

CELEBRATE WORLD RANGER DAY ON 31 JULY

Swarovski Optik And World Land Trust Share Inspiring Wildlife Stories From Five Rangers Around The World

June 2022 - In celebration of World Ranger Day on 31 July 2022, long-range optic specialists [SWAROVSKI OPTIK](#) and conservation charity [World Land Trust](#) have shared five inspiring stories from rangers working on the front-line of conservation at locations around the world.

Rangers are essential in the day-to-day protection of wildlife, ecosystems and natural resources and World Land Trust's Keepers of the Wild programme supports many of its partner organisations to employ local men and women to protect these invaluable habitats.

Successfully protecting these large areas of land can however be difficult and unpredictable. These unsung heroes face natural and human threats while safeguarding some of the world's most threatened habitats and species. To raise awareness of the invaluable work they do, SWAROVSKI OPTIK and World Land Trust are celebrating five inspirational rangers sharing their wildlife success stories and passion for protecting nature.

Angie Eliana Rodríguez Rivera- Asociación Ecológica de San Marcos de Ocotepeque (AESMO) at Pacayita Volcano Biological Reserve, Honduras

AESMO ranger since 2017



Over time, I have understood how beautiful and satisfying it is to be a ranger. We have contact with nature: we feel it, love it, and take care of it. When I go on patrol, I love listening to and watching the birds, admiring the beautiful pine trees, and enjoying the rich climate. All of this makes me feel unique at that moment. Not every day is like this though. In 2019 I witnessed a huge forest fire in my reserve which affects me even today; Now, when I see how the forest is regenerating, I feel like I am reborn. Taking care of wildlife in a country where we have a great wealth of biodiversity fills me with pride. As a ranger, as a woman and as a Honduran, I will fight together with the support of communities to conserve and protect our land and our watersheds.

Binoculars are fundamental tools for AESMO's rangers. They help us to spot forest fires and identify different birds and other species of wildlife from a distance. Binoculars are also very important for community council members who participate in our biological monitoring activities.

Boris Vanyan - Foundation for the Preservation of Wildlife and Cultural Assets (FPWC) at Caucasus Wildlife Refuge, Armenia

FPWC ranger since 2017

Growing up, I always liked spending time in nature watching birds and animals near my village, exploring gorges and hidden nature trails. I chose this profession to protect the fragile natural world and provide an opportunity for future generations to admire it. There are many rare animals in my reserve, but I am in love with this special place because of the Caucasian Leopard. I have always been fascinated with this species and dreamed to see it. One day, my dream came true. I was walking in a gorge early in the



morning, and as I turned a corner, I saw a leopard. It was so unexpected that we both froze for a while. The leopard had a Bezoar Ibex in his mouth. He noticed me and slowly carried his prey to a cave nearby. This was the most memorable wildlife encounter I've ever had. To me, being a ranger in Armenia means being a nature warrior aiming to break the stereotypes, change the behaviour and culture of the traditional hunters, protect lands holding unique biodiversity, restore degraded areas for future generations, and live in harmony with nature.

For us, one of the most important aspects of binoculars is their weight. They are lighter than spotting scopes, which allows us to carry them long distances through the mountains. Nature is also different through binoculars: it is possible to see many nuances and observe animals in action. Binoculars are also essential in our daily work patrolling the reserve and protecting it from hunters and poachers.

Gabriel León - Asociación Civil Provita at Chacaracual Community Conservation Area, Venezuela
Provita ranger since 2017



My favourite part of being a ranger in Chacaracual is working with Yellow-shouldered Parrots. Every year we set ourselves the goal of increasing the number of chicks that fledge from the nests we protect. We were very excited when we surpassed 100 fledglings, a goal that we had pursued for years; then, last year, we doubled that to 202 fledglings! The annual population has also risen from 700 at the start of the project to 2,000 during the last two years. The parrot season involves great effort and tension due to the pressure we have from poachers, but my team and I continue to work out of love for the nature that surrounds us. To me, taking care of our nature will give us a better life, a better livelihood. Working for Provita has motivated me to study biology and find the answers we need to help conserve our species. Although it is currently very difficult to enter university in Venezuela, I was eventually accepted thanks to the support of Provita. The joy I felt, that of my colleagues, of the Provita staff is indescribable. In the future, I hope to become one of Provita's dedicated Yellow-shouldered Parrot biologists.

Binoculars are extremely important for our work as they allow us to monitor our parrot nests from a distance, without disturbing the birds. The optics of the binoculars donated by Swarovski Optik are way superior to the other binoculars we have; we can even clearly observe Pico Macanao, the highest point in the west of Margarita Island.

**Jorge Antonio Díaz Miranda - Fundación para el Ecodesarrollo y la Conservación (FUNDAECO)
Chiclerá Mountain Regional Municipal Park and Sierra Caral Water and Forest Reserve,
Guatemala**

FUNDAECO ranger since 2013



As a child, when I looked at the mountain from my house and saw that there was smoke, I cried. I knew that something bad was happening, but I felt powerless. Today I am thankful to work in coexistence with nature, protecting life in all its manifestations, and it fills me with pride to know that what I do is not only for my benefit but for future generations as well. I am aware that protecting nature brings many risks due to ill-intentioned people who in one way or another only seek to destroy what exists, but I will remain firm because I know what I do is vital for us all. Fame and fortune are not sought – the beauty of nature fills the lungs of all humanity, and this does not have a price. “Conserve to live and live to conserve”: this thought lives in my mind and in my heart every day.

FUNDAECO’s rangers use binoculars every day as they are very useful for identifying animals that remain in the tree canopy. We also use them to watch for forest fires – at Chiclerá Mountain, for example, slash-and-burn agriculture in surrounding communities can cause uncontrolled burnings within the park. The more capacity the binocular has, the greater the utility.

Miguel Flores - Grupo Ecológico Sierra Gorda (GESG) at GESG reserve network, Mexico
GESG ranger since 2015



After several years working with GESG, becoming a ranger was a very natural thing to do, as I am a proud Sierra Gordan and these mountains and forests have been our home for generations. To have the honour of guarding them is the highest possible reward. At GESG, we focus our efforts on allowing nature to regenerate by itself, removing human pressures as much as we can. On our surveillance hikes, encountering fresh evidence of Pumas and Jaguars is almost routine – that means we are effective. These predators are indicators of forest health, and as long as they are present, it is likely all the other species are too. It is these experiences that make myself and my protégés even more committed to the work we are doing. By working in the Sierra Gorda, my duty is to protect a small fraction of Mexico’s amazing biodiversity. This is our natural heritage, and a very fulfilling part of my job. By protecting the mountains, forests, rivers and wildlife of our homeland, we

are also helping to provide environmental services like water, CO₂ capture and even natural beauty for other Mexicans. This is very important, even on our relatively small, local scale.

There are some items that are an indispensable part of our work: a 4x4 truck, GPS, backpack and among others, a good pair of binoculars – and of course Swarovski Optik are the very best. From spotting Flying Squirrels in the canopy to recording the annual migratory birds, or even monitoring illegal activities like logging, we depend on optics that can endure difficult weather and a lot of use.

To find out more about World Land Trust’s Keepers of the Wild or to donate to the programme, visit www.worldlandtrust.org/product/keepers-of-the-wild.

The world belongs to those who can see beauty.

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www.swarovskioptik.com



Notes to Editors:

- High-res images available to download from <https://wettransfer.com/downloads/57eff5a9daa8164c41093e7d571efdc020220606121855/c5d4e3>

ABOUT SWAROVSKI OPTIK

SWAROVSKI OPTIK, headquartered in Absam, Tyrol, is part of the Swarovski group of companies. Founded in 1949, the Austrian company specialises in the development and manufacturing of long-range optical instruments of the highest precision in the premium segment of the market. The binoculars, spotting scopes, rifle scopes, and optronic instruments are products of choice for demanding users. The company's success is based on its innovative strength, the quality and intrinsic value of its products, and their functional and aesthetic design. The appreciation of nature is an essential part of its company philosophy and is reflected commendably in its environment-friendly production and its long-term commitment to selected nature conservation projects. The turnover in 2021 was 210.4 million euros (2020: 163.5 million euros), with an export ratio of 91%. The company has around 1,000 employees.

ABOUT WORLD LAND TRUST

WORLD LAND TRUST (WLT) was founded in 1989 with a simple yet pioneering goal: raising funds to purchase land for the express purpose of conservation. The effects of climate change and biodiversity loss have become better known and more extreme in the three decades since, but WLT's 'Buy an Acre' concept still offers a very real and tangible way to have a positive impact on these interlinked crises. Today funding also supports ranger salaries, habitat restoration, carbon offsetting projects, and urgent aid like wildfire management. Above all, WLT believes conservation should be conducted in concert with local communities – the people who know their land best. A sustainable future for these men and women, and the wildlife and wilderness they have grown up alongside, is the goal that WLT works toward every day.

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