



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Cuyahoga Valley
National Park

15610 Vaughn Road
Brecksville OH 44141

www.nps.gov/cuva
www.dayinthevalley.com

Cuyahoga Valley National Park News Release

For Immediate Release – Friday, March 5, 2010

Mary Pat Doorley, (440) 546-5995, (440) 343-7355 (cell), or mary_pat_doorley@nps.gov

Primate Researcher to Discuss Discovery of 125,000 Gorillas

Brecksville, Ohio - Dr. Amy Pokempner, researcher with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), will present a program on primate conservation and the discovery of 125,000 gorillas in the Republic of Congo, on Friday, March 12 at Happy Days Lodge in Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP), as a part of the Lyceum Distinguished Speaker Series. The lecture series features national speakers who stimulate the heart and mind with compelling stories of our natural and cultural world.

General seating admission is \$8 adults, \$6 CVNPA members, and \$3 children ages 3 - 12. Attend any three lectures for the subscription price of \$20 adults, \$15 CVNPA members. Advance sales are available by calling (330) 657-2909. Program time is 7 - 9 p.m. and doors open at 6:30 p.m. For updates on ticket availability and weather related cancellations, call the park's Cultural Arts Hotline at (330) 650-3636, ext. 228, or (800) 257-9477, ext. 228. This message will be updated by 2 p.m. the day of an event.

The world's population of critically endangered western lowland gorillas received a huge boost in 2008 when the WCS released a census showing massive numbers of these secretive great apes in the Republic of Congo. Previous estimates from the 1980s placed the entire population at fewer than 100,000. In the years following, scientists believed that this number had dwindled by at least half—the result of hunting and disease.

The new census tallied more than 125,000 western gorillas in two adjacent areas in the northern part of the country, covering an area of 18,000 square miles. In order to obtain accurate estimates of the population, researchers combed rainforests and isolated swamps counting gorilla “nests”. Gorillas construct sleeping nests each night from leaves and branches. In one particularly rich forest patch, population density was eight individuals per square kilometer, making this tally among the highest gorilla density ever recorded. The Bronx Zoo-based WCS and the government of Republic of Congo carried out the intensive fieldwork.

-NPS-