



# Status of large carnivores in Triglav National Park and the related experience and tasks of park rangers

Danilo Re 2009

Mittersill, 13 March 2009

Authors: Zvonko Kravanja, Miha Marenče, Martin Šolar



- In 1981 the Act establishing Triglav National Park (TNP) was passed and the Professional Ranger Service of the park was formed.
- In 28 years of existence, the Ranger Service has evolved into a modern, well-organized and, in terms of employees, the most numerous department of Triglav NP.
- Currently, the TNP Ranger Service employs 18 rangers, 13 of whom also carry out the tasks of hunting wardens.

triglavski narodni park

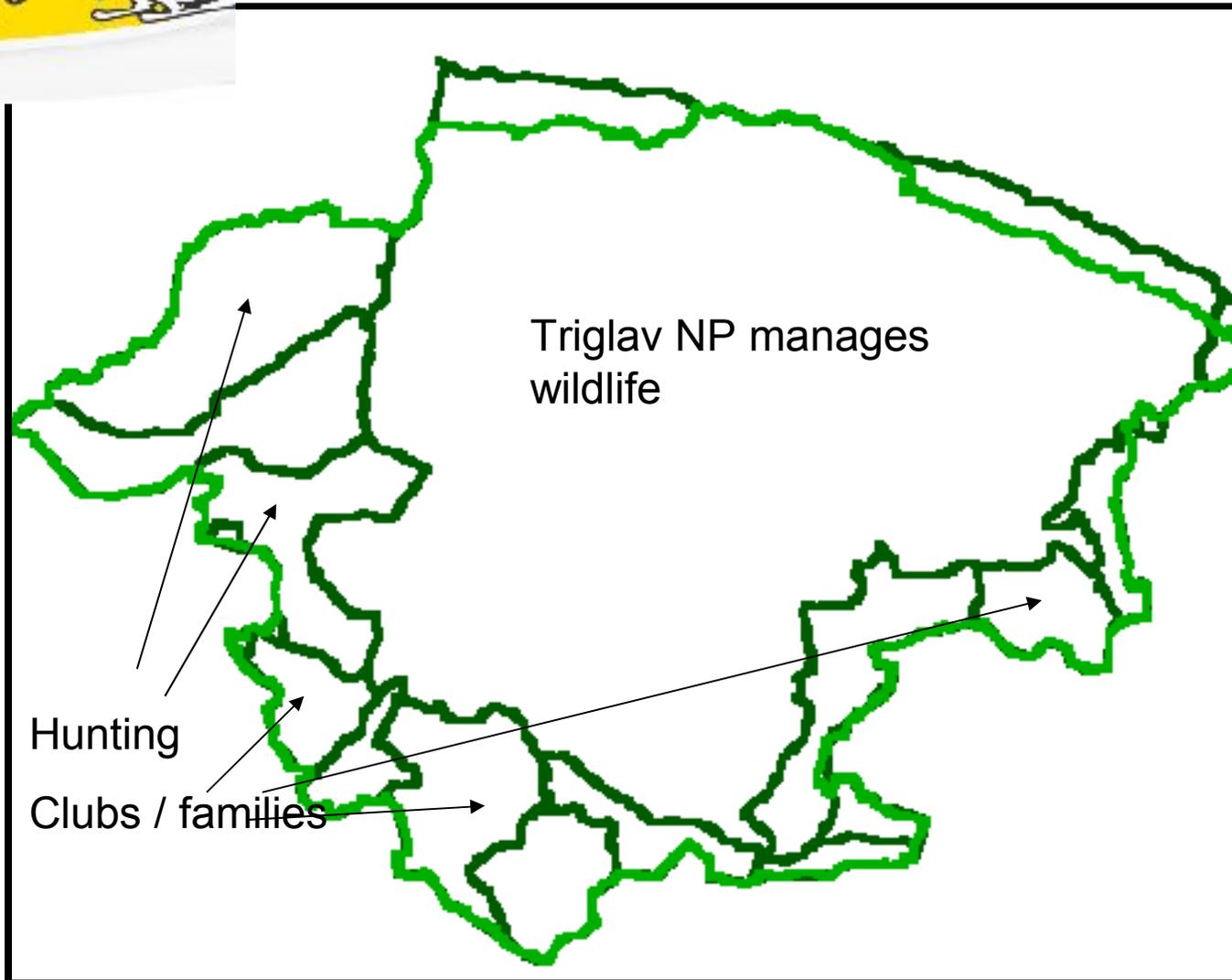


nadzornik



## Primary tasks of TNP professional rangers include:

- Protection and enforcement of the TNP Act
- Providing visitors with advice, assistance, information and guidance
- Co-operation with and counselling to the local inhabitants
- **Wildlife Protection and Management activities (hunting, observations, monitoring)**
- Management and maintenance of park infrastructure
- Participation in expert tasks of the TNP Authority.





# Wildlife protection and management tasks

- Observation, monitoring, data collection
- Feeding wildlife
- Monitoring wildlife health status
- Hunting (culling) in hunting grounds
- **All large carnivores in Triglav NP enjoy the status of protected species.**



# Status of large carnivores in TNP

- **Bear**
- The brown bear had traditionally occurred in TNP regularly.
- Later, it disappeared from the area but in recent decades its occurrence is again regular.
- Increasingly, bears hibernate in TNP, which points to their year-round presence.
- Only individual males can be found.



Stopinja



Sled





- **Bear**
- Brown bear monitoring in Triglav NP is carried out through a continuous collection of data on the species occurrence.
- No sightings of females with young have been reported yet, which means that the park has not become a permanent habitat for the brown bear.
- Over the last decade, two to three male bears can regularly be found within Triglav NP or in its proximity.



- **Wolf**
- Wolf presence in Triglav NP has only been reported in recent years.
- The only documented wolf sighting in the area over the last decades dates back to 1980.
- In autumn 2006 the wolf was seen in the western part of the park and was reported to stay there throughout 2007. Traces have been identified as belonging to two wolves.







- **Wolf**
- In December 2007 the wolf was seen in the central part of Triglav NP and was reported to stay there throughout 2008. Traces show that two to three wolves have been present in the area over the last two years.
- The main reason for wolf occurrence lies in highly protective wolf management in Slovenia.



## Lynx

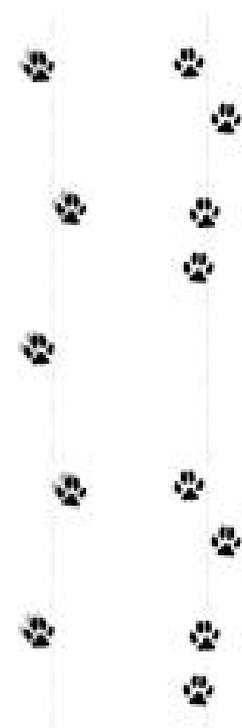
- In Slovenia the lynx was an endemic species, hunted to extinction at the end of the 19th century. The species was reintroduced in 1973 when three couples were brought to Slovenia from Slovakia. This measure is regarded as the most successful lynx reintroduction in Europe.
- In the early 1980s, lynx were first reported to be seen at the foot of the Alps. This finding coincides with the lynx monitoring data for TNP.



Stopinja



Sled





- **Lynx**
- Lynx has been present in Triglav NP for almost three decades, ever since the Julian Alps in Slovenia were proclaimed a national park.
- At first, lynx was reported in various parts of the park. In time, however, areas of permanent lynx occurrence have formed, but even there the lynx population was limited to individual animals, mainly males.



## Lynx

- Over the last decade lynx occurrence was characterized by two trends: lynx were known to completely disappear from a certain area and not occur there again, whereas in other areas they were preserved throughout the period.
- The impact of the lynx on domestic animals and ungulates was not negligible. Lynx had indeed exterminated colonies of mouflons, which were an introduced species, not native to Slovenia.

- In Triglav NP, the hunting of the brown bear, the wolf and the lynx is banned also in the areas where hunting is otherwise permitted.
- In case the carnivores cause substantial damage or endanger people and their property, the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning may issue a permit for the exceptional culling of an animal on a case-by-case basis. Whenever possible, the animal should be captured, not killed. Until today, only one such measure was allowed, and it was successful.



# Work and experience of park rangers

- Monitoring
- Observation
- Recording and reporting
- Estimates of damage to domestic animals
- Estimates of elimination of herbivorous wildlife







# Work and experience of park rangers

- The majority of data on the status of large carnivores included in this presentation has been collected by the park rangers.
- Continuous presence of park rangers in the park, their knowledge on the environment and the species' ecology is a precondition for determining the status and, consequently, plan the protection regime applicable to the large carnivores in Triglav National Park.