in Skógaheiði must be done as well.</p>
--	---

<p style="text-align: center;">Project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwanted paths were closed by landscaping. • In many areas, the path was landscaped to fit better in the environment and work was done in mudflats along the hiking trail as well.
---	---



Eldfell and Eldhraun í Heimaey

Number of volunteers' teams: 1
 Working days: 27
 Team leader(s): Kerry Ireland
 Expert (or Ranger): Magnús Freyr Sigurkarlsson

24.07 – 30.07



Assessment/Problem

The paths in the area are unclear and visitors are creating unwanted paths all around. The paths need to be created and maintained in Eldfell. The expansion of the lupine should be controlled and some areas need to be revegetated.

Project

- Maintenance of the trails.
- Landscaping up by the crater in Eldfjallajarðvegi to close some old and unwanted paths.



Gullfoss, Nature reserve

Number of volunteers' teams: 1
Working days: 31
Team leader(s): Verena Stammberger & Robert Price
Expert (or Ranger): Valdimar Kristjánsson

19.06 – 25.06
26.06 – 02.07



Assessment/Problem

The main path from Gullfoss to Brattholt needs to be repaired and some unwanted paths need to be closed.

Project

- Unwanted paths were closed with landscaping using rocks and vegetation.
- Many drains were built on different sections of the trail.



Geysir, Nature monument



Number of volunteers' teams: 1
Working days: 23
Team leader(s): Verena Stammberger & Robert Price
Expert (or Ranger): Valdimar Kristjánsson

19.06 – 25.06
26.06 – 02.07

Assessment/Problem

There is a lot to do in the area: repairing the paths on Laugarfell, build a drain on a footpath and control the expansion of the lupine.

Project

- Lupines were pulled with roots.
- Many drains were built on different sections of the trail.



Pjósárdalur, Protected landscapes

Number of volunteers' teams: 1 (1 team with 2 volunteers due to COVID)
Working days: 16
Team leader(s): David Millar
Expert (or Ranger): Magnús Freyr Sigurkarlsson

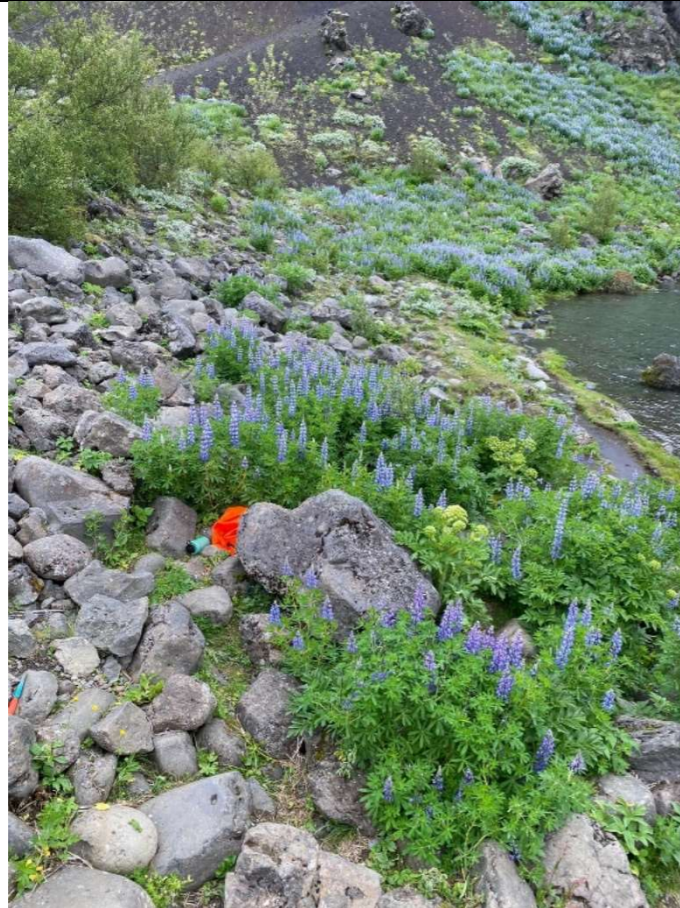
19.06 – 25.06

Assessment/Problem

There is a lot of lupines by Hjalparfoss that needs to be pulled out with roots. The path between Stöng and Hjalparfoss needs to be marked.

Project

- A lot of lupines were removed by Hjalparfoss waterfall.
- COVID had a huge impact during this project's week and the waymarking was abandoned.



Fjallabak, Nature reserve

Number of volunteers' teams: 2
Working days: 54
Team leader(s): Kerry Ireland & Daniel Averill
Expert (or Ranger): Magnús Freyr Sigurkarlsson

25.07 – 31.07



Assessment/Problem

Off-road vehicles tracks and unwanted paths need to be staked out and cleared. The abandoned road at Sauðaleysuvatn need to be racked and obliterated. There is a need to fix a drain on a footpath on Laugavegin.

Project

- Vehicle tracks after off-road driving were removed in various parts of the Nature reserve.
- Stone drains were built in the hiking paths.
- Snow was shovelled at the beginning of the path in Laugahraun as an additional project.



Kerlingarfjöll, Protected landscapes



Number of volunteers' teams: 2
Working days: 54
Team leader(s): Lee Dunn & Nicky Kraft
Expert (or Ranger): Daníel Freyr Jónsson

17.07 – 23.07
24.07 – 30.07

Assessment/Problem

There is a huge need of repairing the steps in Hveradalir, to mark hiking trails, to remove an old drain in Ásgard and to build a small bridge instead.

Project

- Wooden steps in Kerlingarfjöll that needed maintenance were repaired - wooden boxes were built.
- Trails were marked.
- An old bridge with a drain was improved and rock embankments repaired.



Búrfell, Búrfellsgjá, Nature monument

Number of volunteers' teams: 1

Working days: 56

Liðsstjóri: Lee Dunn

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

24.07 – 30.07



Assessment/Problem

Many unwanted paths have a negative impact on the geological formation. A better access to the natural wetland on the north side of the area is needed as it is unclear and unmarked.

Project

- Unwanted paths were closed with signs, poles and ropes.
- The paths were closed and landscaped with rocks and vegetation.



Eldborg undir Geitahlíð, nature monument

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

Working days: 8

Liðsstjóri: Danny Lake & Lee Dunn

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

27.06 – 28.06

24.07 – 30.07

Assessment/Problem Project

The nature monument is being damaged at the top of the crater because of the visitors' traffic. There are numerous unwanted paths that have formed.

- The unwanted paths were closed by the side and at the top of the crater with landscaping.
- The path around the crater was waymarked.



	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Herdísarvík, Nature reserve</h2> <p style="text-align: center;"> Number of volunteers' teams: 1 Working days: 2 Expert (or Ranger): René Biasone, Ásta Davíðsdóttir, Julie Kermarec </p> <p style="text-align: center;">04.08</p>
---	---

<p>Assessment/Problem</p>	<p>The off-road driving is a very known problem in the area having the consequence to damage the vegetation and the cultural heritage monuments. The traffic must be better organised by, for example, creating a path that enhance the experience of the visitors by both discovering nature and culture on this protected area. The beach needs to be cleaned every year.</p>
----------------------------------	---

<p>Project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alongside the road, poles and rope were put in place to stop the off-road driving. • The off-road driving tracks were erased.
-----------------------	--



Tröllabörn, Nature monument

Number of volunteers' teams: 1

Working days: 7

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

02.08 - 03.08



Assessment/Problem

Many motorbikes and quake bikes are coming into the natural monument to shorten their way, having the consequence of damaging the vegetation and the wetland. The erosion of the vegetation has a negative impact on the experience of the visitors coming to the area. During autumn 2021, road contractors came within the landmarks of the area with huge vehicles and machines, leaving behind deep tracks of off-roading. The area is quite small and there are a lot of constructions going on, just a few meters away from its boundaries. The traffic of the vehicle and machines has to stop since the boundaries are not well defined enough. The invasive lupine is spreading inside the protected area. In consequence of all this, Tröllabörn was listed among the orange list areas in 2021.

Project

- Poles and ropes were set in place by the path to mark the boundaries of the protected area.
- Lupine was removed with roots.



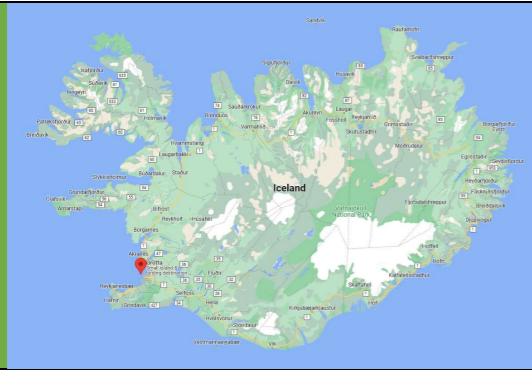
Gróttu, Nature reserve

Number of volunteers' teams: 1

Working days: 2

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

03.08



Assessment/Problem

Cow parsley and other invasive species are expanding in the nature reserve.

Project

- Cow parsley was taken with roots during the summer



Jökulsárgljúfur, Vatnajökull National Park

Number of volunteers' teams: 4

Working days: 98

Team leader(s): Verena Stammberger, Robert Price, Lars Scharfe & Alastair McQuillan

Expert (or Ranger): Guðmundur Ógmundsson, Guðrún Jónsdóttir

12.06 – 18.06

19.06 – 25.06

07.08 – 13.08

14.08 – 20.08



Assessment/Problem

Vesturdalur and Ásbyrgi: A new hiking and cycling path was created between Langavatnshöfði and Rauðhól, about 1.5 km long. For the last two summers, work has been done on the renovation of a footpath in Ásbyrgi, about 1.5 km long. Most of the work has been done with motorized equipment, but completing the work requires manual labor and the skill set of UST's volunteer teams.

Ásbyrgi-Ástjörn: A hiking trail runs on the east side of Ásbyrgisbarmi from Gljúfrastofa to a viewpoint above Botnstjarn. The route is about 4 km and there is a lot of traffic. Some areas of the path have become abnormally wide, and suitable paths have been created in many places. It is important to respond to this by making repairs to the main path. The area is part of the Project Monitoring of Nature Protected Areas led by the Icelandic Institute of Natural Sciences (NÍ).

Project

- On the way to Ásbyrgisbarm (eastern side), by Klappir and Sund, some paths were obliterated. The direction of one of the path was slightly changed, an information sign was moved and the number of markers was increased with the aim of making it easier for hikers to find the right way.
- In Langavatnshöfði and Ásbyrgi, some landscaping was done with vegetation and trees to cover some marks.
- Stone steps and drains were built on the path from Ytri-Þórunnarfjall down to Hólmatungur. At the same time, the main path direction was changed.
- By Ástjörn, pedestrian bridges were rebuilt and raised as the old ones started to sink and were partially submerged in the wetlands.



Skaftafell, Vatnajökull National Park

Number of volunteers' teams: 2

Working days: 54

Team leader(s): Kerry Ireland & Daniel Averill

Director of the National Park / Expert (or Ranger): Hrafnhildur Ævarsdóttir, Linda Björk Hallgrímsdóttir

07.08 – 13.08



Assessment/Problem

Eystragil (S5/S6): the bridge in the gorge is leaning a lot and is creating dangers in certain situations, especially since it has no handrail. A new bridge has to be built to replace the old bridge. On the same area, there are many steps and drains that need to be fixed.

Project

- A new bridge with a handrail has been built with timber and put in place instead of the old bridge. Some of the material from the old bridge was reused on the new bridge.
- Several drains and steps were built on the path in the surroundings of the new bridge.

