



INTERNATIONAL INTERPRETATION SECTION

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Species around the world are under threat of extinction. Read all about it on page 2.

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Invasive species are crossing international boundaries to take over new habitats. Check it out on page 5.

Our friends in Europe are working towards a pan-European interpretive association. Find out more on page 6.

IUCN Launches “Species of the Day”
 -Courtesy of the US National Park Service

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is increasing awareness of the enormous variety of life on our planet and raising the profile of threatened species by launching the IUCN Red List ‘Species of the Day’ on its website at <http://www.iucn.org/>.



IUCN’s mission is to help the world find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges: “Biodiversity is the backbone of all life on earth, and its conservation lies at the very core of IUCN’s work. ‘Species of the Day’ has been launched as part of IUCN’s involvement in the International Year of Biodiversity. With mounting scientific evidence of a serious extinction crisis, it’s time to take action. Jane Smart, Director of IUCN’s Biodiversity Conservation Group, said that, ‘The latest analysis of the IUCN Red List shows the 2010 target to reduce biodiversity loss will not be met. It’s time for governments to get serious about saving species and make sure it’s high on their agendas for next year, as we’re rapidly running out of time.’”

Each day throughout 2010, a different species will be featured on the IUCN website. It will include information on the species range, threats to the species, and conservation priorities. The 365 species selected represent the entire range of taxonomic groups and cover all regions. The website will first feature some of the better known species; such as the polar bear. It will move on to cover lesser well known plants, fungi, invertebrates, and more. Both charismatic and obscure species will be featured, providing an insight into the astonishing level of biodiversity that exists on our world.

On January 6th, for example, the Asian elephant was featured: “The Asian elephant, *Elephas maximus*, is listed as ‘Endangered’ on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. It is found in isolated populations in 13 tropical Asian countries. The Asian elephant is smaller than its African savannah relative; the ears are smaller and the back is more rounded. The numbers of Asian elephants have been decimated by habitat loss, degradation, and fragmentation, driven by an expanding human population. This causes elephants to become increasingly isolated, often coming into conflict with local farmers. Crops are damaged and lives lost; up to 300 people a year are killed by elephants in India. Poaching for ivory is also a threat and because only males have tusks, populations can become extremely skewed towards females, thus affecting breeding rates. The most important conservation priorities for the Asian Elephant are: conservation of their habitat and maintaining habitat connectivity by securing corridors; management of human–elephant conflicts; improved legislation and law enforcement with enhanced field patrolling; and regulating/curbing trade in ivory and other elephant products.”



Virgin Island Ground Lizard



See you in Australia!

NAI International has a blog! Share your thoughts, questions and answers with the world. Let others know about cool interp websites that you've discovered, or where to access interesting information. Learn about international opportunities or spread the word about things on your radar. Make friends and influence people.

**Let's go blogging now
Everybody's learning how
Come on and go
blogging with me!**

(with apologies to the Beach Boys)

It's easy, safe, informative and provides hours of fun for the whole family! Just go to our website (<http://www.naisessions.org/INTL>), click on the blog and start reading. If you want to comment or add something, simply type into the box provided. No log-ons or registration required.

The world is becoming a very small place, let's work to make it even smaller.

First Academic Course in Interpretation in the Arab World at Sultan Qaboos University, Oman

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The Sultanate of Oman is lovely country located in the Southern Eastern part of Arabian Peninsula. Oman is a growing tourism destination in the Middle East and it has been known for its beautiful natural landscape and richness in cultural resources. Therefore, interpretation as a profession would be a critical tool for the development of the tourism industry, especially natural and cultural sites. In order to achieve this, and as a first step to develop this profession, the Department of Tourism at Sultan Qaboos University, designed courses for teaching interpretation in relation to tourism and heritage industry.

I do believe that at the academic level, this is the first attempt in the Arab World, and maybe in the whole Middle East, to somehow “educate” and ‘communicate’ the meaning of interpretation as industry and as a profession. This is so important since most people think that interpretation is about ‘translation’ or ‘tour guiding’. Now the next step is to carve out a catchy Arabic terminology for the word ‘interpretation’ as we all know it and we asked for some assistance from the Department of Arabic Language...they are trying.



Our first students in a course titled ‘ Interpretation Industry and Tourism’

Multinational Invaders

By Scott Pfeninger, Chief Ranger, US National Park Service

Maho Bay Watersports Center divers reported sighting an exotic invasive Indo-Pacific lionfish (*Pterois volitans*) in park waters in Leinster Bay near Waterlemon Cay (US Virgin Islands) last Monday. The next day, park dive team members Rafe Boulon (chief of resource management), Thomas Kelly (biologist), Devon Tyson (biological technician) and David Horner (protection ranger) searched for and captured the eight-inch juvenile lionfish, found in 40 feet of water just east of the cay. It is the first lionfish caught in National Park Service Caribbean waters, the first caught off St. John, and the 19th caught in U.S. Virgin Island waters.

Biologists fear that the non-native fish will wreak havoc on local fisheries within the park. Introduced lionfish can rapidly become an established species and pose potential problems for both the environment and humans. They are voracious predators that appear to compete for food resources of the commercially and ecologically important snapper-grouper fishery, which is already depleted. Female lionfish can produce approximately 2.3 million eggs per year and can grow to 20 inches in length in the Atlantic. They have few natural predators in the Atlantic Ocean and studies show that Atlantic predators avoid lionfish. Lionfish are not timid and readily approach divers and snorkelers. Their venomous spines can sting park users and can cause intense pain, swelling, headache, nausea, paralysis, and convulsions.



Park diver/biological technician Devon Tyson examines the Indo-Pacific lionfish captured last Tuesday in park waters. NPS photo.

Said Boulon: "This is the first problem of many, many more to come, unfortunately." The park has been distributing fliers warning divers about the dangers the fish poses to the reef ecosystem since last year. The fish is now preserved and has been reported to the national lionfish database. Tissue samples are being sent for genetic analysis to try to determine the route by which the lionfish arrived at Virgin Islands National Park.

Interp Europe

by Patrick Lehnes, Michael Glen

On March 24 and 25th 2010, a meeting was held in Freiburg, Germany. Present at the meeting were Patrick Lehnes (chair), Darko Babic, Susan Cross, Michael Glen, Bettina Lehnes and Dorothea Papathanassiou-Zuhrt. The purpose of the meeting was the initiation of a process aimed at the founding of an association for interpretation in Europe.

It was agreed at the meeting that the following matters relating to the establishment and operation of Interpret Europe should be proposed for agreement at a meeting in Slovenia, on 11 to 14 July 2010:

- 1) A formal organisation should be established under the name European Association for Heritage Interpretation; it would be registered in Germany and hosted, initially, by the University of Freiburg
- 2) Its short title would be Interpret Europe
- 3) It would use an explanatory strapline that explained its role and purpose more clearly, for example: Place and People – Understanding Europe’s natural and cultural heritage
- 4) It would have a legally-approved constitution or articles of association, the broad contents of which have been identified
- 5) It would have an ethical base, articulated as a series of core values which have been drafted
- 6) It would work to achieve a number of principal goals which have been drafted
- 7) It would seek to promote the profession of interpretation and good practice within that profession to as wide an audience as possible including EU organisations, NGOs, educational institutions, community organisations, consultants and contractors, and interested individuals
- 8) It would operate as an umbrella organisation for existing and new national interpretation associations (representing their members), with an elected board of management and a paid secretariat; membership would be open to other organisations and individuals who are interested in international and European collaboration on a fee-paying basis
- 9) It would focus on the international and European level of professional development in interpretation, thus complementing the work of national or regional associations for Interpretation, and representing the profession at European institutions and international organisations

- 10) It would establish a series of standards for the implementation of interpretation with their achievement being recognised by a Quality Mark, based upon the experience of the Transinterpret Project
- 11) It would set out a Code of Conduct for practitioners of interpretation and also for interpretation consultants
- 12) It would publish a series of guidelines, for organisations wishing to commission interpretation, on the principals and practice of interpretation and how best to brief and appoint consultants and contractors
- 13) It would promote international cooperation in research, higher education and vocational training for the advancement and recognition of Interpretation as a sophisticated knowledge-based service
- 14) It would operate a forum for the exchange of news, information etc. relating to innovative interpretation projects, funding sources, education and training etc.
- 15) It would promote and organise international conferences; the first will be held in Freiburg from 7 to 11 June 2011
- 16) It would seek funding, in addition to membership fees, from European programmes and projects, sponsors and donors, and fees for professional services such as Quality Mark assessment; some funding has already been sought.

Participants of the initiative group meeting in Freiburg agreed that the following core values for Interpret Europe should be proposed as its organisational ethics. The following list is now open for discussion.

Interpretation should:

- 1) Broaden horizons and deepen empathy among its audience
 - a) Provoke thought and reveal meaning by establishing context and explaining relationships
 - b) Promote mutual respect, multi-cultural understanding and inclusiveness
 - c) Maintain balance, especially in controversial topics
 - d) Deal with both tangible and intangible matters
 - e) Contribute to a rewarding visit or experience as part of informal life-long learning

- 2) Help to establish a sense of place and respect for heritage
 - a) Be based on visitors' or local people's first-hand experience
 - b) Explain the value, essential qualities and significance of a place, object or event
 - c) Maintain authenticity
- 3) Help to enhance local pride and community engagement
 - a) Promote local distinctiveness
 - b) Develop a relationship between people, whether visitors or local people, and a site, object of event
 - c) Build capacity of volunteers in interpretation as part of life-long learning
 - d) Promote participatory planning and design of interpretation
- 4) Support conservation of natural and cultural heritage
 - a) Contribute to enhance understanding and appreciation of Europe's natural and cultural diversity
 - b) Promote stewardship for natural and cultural heritage
- 5) Support sustainable development
 - a) Contribute to sustainable development in its ecological, social and economic dimensions
 - b) Support sustainable heritage based tourism
 - c) Support the promotion of typical regional products that are in line with the principles of sustainable development
 - d) Enhance environmental awareness and stewardship

Interested parties can follow along, as well as participate, in the discussion at www.interpret-europe.net or on the NAI blog at <http://naisctions.org/INTL/blog/?p=12#comments>.