



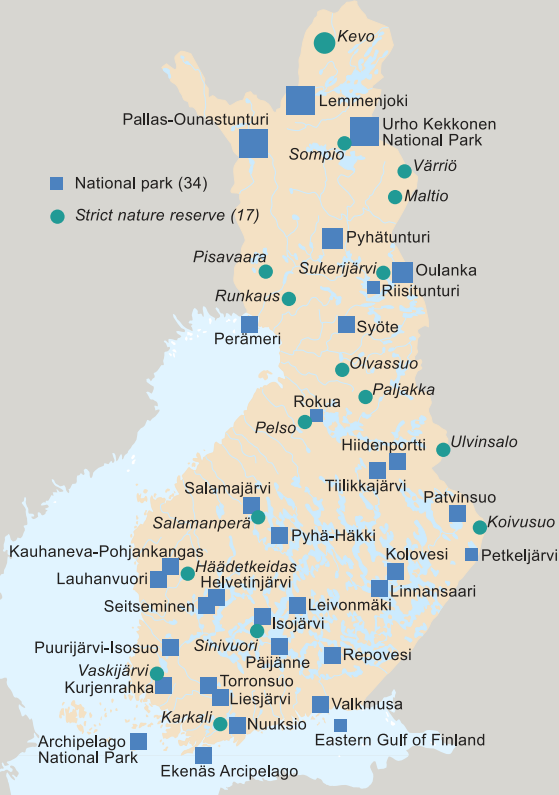
# METSÄHALLITUS NATURAL HERITAGE SERVICES

Annual Report 2003



METSÄHALLITUS

**National parks, strict nature reserves, wilderness areas, national hiking areas and state-owned public waters administered by Metsähallitus**



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Juha Ilkka

▲ Arctic fox (*Alopex lagopus*)

Editor: Liisa Nikula

Translation: Fran Weaver and Liisa Nikula

Layout: Marianne Katainen

Maps: Hannu Sipinen, © Metsähallitus

Cover photo: Jari Kostet (Lortikka rental hut in Isojärvi National Park)

Illustration on back cover: Auvo Sapattinen (rangers working)

Metsähallitus, Natural Heritage Services 2004

P.O. Box 94 (Vernissakatu 4), 01301 Vantaa

Tel.int. +358 205 64 100

Telefax +358 205 64 4350

www.metsa.fi

Erweko Painotuote Oy, Helsinki 2004

600 copies

printed on environmentally friendly paper

ISBN 952-446-421-7



# Director's Review

*Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services manages national parks and strict nature reserves, other protected areas, wilderness areas and national hiking areas with the aim of preserving Finland's natural features and providing citizens with facilities for outdoor recreation. We also manage publicly-owned waters in lakes and the sea. While doing this, we also provide employment and create an environment for nature tourism and scientific research. Our work also promotes the sustainable use of the State-owned commercial forests managed by Metsähallitus. Objectives are set annually by Parliament, and defined in detail by the Ministry of the Environment regarding nature conservation or by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry concerning facilities for visitors.*

The year 2003 was enlivened for Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services by developments related to the Government-approved Metso action plan to safeguard biodiversity in forests in Southern Finland, and the Vilmata action plan to develop nature tourism and the recreational use of natural areas. The funding decisions for both these programmes will also serve to boost employment.

Implementation of the Metso programme began promptly, and the programme's initial objectives already have been achieved, with biotope surveys carried out in protected areas over a total area of 136,000 hectares.

In a one-off project organised jointly with Metsähallitus Forestry, habitat restoration work was carried out in a total of 2,200 hectares of formerly commercially managed forest and mire habitat in protected areas, in order to restore natural structural features and hydrological conditions, and to guarantee the survival of threatened species. These measures have also provided employment for foresters.

The European Union's Life-Nature Fund approved financing for 33 habitat restoration projects in Natura areas. Metsähallitus's partners in these projects will be the University of Joensuu, the Karelia Brigade, WWF Finland and UPM-Kymmene Oyj.



Lilja Nikula

In order to improve the prospects for the use of protected areas for nature tourism and the related business opportunities, basic facilities were developed in areas including the Archipelago National Park and other marine national parks, while work also continued on the development project for the Nuuksio National Park. Services and facilities were also improved in other national parks, including Leivonmäki, Repovesi and Lauhanvuori.

There was concrete progress in other aspects of our activities. The Repovesi National Park was established in the beginning of 2004, and land use and management plans have already advanced rapidly. Finland's 35th national park was established in the beginning of March at Leivonmäki. The Ministry of the Environment has additionally submitted proposals for the designation of the planned Pallas-Yllästunturi National Park.

Metsähallitus participated in the drafting of the Velmu marine biotope inventory scheme, which forms part of the national Baltic Sea Protection Programme, while also starting to implement an internal plan of action in the field of marine biology.

On Metsähallitus's initiative, the EUROPARC Federation of protected areas set up a new Nordic-Baltic Section, with members from Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Metsähallitus also signed agreements during 2003 on co-operation with the National Board of Antiquities and the Geological Survey of Finland.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rauno Väisänen".

Rauno Väisänen, Director,  
Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services

# Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services

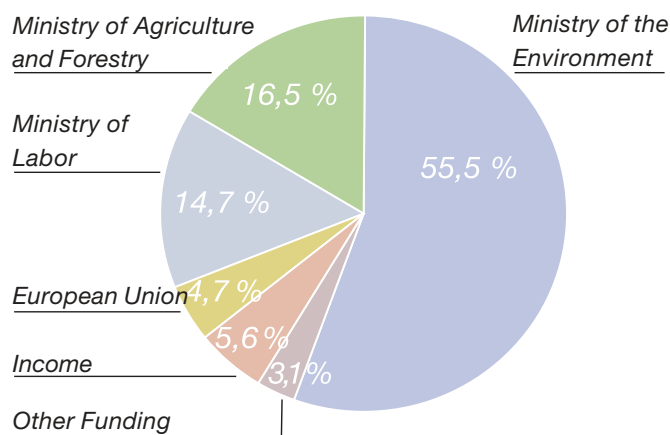
Metsähallitus manages and utilises State-owned lands and waters in Finland. Metsähallitus is a State enterprise that runs business activities while also fulfilling wider functions in society. These wider functions include the management of State-owned protected areas and hiking areas and the provision of outdoor recreation services for all citizens, and are mainly financed from the Government budget. Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services consists of six regional units and a central unit.

Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services manages most State-owned protected areas and national hiking areas in Finland, and plans their use. In 2003 these areas amounted to 37,300 km<sup>2</sup> of land (an increase of some 700 km<sup>2</sup> compared to 2002) and 31,100 km<sup>2</sup> of water.

**Statutory protected areas, wilderness areas, national hiking areas, recreational forests, areas reserved for future protection, and public water areas managed by Metsähallitus on December 31, 2003.**

Type of area	No. of areas	Total surface area (km <sup>2</sup> )
National parks	34	8,138
Strict nature reserves	17	1,503
Protected mires	173	4,512
Protected herb-rich woodland	49	11
Other protected areas	183	823
Areas established by Metsähallitus decisions	24	8
<b>Statutory protected areas (total)</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>14,995</b>
Areas reserved for protection programmes		7,777
Wilderness areas	12	14,898
National hiking areas	7	359
Recreational forests	93	1,618
<b>Other areas (total)</b>		<b>24,652</b>
<b>Public water areas (not included above)</b>		<b>24,348</b>
<b>Total area</b>		<b>63,995</b>

**Sources of funding for Natural Heritage Services in 2003 (32M euros)**



We additionally protect and monitor the occurrences of threatened species in State-owned lands managed by Metsähallitus, and are responsible for the nationwide protection and monitoring of populations of Golden Eagle, Saimaa Ringed Seal and many other threatened species. We also provide a variety of outdoor recreational facilities free-of-charge for everyone visiting natural areas in Finland on the basis of traditional everyman's rights.

Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services participates in international nature conservation activities and promotes experimental and research activities that help to preserve biodiversity.

A total sum of 32 million euros was used to finance the operations of Natural Heritage Services in 2003. The total work input amounted to 570 man-years; and at the end of 2003 some 300 people were employed by Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services as permanent staff. Work done by around 790 temporary employees accounted for about half of the unit's work during 2003.



Jari Koster

▲ As of March 1, 2004, Lakeland Centre operates under the name Oskari – Linnansaari Visitor Centre.

## Recreational Facilities Throughout Finland

*Metsähallitus's visitor centres, customer service points and other information points provide information on local natural features and facilities for recreation. Our 19 visitor centres organise various types of events and exhibitions, and can provide information about other services offered by Metsähallitus. At the end of 2003 a total of 23 visitor centres and customer service points were in operation, and 688,000 visits were registered over the whole year. We also manage 12,000 kilometres of trails and other routes, including 3,500 kilometres of hiking trails and 1,000 kilometres of boating routes. Firewood is provided for visitors at 2,000 locations, and 650 sites are equipped with waste facilities.*

**T**he year 2003 began in style with the opening of the new visitor centre for the Syöte National Park in Pudasjärvi. Over its first

year, 30,000 visitors were registered at the centre, which is in the immediate vicinity of both the Syöte National Park and the Iso-Syöte Hiking Area.

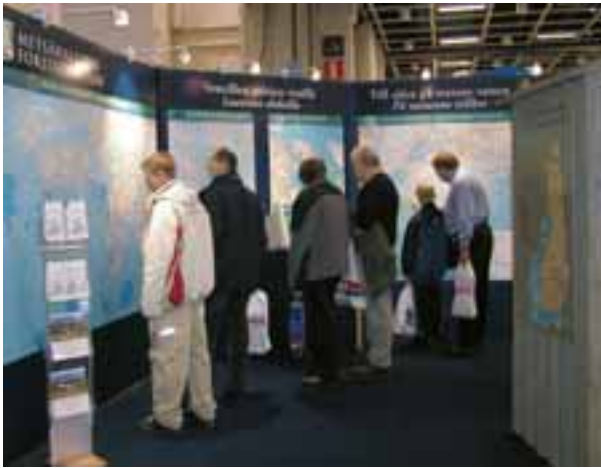
The new Kilpisjärvi Visitor Centre opened at the end of April, and now provides customer services for a wide area including the Käsivarsi Wilderness Area, the Malla Strict Nature Reserve, and the Saana nature reserve and research area. A permanent exhibition features the wildlife of the high fells of Käsivarsi and the local history of this interesting region.

During 2003 a preliminary report was prepared about plans to build a visitor centre for the Nuuksio National Park. The report assessed needs and opportunities, as well as possible functions and locations for the proposed centre. The main objectives of the visitor centre would be to inform visitors about nature in Finland, and to serve as a centre for

customer services and environmental education for the whole Nuuksio region.

Facilities for popular outdoor activities are provided in areas managed by Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services. These facilities and areas are frequently publicised at exhibitions and other events.

In February 2003 Metsähallitus informed boaters about suitable places to visit and useful facilities at the ten-day Vene 03 Båt exhibition, where our own expert naturalists featuring maps provided information by means of maps and a new special website for boaters.



▲ Display maps of the Gulf of Finland, Lake Päijänne and the Linnansaari National Park helped to attract some 8,000 visitors to the Metsähallitus stand.

The fifth European Day of National Parks was held on 24 May 2003. This annual event aims to familiarise everyone with national parks, particularly people living near parks. The theme for the 2003 event was voluntary work. More than twenty Finnish national parks and visitor centres organised voluntary work-camps to clean up litter, supply firewood, build nest-boxes, shear sheep or prepare traditional food for the other voluntary workers.

The Nordic Wild Flowers Day event was organised in Finland for the first time on 15 June 2003. Almost 70 free excursions were organised around Finland in order to increase awareness of botany, with Metsähallitus among the organisers.



Jari Koski

▲ Finland's national flower the lily-of-the-valley was chosen as the emblem for the country's first official wild flowers day.

The jubilee year for European heritage in 2003 focused on construction skills and valuable buildings. A series of lectures presented at the Seitsemien Visitor Centre, and special events held in old forest ranger's cabin and a crofter's cottage attracted plenty of visitors interested in Finland's architectural heritage. The theme of architectural heritage day on 12th September was "open house for heritage".

The travelling exhibition "One Land", which describes the relationship between northern peoples and nature through contemporary art, was purchased jointly by the Sámi Museum and the Northern Lapland Nature Centre at Siida in Inari. An exhibition about the endangered arctic fox and related conservation and research issues toured visitor centres in Northern Lapland. At the Pallastunturi Visitor Centre, a new audio-visual presentation in six language versions was launched to mark the 65th anniversary of the national park.

The third revised edition of the comprehensive guide to hiking in Finland "Suomen retkeilyopas" was published together with Edita Publishing Oy. During 2003 information about places to visit and facilities and activities organised by Metsähallitus was available on the 1,650-page website [www.metsa.fi](http://www.metsa.fi), which also provided information about 360 current publications and other printed matter.

### Estimated numbers of visits at visitor centres and customer service points in 2003

Blåmusslan Visitor Centre .....	20 200
Ekenäs Visitor Centre .....	26 000
Fell-Lapland Nature Centre .....	24 500
Hossa Visitor Centre .....	41 200
Häme Visitor Centre .....	20 800
Kainuu Nature Centre .....	8 500
Kellokas Visitor Centre .....	57 600
Kilpisjärvi Visitor Centre .....	9 900
Koilliskaira Visitor Centre .....	21 400
Lakeland Centre .....	14 400
Nestori – Saimaa Nature Centre .....	9 800
Oulanka Visitor Centre .....	71 800
Pallastunturi Visitor Centre .....	37 700
Pyhäntunturi Visitor Centre .....	26 300
Ruunaa Visitor Centre .....	15 800
Savukoski Visitor Centre .....	8 900
Seitseminen Visitor Centre .....	31 500
Siida – Northern Lapland Nature Centre .....	89 700
Syöte Visitor Centre .....	30 300
<b>Visitor centres (19) total .....</b>	<b>566 300</b>
Etiäinen .....	37 700
Ivalo .....	8 700
Karhuntassu .....	65 000
Kiehininen .....	10 000
<b>Customer service points (4) total .....</b>	<b>121 400</b>
<b>Total (23) .....</b>	<b>687 700</b>

### Estimated numbers of visitors in national parks 2003

Archipelago .....	80 000
Eastern Gulf of Finland .....	15 000
Ekenäs Archipealgo .....	20 000
Helvetinjärvi .....	32 000
Hiidenportti .....	7 500
Isojärvi .....	8 000
Kauhaneva-Pohjankangas .....	6 000
Kolovesi .....	6 000

Kurjenrahka .....	20 000
Lauhanvuori .....	25 000
Leivonmäki .....	4 500
Lemmenjoki .....	10 000
Liesjärvi .....	15 000
Linnansaari .....	28 000
Nuukio .....	100 000
Oulanka .....	165 000
Pallas-Ounastunturi .....	125 000
Patvinsuo .....	15 000
Perämeri .....	7 000
Petkeljärvi .....	17 000
Puurijärvi-Isosuo .....	15 000
Pyhä-Häkki .....	11 000
Pyhäntunturi .....	25 000
Päijänne .....	8 000
Repovesi .....	65 000
Riisitunturi .....	7 000
Rokua .....	24 000
Salamajärvi .....	7 000
Seitseminen .....	40 000
Syöte .....	24 000
Tiilikajärvi .....	6 000
Torrnsuo .....	20 000
Urho Kekkonen .....	160 000
Valkmusa .....	5 000
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>1 123 000</b>

### Estimated numbers of visitors in national hiking areas 2003

Evo .....	50 000
Hossa .....	42 000
Iso-Syöte .....	22 000
Kylmäluoma .....	34 000
Oulujärvi .....	27 000
Ruunaa .....	118 000
Teijo .....	60 000
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>353 000</b>



Mikael Hinze

▲ Leivonmäki National Park is Finland's 35th national park.

## Two New National Parks

*The Natural Heritage Services manages almost all protected areas on State-owned lands, as well as the extensive wilderness areas of northern Lapland, national hiking areas and areas reserved for future protection under nature conservation programmes. We are also responsible for 19 recreational forests.*

**T**he Ministry of the Environment established two new national parks. The Repovesi National Park was founded on January 2003 in the municipalities of Valkeala and Mäntyharju, partly on land specially donated to the State by UPM-Kymmene Oyj.

Finland's 35th National Park was established in Central Finland on 1 March 2003. The park's bogs, shores, eskers and forest habitats are an attractive destination for visitors, and also suitable for educational purposes. The year 2003 marked the 65th anniversary of the founding of Finland's two oldest national parks, Pyhänturi and Pallas-Ounastunturi,

as well as the 20th anniversary of the Archipelago and Urho Kekkonen national parks, and the 10th anniversary of the Päijänne National Park – which was marked by a celebratory cruise on Lake Päijänne.

At the end of 2003 the EU Commission approved 19 areas in Northern Lapland for inclusion in the Natura alpine zone and the wider European Natura ecological network of protected areas. Seventeen of these alpine Natura areas, with a total area of 17,810 sq.km., are partly or wholly located on land managed by Metsähallitus – mainly within wilderness areas.

Progress is being made on co-operation with the Sámi Parliament in Finland, who at Metsähallitus's request drafted a special evaluation of the impacts of the land use and management plans for wilderness areas on Sámi culture, in addition to their normal statement on these plans. The NHS maintains a traditional Kolt house in Sevetijärvi as a nature cabin.

A preliminary report was completed in co-operation with the corresponding Swedish authori-



ties on the planning of land use and management in protected areas in the Kvarken Archipelago region, in order to combine the principles and practices applied in Finland and Sweden to control land use and management. Land use and management planning has already begun on the basis of the preliminary report for the Mikkeli Islands in Finland and the island of Holmö in Sweden.

Planning procedures related to the management and use of natural resources were revised by Metsähallitus in 2003. The previously used landscape ecological planning has now been combined with natural resource planning. The first new integrated natural resource planning was carried out for the Kainuu region. Nature tourism and the recreational

use of natural areas were given more prominence in the plans for Kainuu than previously, as can particularly be seen in plans for the preservation and development of landscape values in forests in Kainuu where tourism is being promoted. Natural resource utilisation planning was begun in Western Finland.

A manual for Natural Heritage Services field workers designed to improve the standard of field work was taken into use in the beginning of 2003. The book deals with field work procedures related to different kinds of facilities, habitat management measures and customer services, and also contains details of best practices and handy practical tips. The training programme for field workers aims to develop professional expertise on the multiple use of forests.

### EU Life-Nature projects involving Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services during 2003

**Objectives:** to protect species and habitats primarily protected by means of the Habitats and Bird Directives; and to develop areas within the Natura 2000 Network.

- 2003–2008** Saving the endangered Fennoscandian Alopex lagopus (SEFALO+)
- 2003–2007** Management of wetlands along the Gulf of Finland migratory flyway
- 2002–2007** Karelian mires and virgin forests - pearls in the chain of geohistory
- 2002–2007** Restoration of boreal forests and forest-covered mires
- 2002–2006** Restoration of mire and bog ecosystems in North-Savo with reference to environmental education
- 2002–2005** Evo Forest – Awareness-raising and protection of Southern Finland forest biotopes
- 2002–2005** Protection of Aapa Mire Wilderness in Ostrobothnia and Kainuu
- 2001–2006** Protection of valuable bird-rich wetlands in Central Finland
- 2001–2005** Herb-rich forests, forests of *Dendrocopos leucotos* and Western Taigas in North Karelia
- 2001–2004** Rehabilitation and maintenance of meadows in Finland, Sweden and Estonia
- 2001–2004** Protection and management of the valuable wetland Siikalahti
- 2000–2005** Conservation of *Cypripedium calceolus* and *Saxifraga hirculus* in Northern Finland
- 2000–2005** Protection and usage of aapamires with a rich avifauna in Central Lapland
- 1999–2004** Management of the most valuable wetlands in SW Finland
- 1999–2003** Conservation and management of boreal groves

- 1999–2003** Deciduous Western Taigas and Herb-rich Forests in Pohjois-Savo
- 1999–2003** Conservation of Ylläs-Aakenus Taiga Forest Area in Lapland
- 1999–2003** Combining protection with other forms of land use in the natural boreal forests of Syöte

### Projects financed through EU Structural Funds involving Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services during 2003

**Objectives:** to reduce regional inequalities within the EU by supporting less developed areas; and to implement various environmental projects.

- 2003–2006** Historical Background to Nature Tourism on River Lieksanjoki (Interreg III A Karelia)
- 2003–2005** Kalevala Parks (Interreg III A Karelia)
- 2003–2005** Launch of the Finnish Large Carnivore Information Center (Interreg III A Karelia)
- 2003–2005** The existence and state of the populations of the fresh water pearl mussel in the NE parts of the North Calotte
- 2002–2004** Development of Sustainable Nature Tourism in the Unesco Biosphere Areas of the Archipelago and in the Western Regions of Estonia (Interreg IIIA)
- 2002–2004** Return to the Sources – Environmental Education Cherishing the Traditions
- 2002–2004** Promotion of nature tourism in the Finnish Oulanka and Russian Paanajärvi National Parks (Interreg IIIA)
- 2001–2003** Service constructions for the lower part of River Tiukanjoki (Objective 2)
- 2001–2003** Kvarken Environment (Interreg III A)
- 2001–2003** Nature trails and recreational facilities

# White-backed Woodpeckers Come under Metsähallitus's Protection



Jari Koski

▲ White-backed woodpeckers can be seen in Central Finland, South Savo, South Karelia and Päijät-Häme.

Natural Heritage Services is responsible for the protection of threatened animal and plant species on State-owned lands managed by Metsähallitus. We also have special responsibility for the conservation of 34 species in Finland, including the fairy slipper orchid (*Calypso bulbosa*), *Primula nutans* ssp. *jokelae*, arctic campion (*Silene furcata*), golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), arctic fox (*Alopex lagopus*), Saimaa ringed seal (*Phoca hispida saimensis*), and since 1 January 2003 also the white-backed woodpecker (*Dendrocopos leucotos*). Many of the species protected by Metsähallitus are also listed as important species in the EU Bird and Habitats Directives.

Overall responsibility for the monitoring of Finland's white-backed woodpeckers was transferred from WWF Finland to Met-

sähallitus in 2003. Nesting success rates for the species in 2003 were the highest recorded over the 10-year monitoring period, with 34 nests observed during the summer. Finland's total white-backed woodpecker is now estimated to consist of 40–50 pairs, which means that the steep decline in the species' numbers may be halted. At the beginning of the monitoring scheme in 1994 only 11 nests were found.

Golden eagles bred successfully in 145 territories. In southern parts of the species' range some attempts to breed failed due to accidental or deliberate disturbance. A total of 186 young eaglets reached ringing-age – more than in any other summer over 40 years of monitoring. Breeding rates were particularly high in Inari, Koillismaa and SW Lapland, largely thanks to an abundance of hares and game birds, although greater success in finding golden eagle territories and nests may also have contributed to the high survey figures.

Golden eagles are known to have bred over the last ten years in a total of 375 areas of suitable habitat in Finland. Approximately 80% of these areas are in Lapland Province. Helicopter surveys were used to observe golden eagle nests in remote wilderness areas for the first time with positive results.

New occurrences of threatened species have been found in various areas, including some in areas which are used by the military but have been managed by Metsähallitus since the beginning of 2002. In Parola, several occurrences of threatened insects, including the two rare beetles *Trichonyx sulcicollis* and *Baris artemisiae*, were discovered. Ecological surveys of the island of Örö in Dragsfjärd revealed that the only previously known occurrence of sand couch (*Elymus farctus*) is thriving better than expected, while a second occurrence was also discovered.

Measures taken to promote the growth of thrift (*Armeria maritima*) at Uddskatan in Hanko greatly increased the numbers of scapes, and many more



Anu Eskelinen

▲ The frozen ice cliffs at Korouoma Falls are popular with climbers in winter, but their thick coating of ice protects the many rare plants that grow on the cliffs.

flowers also bloomed, so the decline of this occurrence has evidently been arrested.

Vegetation surveys were carried at the Korouoma Gorge nature reserve in Posio on cliffs frequently used by rock-climbers to assess how climbers could be directed to certain routes where vegetation is less sensitive. The surveyors needed a good head for heights as well as expertise on the identification of mosses and lichens, since the surveys were carried out using mountaineers' ropes. Local climbers provided welcome advice on safety procedures.

Four nationally endangered moss species were found on the cliffs at Korouoma, including the rare *Scapania crassiretis*. Other threatened mosses, lichens and vascular plants were also found, and the Korouoma Falls were found to be particularly rich in species. Although the falls are a popular destination for ice-climbers in winter, the numbers of climbers and climbing routes do not represent any immediate threat to the vegetation.

Surveys of occurrences of freshwater pearl mussels (*Margaritifera margaritifera*) were begun during the late summer east of Inari and in the Paatsjoki Valley in Norway and Russia. This three-year project is partly funded through the EU Interreg

scheme, and Metsähallitus's partners include the Svanhovd Environmental Centre in Norway and the Pasvik Nature Reserve in Russia. The project aims to survey occurrences of mussels in the area while also developing new efficient survey methods for use over wide areas. Surveyors have been specially trained in diving skills by local diving experts in Inari.

Metsähallitus also runs a 330-page website [www.suurpedot.fi](http://www.suurpedot.fi) with information in Finnish about the four large predators found in Finland: the brown bear, the wolf, the lynx and the wolverine.

▼ Finland's gyrfalcons produced more young in 2003 than for many years. More than 40 fledglings were observed during surveys of the birds' nesting sites.



Juha Ilkka



Oy HellFoto Ab

▲ This area of forest was deliberately burnt two years ago to help restore natural habitat by increasing the amount of decaying wood, improving light penetration to help broad-leaved trees grow, and increasing the structural diversity and age diversity of the forest.

## Restoring Habitats and Managing Traditional Landscapes

*The NHS manages habitats to preserve threatened and rare species and their habitats. By carefully managing traditional landscapes we protect valuable landscapes and their typical flora and fauna, while also preserving Finland's cultural heritage. Habitat restoration work aims to return areas disturbed by man to their natural state or as similar a state as possible. The largest groups of threatened species in Finland are associated with traditional rural landscapes and natural forests.*

**D**uring 2003 Metsähallitus restored 1,145 hectares of forest habitat and 1,185 ha of mire habitat. A total area of about 1,200 ha of traditional rural landscape was also managed.

In autumn 2003 a major project started up, aiming to restore boreal forest and wooded mire habitats in more than 30 Natura areas. The project involves many organisations, and has a total budget of 3.7 million euros, of which half consists of EU funding. During the project over a total area of around 5,000 hectares will be restored using various measures. The effectiveness of these measures will be monitored, and further sites will be selected for future restoration.

Metsähallitus is involved in a partly EU-funded Life-Nature project for the Restoration and Management of Meadows in Finland, Sweden and Estonia, which is being co-ordinated by WWF Finland. The project involves the restoration of traditional agricul-

tural habitats, and assessments of the impact of habitat management on butterflies. Initial surveys of butterfly species have been completed. At Hindsby in Sipoo, a nationally valuable area of meadows and wooded pastures was restored. Coastal meadows on the Hanko peninsula were cleared of scrub, and these areas are to be kept open by grazing cattle, according to agreements already made with local cattle farmers. Traditional landscapes have also been restored on islands in the municipalities of Iniö and Houtskari.

Traditional landscapes were managed in the Rahja Islands by grazing around 100 sheep on them. Highland cattle were grazed on State-owned bird reserves in Kristiinankaupunki and in Kokkola, in order to help restore favourable coastal meadowland vegetation for wading birds.

The habitat restoration and management work in the Valuable Wetlands in SW Finland project is also

partly financed through the EU Life-Nature Fund. During 2003 new facilities for visitors were provided at Mietoistenlahti, Otajärvi, Omenajärvi and Koskeljärvi. A new viewing tower was built by Lake Koskeljärvi in Eura for bird-watchers. Most of the water meadows at Mietoistenlahti within this project are now being grazed or mown.

Managing traditional landscapes can also help to preserve Finland's valuable cultural heritage, especially in historically significant areas. Vegetation was cleared and meadows mown around an old chapel at Pielpajärvi in Inari, in the Lemmenjoki National Park, in the Hammastunturi Wilderness Area, and in the Pallas-Ounastunturi National Park. At Kevonsuu in the Kevo Strict Nature Reserve sheep have been grazed to preserve the traditional landscape.



Tapio Heikkilä

▲ Landscape managers at work in the Southwestern Archipelago.

# Sustainable Nature Tourism

*Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services has prepared a special set of principles for sustainable nature tourism in order to guide tourism and the provision of facilities in protected areas, wilderness areas and sites in conservation programmes. Sustainable nature tourism is being carefully developed through co-operation with tourism firms, local residents, local authorities and other organisations. These guidelines may be followed in different ways by different organisations, according to local conditions.*

The main purpose of protected areas is to protect natural features, but they are also beneficially used for scientific research, amateur nature studies and outdoor recreation. The recreational use of protected areas can usually also be described as nature tourism. The term nature tourism can be used to describe all forms of tourism and recreation based on an appreciation of nature, except for the everyday recreational activities people enjoy near their own homes.

The goal of sustainable nature tourism is to provide visitors with rewarding experiences in natural surroundings without harming the natural environment. The new principles take account of the various ecological, social, cultural and economic aspects of sustainability.

Well planned and organised tourist activities do not endanger natural features and local cultures, or disturb other people using natural areas. Nature tourism at its best can improve participants' physical and spiritual well-being, while also supporting local livelihoods.

We are currently developing indicators to evaluate the sustainability of nature tourism. These indicators will be used to monitor the ecological, social and economic impacts of nature tourism in specific areas. Such indicators will also be used in the planning of the use and management of protected areas.



Jari Kostet

▲ Visitors are guided along safe routes by signposts. Signposted routes are carefully planned to leave the most sensitive areas undisturbed.

A special booklet has been designed on the sustainable nature tourism in protected areas in Finland.

## Nine principles for sustainable nature tourism have been defined to guide the activities of Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services:

- 1 Natural values are preserved and all activities promote nature conservation.
- 2 The environment is subjected to as little pressure as possible.
- 3 Local traditions and cultures are respected.
- 4 Visitors increase their understanding and appreciation of nature and cultures.
- 5 Improved recreational facilities are provided for visitors.
- 6 Visitors are encouraged to enjoy both mental and physical recreation.
- 7 Local economies and employment are promoted.
- 8 Publicity materials are produced responsibly and carefully.
- 9 Activities are planned and organised co-operatively.

## Metsähallitus customer service points and visitor centres

### Blåmusslan Visitor Centre

Meripuistontie, 25930 Kasnäs, tel.int. +358 205 64 4620

### Ekenäs Visitor Centre

Rantapuistikko, 10600 Ekenäs, tel.int. +358 205 64 4613

### Etiäinen Customer Service

96930 Napapiiri, tel.int. +358 205 64 7820

### Fell Lapland Nature Centre

Peuratie 15, 99400 Enontekiö, tel.int. +358 205 64 7950

### Hossa Visitor Centre

Jatkonsalmentie 6, 89600 Suomussalmi, tel.int. +358 205 64 6041

### Häme Visitor Centre

Härkätie 818, 31380 Letku, tel.int. +358 205 64 4630

### Ivalo Customer Service

P.O. Box 35, 99801 Ivalo (Ivalontie 10), tel.int. +358 205 64 7701

### Kainuu Nature Centre

Lenttiirantie 342 D, 88900 Kuhmo, tel.int. +358 205 64 6380

### Karhuntassu Customer Service

orangintaival 2, 93600 Kuusamo, tel.int. +358 205 64 6800

### Kellokas Visitor Centre

95970 Äkäslompola, tel.int. +358 205 64 7039

### Kiehininen Customer Service

Honkapolku 3, 99830 Saariselkä, tel.int. +358 205 64 7200

### Kilpisjärvi Visitor Centre

99490 Kilpisjärvi, tel.int. +358 205 64 7990

### Koilliskaira Visitor Centre

99695 Tankavaara, tel.int. +358 205 64 7251

### Nestori – Saimaa Nature Centre

Akselinkatu 8 (visitors Aino Acktén puistotie 5), 57130

Savonlinna, tel.int. +358 205 64 5929

### Oskari – Linnansaari Visitor Centre

Ohitustie 7, 58900 Rantasalmi, tel.int. +358 205 64 5916

### Oulanka Visitor Centre

Liikasenvaarantie 132, 93999 Kuusamo, tel.int. +358 205 64 6850

### Pallastunturi Visitor Centre

99330 Pallastunturi, tel.int. +358 205 64 7930

### Pyhäntunturi Visitor Centre

Kerontie 22, 98530 Pyhäntunturi, tel.int. +358 205 64 7302

### Ruunaa Visitor Centre

Ruunaantie 129, 81750 Pankakoski, tel.int. +358 205 64 5757

### Savukoski Visitor Centre

Samperintie 32, 98800 Savukoski, tel.int. +358 205 64 7556

### Seitsemäinen Visitor Centre

Seitsemisentie 110, 34530 Länsi-Aure, tel.int. +358 205 64 5270

### Siida – Northern Lapland Nature Centre

Inarintie, 99870 Inari, tel.int. +358 205 64 7740

### Syöte Visitor Centre

Erätie 1, 93280 Syöte, tel.int. +358 205 64 6550

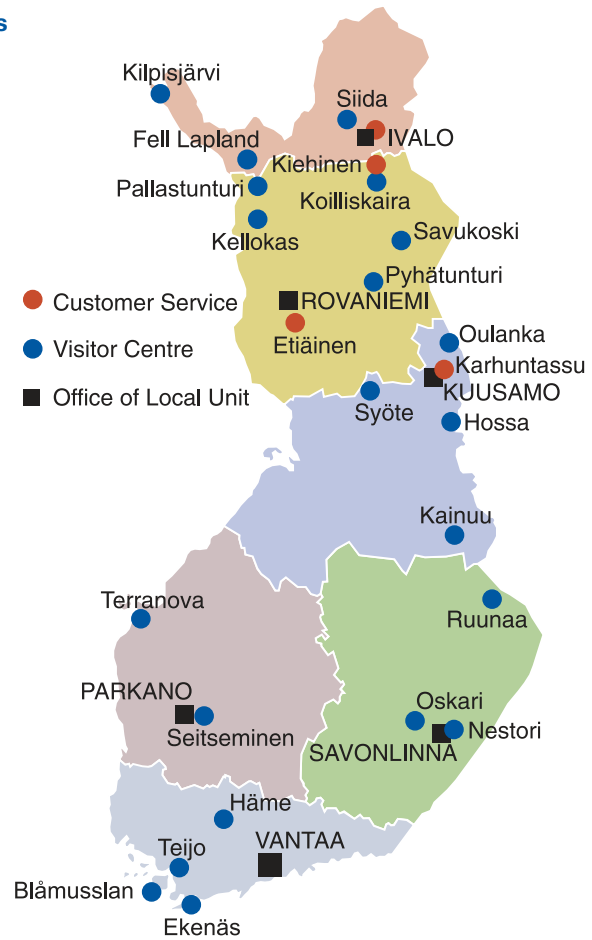
### Teijo Visitor Centre

Haarlantie 4, 25500 Perniö (visitors Skoilantie 491, Mathildedal) tel.int. +358 205 64 4700

### Terranova – Kvarken Nature Centre\*

P.O. Box 2 (Museokatu 2), 65101 Vaasa, tel.int. +358 6 325 3800

\* in cooperation with the Ostrobothnian Museum



## Metsähallitus Natural Heritage Services

### Natural Heritage Services, Central Unit

P.O. Box 94, 01301 Vantaa, tel.int. +358 205 64 100

### Natural Heritage Services Southern Finland

P.O. Box 94, 01301 Vantaa, tel.int. +358 205 64 100

### Natural Heritage Services Western Finland

P.O. Box 38, 39701 Parkano, tel.int. +358 205 64 5500

### Natural Heritage Services Eastern Finland

Akselinkatu 8, 57130 Savonlinna, tel.int. +358 205 64 5500

### Natural Heritage Services Ostrobothnia-Kainuu

Torangintaival 2, 93600 Kuusamo, tel.int. +358 205 64 6800

### Natural Heritage Services Northern Finland

P.O. Box 8016, 96101 Rovaniemi, tel.int. +358 205 64 7600

### Natural Heritage Services, Northern Lapland District for Wilderness Management

P.O. Box 36, 99801 Ivalo, tel.int. +358 205 64 7700



## For Nature and For People

**M**etsähallitus protects and manages valuable and endangered natural areas in Finland, and provides a wide range of outdoor recreational facilities for hikers and other visitors. We are responsible for the management of almost all of Finland's national parks, strict nature reserves and other protected areas owned by the State, as well as the extensive wilderness areas of northern Lapland and many other State-owned areas where facilities are provided for visitors. These areas are managed by Natural Heritage Services' six regional units. Visitor centres and customer service points provide a wealth of information on local natural features and facilities for visitors. Useful information for visitors is also available on the website [www.metsa.fi](http://www.metsa.fi) together with details of all our activities.



METSÄHALLITUS

P.O. Box 94 (Vernissakatu 4), 01301 Vantaa  
Tel.int. +358 205 64 100, telefax +358 205 64 4350  
[www.metsa.fi](http://www.metsa.fi)