

# Gorilla Journal



Our successful model of conservation includes daily protection, helping communities, education and scientific study.

## The year in review

# What it takes to save gorillas

*During the nearly 50 years* since Dian Fossey established the Karisoke Research Center, those of us who carry on her work have learned that successful conservation is complex, challenging and continuous.

And it only works when we all work together — communities, scientists, field staff, local authorities, and supporters like you. We are all members of the gorilla team!

Together, we have developed an integrated conservation model for saving the gorillas that we know works, as shown by the increase in the mountain gorilla population in Rwanda over the years since our intensive protection efforts began. And now we use the same model in nearby Democratic Republic of Congo to protect Grauer's gorillas, which are among the world's most-endangered apes.

### Our four pillars of conservation

**1. Protecting gorilla populations and their habitats.** In Rwanda, we do this with daily protection and anti-poaching patrols that monitor some 115 mountain gorillas, currently living in 9-11 groups. Each day our tracker teams hike into the forest to locate every group under our care, and to observe the

status of each individual gorilla, while our anti-poaching teams conduct patrols to locate snares set in the forest and deter other illegal activities.

In Congo, our teams work differently because the Grauer's gorillas there are not habituated to the presence of humans. Therefore, we follow their trails to collect information, and use remote cameras to collect photographs without disturbing them.

**The goal:** To ensure that gorilla populations remain stable!

**2. Scientific study on gorillas, their habitats, and the other animals and plants (biodiversity) around them.** This provides knowledge and the best basis for creating effective conservation strategies. And we also learn some important things about the gorillas that inform our understanding not only of these amazing animals but of nature in general.

**The goal:** To have the best information available for use in preserving the gorillas and their ecosystems.

**3. Training and building the next generation of conservationists and scientists.** We do this by creating educational

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800 Cherokee Ave., SE  
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1-800-851-0203



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