

THE PARK MONUMENTS OF GALAPAGOS: A HISTORY AND TRIBUTE

By: K. Thalia Grant & Gregory B. Estes

Puerto Ayora, Isla Santa Cruz, Galapagos, Ecuador. <galapagos@earthlink.net>

SUMMARY

The National Park monuments of Galapagos are stone plinths bearing notices advising visitors of the protected status of Galapagos and its wildlife, which were constructed by members of the Charles Darwin Foundation and the Ecuadorian Navy over half a century ago, when the Park was in its infancy. They represent the earliest efforts of the first conservation managers of the Park, before the Galapagos National Park Service was established, to control human activities in the uninhabited areas of Galapagos and ensure that tourism developed in a manner compatible with conservation. There were purportedly 18 monuments scattered throughout the archipelago, on 14 different islands. We identify their locations and provide a history of their origins, an assessment of their current condition, and a photographic record of most of them. Simply called "park notices" when they were first erected, 12 remain standing, on ten islands. They are now icons of that era of Galapagos conservation and we propose that they warrant the designation of historical monuments with corresponding protection.

RESUMEN

Los monumentos del parque Galápagos: historia y homenaje. Los monumentos del Parque Nacional Galápagos, plintos de piedra con avisos que informan a los visitantes sobre el estado de protección de Galápagos y de su vida silvestre, fueron construidos por el personal de la Fundación Charles Darwin y la Armada del Ecuador hace más de medio siglo, cuando el Parque estaba en su infancia. Estos avisos representan las medidas iniciales tomadas por las primeras autoridades administradoras del Parque (previo al establecimiento del Servicio Parque Nacional Galápagos) para regular la actividad humana en las áreas deshabitadas de Galápagos y procurar el desarrollo del turismo de manera compatible con la conservación. Se presumía que había 18 monumentos dispersos a lo largo del archipiélago, en 14 islas diferentes. Identificamos sus ubicaciones y brindamos una historia de sus orígenes, una evaluación de su estado actual y un registro fotográfico de la mayoría de ellos. Conocidos simplemente como "avisos del parque" cuando fueron erigidos, 12 permanecen todavía, distribuidos en diez islas. Son ahora íconos de la etapa inicial de la conservación de Galapagos, por lo que proponemos que merecen la designación de monumentos históricos con el correspondiente estado de protección.

INTRODUCTION

The Park monuments of Galapagos are familiar to almost everyone who has completed a boat tour of any length in Galapagos. They stand at a number of sites throughout the archipelago; flat-topped, trapezoidal pyramids of cemented lava rocks, most 1.5–2 m. in height, inset on one side with a rectangular 50 x 60 cm white marble plaque, engraved and painted with black letters (Fig. 1). The plaques, originally known as "National Park notices" (Perry 1968, 1970b, T. De Vries pers. comm.) and sometimes as "National Plaques" (Perry 1969) or "Wildlife Reserve notices" (Mountfort 1970), advise visitors, in Spanish above and English below, of the status of the Galapagos Islands as a National Park and of the legal protection of its indigenous wildlife (Fig. 2).

Most of the monuments are situated at what are now designated tourist "visitor sites", *i.e.* sites where regulated tourism is currently permitted by the Galapagos National Park Directorate (GNPD). All are found at historical "visiting sites", *i.e.* sites with a history of frequent or regular visitation before access restrictions were imposed. The monuments cut imposing figures wherever they stand, typically on or near the shoreline, but they blend aesthetically with their surroundings because they are made from locally-sourced lava blocks. They are often adorned with one or more of the native species they were designed to protect: depending on the island, Marine Iguanas *Amblyrhynchus cristatus*, lava lizards *Microlophus* spp., Galapagos Hawks *Buteo galapagoensis*, Nazca Boobies *Sula granti*, Blue-footed Boobies *S. neobuxii*, Swallow-tailed Gulls *Creagrurus furcatus*, Brown Pelicans *Pelecanus occidentalis urinator*, Galapagos mockingbirds *Mimus* spp., Galapagos Doves *Zenaida galapagoensis* and Darwin's finches *Geospiza* spp., regularly use them as perches (Fig. 3).



Figure 1. The Park monument at Santa Fé, 26 Nov 2019. (Photo: KTG)

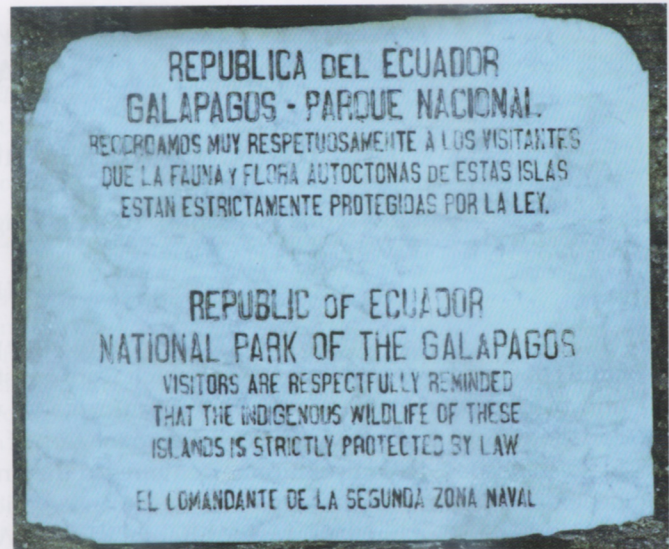


Figure 2. The plaque of the Park monument at Playa Espumilla, Santiago, 30 Jan 2020. (Photo: KTG)



Figure 3. The Park monument at Punta Suárez, Española, topped with Marine Iguanas (left), a Blue-footed Booby and Brown Pelican (centre), and a Galapagos Hawk (right). (Photos on left, GBE 1983; photo of hawk, KTG 20 Jul 2014)

Over the past few decades we have come across many of these monuments and read their plaques countless times. However, we never thought to document them until our curiosity was piqued by a 45-year old Galapagos postcard, advertised for sale, bearing a photograph of one of the Park monuments (minus its plaque) standing next to the famous Post Office Barrel of Floreana Island, where the postcard was mailed on 18 Jun 1974 by a tourist on the *Golden Cachelot* (Fig. 4). The photograph was taken in 1973 or 1974, as indicated by the dates painted on the planks plastering the barrel and the post on the right, and by the mailing date of the postcard. No such stone structure exists at Post Office Bay today, nor did it when we first visited this site in the 1980s, and the image struck



Figure 4. Picture postcard showing the Park monument at Post Office Bay, Floreana, photographed in 1973 or 1974. (Authors' collection)

us as so bizarre that we fleetingly wondered if the picture was a hoax. We looked for corroborating evidence that a Park monument really had existed next to the barrel, and found it in two published photographs (Bridge 1970, Laycock 1970), in the memories of a couple of local people and, most recently, in a collection of photographic slides shared by an acquaintance whose late father had visited Galapagos on the tour ship *Lina A* in early 1970 (Fig. 5). We searched the area for remains of the monument on our next visit to Post Office Bay and found several pieces of it scattered in the undergrowth of a sprawling Palo Verde tree *Parkinsonia aculeata*, not 10 m from where it had originally stood (Fig. 5 inset). When the monument was destroyed was less easy to determine, for the local people we questioned had widely differing memories and opinions on this matter, and most of the photographs of the Post Office Barrel we came across were inconclusive, as it was clearly possible to photograph the barrel without the monument in the frame. We did, however, find a panoramic image of the area, photographed in February 1978, showing that the monument had already been dismantled by then.

This foray into recent history and archaeological sleuthing sparked other questions. How many Park monuments were there? When and where were they erected and by whom? Who destroyed the monument at Post Office Bay and why? Had other Park monuments suffered the same fate? How many monuments remain, where are they and what condition are they in? It soon became apparent that the story of the Park monuments was an untold part of the otherwise well-repeated narrative of the earliest days of Galapagos conservation and tourism (Corley-Smith 1990, Epler 2007, Oxford & Watkins 2009), of potential interest to anyone engaged in these industries. An informative tribute to the monuments also seemed timely because 2019 marked the 60th anniversary of the creation of the Galapagos National Park (GNP) and the Charles Darwin Foundation (CDF) and the 50th anniversaries of the Galapagos National Park Service (GNPS, now known as the Galapagos National Park Directorate GNPD) and of regulated tourism in Galapagos.

METHODS

We began by listing all the monuments we remembered seeing since we first arrived in Galapagos, in 1973 (KTG) and 1982 (GBE). We then set out to find as many as we could, record their geographical location with GPS, and measure and photograph them. We perused the literature for mention of them and the internet for old photographs. We questioned long term residents of Galapagos about the monuments and particularly sought out people who had worked for or



Figure 5. The Park monument at Post Office Bay, Floreana, with the shattered remains of its plaque clearly visible at its base, in 1970 (Photo by Marcel F. Sandoz, courtesy of Shirley Sandoz) and (inset) the top right corner of the demolished monument, 29 Dec 2016. (Photo: GBE)

with the Charles Darwin Research Station (CDRS) and GNPS in the early days of their establishment. Conversations with Tjitte De Vries, an early UNESCO appointee at the CDRS, who arrived in the islands in 1964 and “played an important role in shaping the station’s activities” (Perry 2004), José (Pepe) Villa, one of the first two officials of the GNPS, who arrived in September 1968, and Oswaldo Chappy, a native of Galapagos whose career as a field warden of the CDRS started in the mid-1960s, were particularly revealing. As well as providing personal recollections, De Vries pointed us to the CDRS’s *Scientific and Conservation Reports*, a series of 21 documents compiled by Roger Perry, CDRS Director 1964–70, detailing the activities of the station during his tenure. In Report 15, a short note about the “notices” answered many of our questions (Perry 1968).

RESULTS

How many Park monuments were there?

Perry (1968) states that 18 monuments were erected in total, with the first 16 built between 12 Jun 1967, when funds for their manufacture were secured, and December 1968, the date of Perry’s report. The specified locations were: San Cristóbal (Puerto Baquerizo Moreno); Española (Gardner Bay and Punta Suárez); Floreana (Post Office Bay and Black Beach); Pinzón; Baltra (“marine terminal”); Plaza Sur; Santa Fé; Genovesa (Darwin Bay); Pinta (“anchorage on S coast”); Fernandina (Punta Espinosa); Isabela (Tagus Cove); Santiago (James Bay, Playa Espumilla and “Sullivan Bay”, though the “Sullivan Bay” monument was actually built on neighbouring Bartolomé Islet: Fig. 6).



Figure 6. The Park monument at “Sullivan Bay”, located on Bartolomé, with a close-up view of its plaque, 12 Dec 2019. (Photos: KTG)

Perry (1968) also reveals that at the end of 1968 there were plans to install two more notices, one at Puerto Villamil, Isabela, and the other at Puerto Ayora, Santa Cruz. O. Chappy (pers. comm.) has a distant recollection that the Villamil monument was built at the land end of the old dock (“muelle viejo”) near the offices of the Port Captain (“Capitania”) and was taken down at an unknown date. The Puerto Ayora structure was erected by early 1970 (Fig. 7 left). It stood near the end of the road leading from Puerto Ayora to the CDRS; its site became a small traffic island, beside which the current CDRS administration building was later erected. This monument was unique in that it was inset with only half a marble plaque, the Spanish portion, above which was a larger bronze plaque, also in Spanish, commemorating the inauguration of the CDRS on “el 21 enero 1964” (21 Jan 1964). The accuracy of this date has since been questioned, because even though contemporary newspaper articles (e.g. Oakland Tribune 23 Jan 1964) and some early publications (e.g. Dorst & Laruelle 1967) record the event as having taken place on 21 Jan, several other publications (e.g. Smith 1965, Corley-Smith 1990, Monsalve 2014) record the date as 20 Jan. However, a private letter from one of the participants (D. Balfour) to his parents, written shortly after the event and shown to us by M.-E. Balfour, states that “the ceremony was in fact held on the 21st”. The Puerto Ayora monument must have been rebuilt with different lava rocks, but more or less on the same spot and with the original plaques inserted into the new plinth, sometime prior to April 1983, as evident in Fig. 7 centre. This second monument was then removed sometime between May and November 2007 (A. Izurieta pers. comm., A. Tye pers. comm.) and replaced with the wooden welcome sign that stands there today, straddling the still-visible rectangular foundations of the old stone monument (Fig. 7 right).



Figure 7. Left to right: the Park monument at the CDRS on Santa Cruz, Feb 1970 (photo: S. Ito, courtesy University of Nagasaki), GBE standing next to the rebuilt monument, Apr 1983 (Photo: GBE), and the entrance sign to the CDRS, where the monument used to stand, 24 Jan 2020. (Photo: KTG).

Who built the Park monuments?

Construction of the monuments and plaques was financed by the Securities Commission of the National Finance Corporation of Ecuador (“Comision de Valores de la Financiera Nacional de Ecuador”) which in 1967 provided 200,000 sucres to the CDRS for “urgent” conservation matters, *i.e.* for the salaries, equipment and transportation of the “wardens and officials connected with conservation work”, and for the fabrication and installation of the plaques (Perry 1967, 1968). This amount was the equivalent then of about US\$ 11,000 (Steinberg 1966), or of US\$ 85,000 in 2020. Perry prepared the text for the notices (T. De Vries pers. comm.), and the stone plinths were built and the plaques installed by naval personnel and members of the CDRS (including Chappy, Lautaro Andrade and De Vries), working under the direction of Miguel Castro, the first Conservation Officer of the CDRS (O. Chappy, T. De Vries and J. Villa pers. comm.). The naval personnel were also acting under the orders of the commander of the “segunda zona naval” (the Ecuadorian naval zone that encompasses Galapagos), who was based on San Cristóbal; this was Mario Jaramillo del Castillo in 1967 and Édison Ruiz Rivas in 1968 (Monteverde Granados 2003). De Vries, who helped build several of the monuments, remembers that they started with the one on Santa Fé (Fig. 1). Chappy, who was also involved in the Santa Fé construction and at least one of the Santiago monuments, recalls that the Plaza Sur monument was one of the first to be built (Fig. 8).

According to Chappy (pers. comm.), several boat trips were made to erect all the monuments. The CDRS did not own a vessel at this time; the *Beagle II*, which the CDRS acquired in May 1964, was decommissioned in August 1967 and the *Beagle III* did not arrive until December 1971 (Barlow 1967, 1969, Kramer 1972). Thus various vessels, mainly fishing boats, had to be chartered for the purpose. A military vessel may also have been used (J. Villa pers. comm.); if so, it may have been the naval patrol vessel LP-82, whose identification number is painted in large white letters on the portion of the cliff that supports the monument in Darwin Bay (Fig. 9). The accompanying date (13 Nov 1968) falls within the period of time in which the first 16 notices were erected (Perry 1968). At the time, LP meant “Lancha Patrullera” (patrol boat); this naval category was later changed to LAE (Lancha de la Armada del Ecuador), at which point the LP-82 was renamed LAE 10 de Agosto and later LAE *Isla Santa Cruz* (Armada del Ecuador 2014). Today LP refers to “Lancha de Pesca” (fishing boat).

How many remain and what condition are they in?

Of the 18 original monuments listed by Perry (1968), a dozen remained standing as of 2019 (Fig. 10, Table 1). Eleven are located on nine uninhabited islands and one (Tagus Cove) on the uninhabited part of inhabited Isabela.



Figure 8. The Park monument on Plaza Sur, 26 Nov 2019 (photo: KTG), and close-up views of the plaque in 1970 (middle photo: M.F. Sandoz courtesy of S. Sandoz) and on 26 Nov 2019 (photo: KTG).



Figure 9. The Park monument in Darwin Bay, Genovesa, with close-up view of the plaque after being wiped clean of bird guano, 8 Jan 2020. (Photos: GBE)

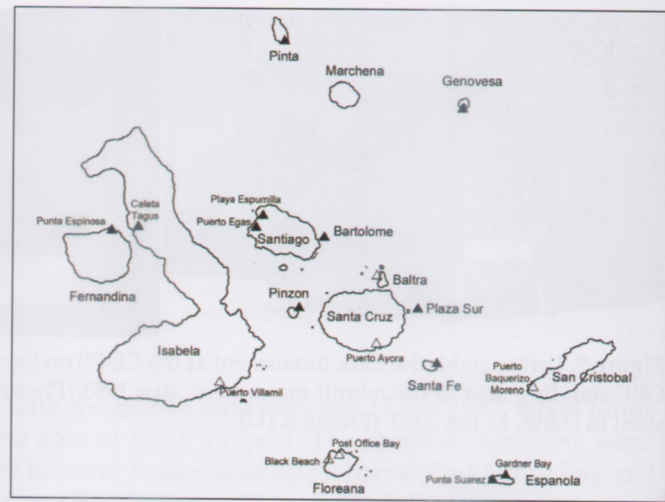


Figure 10. Distribution of the 18 Galapagos Park monuments. Black triangles denote monuments that are still standing, open triangles those that no longer exist.

The six that have disappeared, from Baltra, Puerto Villamil (Isabela), Post Office Bay and Black Beach (Floreana), Puerto Ayora (Santa Cruz) and Puerto Baquerizo Moreno (San Cristóbal) were all on inhabited islands and, with the exception of the Post Office Bay monument, in populated areas. Perhaps one of these six was never built at all: Lenín and Walter Cruz (pers. comm.), long-term residents of Floreana Island, claim there was never a monument at Black Beach, despite Perry's (1968) report to the contrary.

All the surviving plinth structures are in excellent condition, with little sign of erosion. However, the monument at Gardner Bay, Española, is at present almost entirely covered in scrub, mainly *Cordia lutea* and *Vallesia glabra* (Fig. 11), while on Santiago *C. lutea* is also encroaching on the James Bay monument (Fig. 12), as is Button Mangrove *Conocarpus erectus* on that at Playa Espumilla (Fig. 13).

Most of the plaques are also remarkably well preserved, despite the black paint that filled the engraved letters having weathered away to a greater or lesser extent on all. The plaque at Gardner Bay, Española, is almost completely devoid of paint (Fig. 11), as is the Pinta plaque, which is also so worn as to be effectively illegible (Fig. 14). The plaque at Playa Espumilla is one of the least weathered (Fig. 2).

The uniquely-veined marble of each plaque bears faint scratch marks made by past visitors; some scratches look like random skate tracks on an ice rink, while others form the initials and names of people and places (mainly Manta and Quito), and dates from the late 1960s to early 1980s. The Plaza Sur (Fig. 8) and Punta Espinosa (Fernandina) (Fig. 15) plaques bear the most scratch marks, whereas the Darwin Bay (Genovesa) and Gardner Bay (Española),

plaques are almost scratch-free (Figs. 9 and 11). All the surviving plaques bear the signature "A. Moncayo, Quito", cut into the bottom right-hand corner (Fig. 16), probably the name and location of the manufacturer (O. Chappy pers. comm.). On the Santa Fé plaque, this inscription and all the graffiti have at some point been scratched out (Fig. 17).

Three plaques show significant damage. Only two small fragments remain of the plaque belonging to the monument on Pinzón Island (Fig. 18). Only half a plaque exists at Tagus Cove: the lower portion with the English words

Table 1. Location, dimensions and condition of the Park monuments in Galapagos. Coordinate datum WGS 84. Dimensions (cm) in order: height, width (base), width (top), breadth (base), breadth (top). NM = not measured, NA = not applicable.

Island	Site	Specific Location	Coordinates	Dimensions	Condition
Existing monuments:					
Bartolomé	NW side	Above E end of landing beach (Playa Dorada).	0°17'3.8"S 90°33'18.7"W	177, 118, 86, 68, 37	Intact. Letters missing some paint. Many scratch marks. Fig. 6.
Española	Gardner Bay	Behind centre of beach.	1°21'13.7"S, 89°39'37.6"W	205, 128, 78, NM, NM	Intact. Obscured by vegetation. Letters almost paint-free. Few scratches. Fig. 11.
Española	Punta Suárez	Near landing dock and beginning of trail.	1°22'8.8"S 89°44'42.3"W	180, 116, 71, 88, 30	Intact. Bullet holes in plaque. Letters missing much paint. Few scratches. Figs 3, 20.
Fernandina	Punta Espinoza	C. 75 m NW of landing dock.	0°15'55.7"S 91°26'47.0"W	186, 121, 75, 88, 36	Intact. Letters mostly black, the last line entirely white. Many scratches. Fig. 15.
Genovesa	Darwin Bay	Cliff side behind landing beach.	0°19'6.3"N 89°56'55.0"W	60, 87, 87, 63, 63	Intact. Letters missing much paint. Few scratches. Built onto cliff; c. 2m above ground. Fig. 9.
Isabela	Tagus Cove	Against N side of gully, between dock and steps.	0°15'35.9"S 91°22'9.6"W	73, 127, 120, 102, 73	Spanish plaque missing. Letters of rest missing much paint. Many scratches. Fig. 19.
Pinta	S side of island	On rocks W of landing beach.	c. 0°32'41"N 90°44'17"W	NM	Intact. Letters entirely paint-free and difficult to read. Many scratches. Fig. 14.
Pinzón	NE side	Close to shore near snorkelling site.	0°35'56.8"S 90°39'16.2"W	NM	Plaque missing since 1970. Fig. 18.
Plaza Sur	Plaza Sur	Near landing dock and beginning of trail.	0°34'57.4"S 90°9'53.4"W	177, 117, 85, 87, 31	Intact. Letters missing much paint. Many scratch marks. Fig. 8.
Santa Fé	NE side	Between the two landing beaches.	0°48'13.0"S 90°2'26.4"W	182, 120, 81, 73, 30	Intact. Letters missing some paint. A few graffiti, scratched out. Figs 1, 16.
Santiago	James Bay (Puerto Egas)	Inland from landing beach, next to tourist trail.	0°14'28.1"S 90°51'42.8"W	176, 118, 70, 83, 37	Intact. Letters mostly black. Moderately scratched. Fig. 12.
Santiago	Playa Espumilla	Just beyond N end of beach, in mangroves.	0°11'56.6"S 90°49'44.9"W	168, 116, 78, 86, 44	Intact. Partly hidden by mangroves. Letters mostly black. Few scratches. Figs 2, 13.
Missing monuments:					
Baltra	Marine terminal	Unknown.	?c. 0°26'10"S 90°17'7"W	NA	No longer exists.
Floreana	Black Beach	Unknown.	?c. 1°16'28"S 90°29'20"W	NA	May never have existed.
Floreana	Post Office Bay	Next to Post Office Barrel.	1°14'11.9"S 90°26'55.4"W	NA	Plaque destroyed in 1969. Demolished between 1973 and 1978. Figs 4, 5.
Isabela	Puerto Villamil	?At the end of the old dock near Port Captain office.	?c. 0°57'29"S 90°57'57"W	NA	No longer exists.
San Cristóbal	Puerto Baquerizo Moreno	On naval base, near Darwin	?c. 0°54'8"S 89°36'50"W	NA	No longer exists.
Santa Cruz	Puerto Ayora	Entrance to CDRS.	0°44'31.9"S 90°18'15.2"W	NA	Removed in 2007. Fig. 7.



Figure 11. The Park monument at Gardner Bay, Española, with a close-up view of its plaque, 8 Dec 2019. (Photos: GBE.)

(Fig. 19); a layer of cement covers what, if anything, is left of the Spanish half. The plaque at Punta Suárez has two bullet-sized holes in the centre and may well have been shot at (Figs 3, 20). According to Perry (1969, 1970a) these three plaques and that at Post Office Bay were vandalized within two years of their emplacement; the notices at Punta Suárez and Post Office Bay were “destroyed” in late May or June 1969 (Perry 1969; see also Fig. 5) and those at Pinzón and Tagus Cove, by February 1970 (Perry 1970b). Presumably in the case of the Punta Suárez and Tagus Cove plaques, which still exist, Perry (1969) meant “damaged” rather than destroyed, for we have found no evidence that either was replaced.



Figure 12. The Park monument at James Bay, Santiago, with a close-up view of the plaque, 3 Aug 2017. (Photos: KTG)



Figure 13. The Park monument at Playa Espumilla, Santiago in 2004 (Photo: J. Gibbs) and on 30 Jan 2020 (photo: KTG).

DISCUSSION

History

Seemingly artefacts of the GNPS/GNPD and the tourism industry, the Park monuments were conceived (in 1967), created and most of them erected (in 1967–8), before either entity was formed. The GNPS began in August 1968 as an offshoot of the Forestry Service of the



Figure 14. The Park monument on Pinta Island, with a close-up view of the plaque, in 2011. (Photo: D. Lara, courtesy of E. Hunter).

Ministry of Agriculture, with the first two Park wardens (José Villa and Juan Black) sent to Galapagos the following month. Regulated tourism began in July 1969, with Lindblad Tours operating two-week tours on the ten-passenger

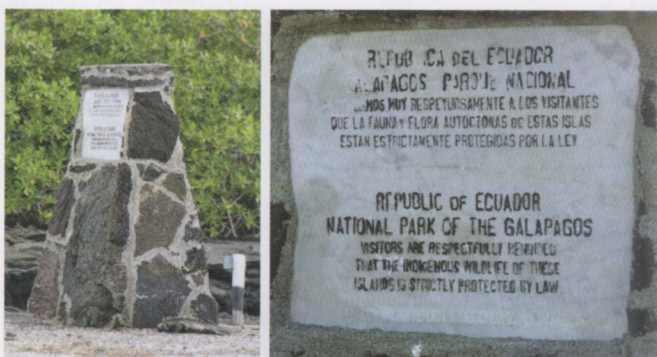


Figure 15. The Park monument at Punta Espinosa, Fernandina with a close-up view of the plaque, 28 Jan 2020. (Photos: KTG)



Figure 16. A close-up of the plaque on Santa Fé, 10 Dec 2019. (Photos: GBE)

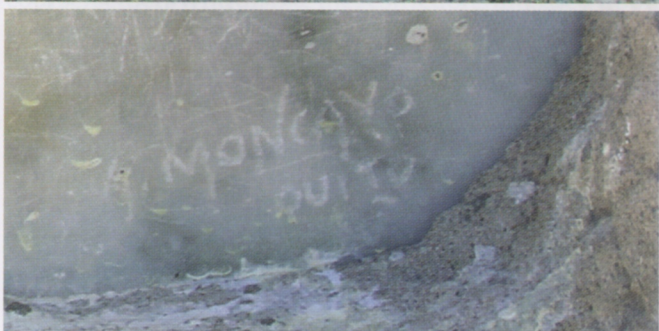


Figure 17. The signature found on all the surviving plaques: Tagus Cove, 2 Aug 2017 (left), Plaza Sur, 11 Jul 2017 (middle), Genovesa, 15 Jan 2020 (right). (Photos: KTG and GBE)



Figure 18. The Park monument on Pinzón, 13 Jan 2018. (Photo: GBE)

Golden Cachelot (Lindblad & Fuller 1983, D. Balfour pers. comm.). Rather, the monuments were the brainchild of the CDF and constructed in partnership with the Ecuadorian Navy. These two institutions were the original conservation managers of the GNP, from 1959 when Ecuador first declared all unoccupied lands in Galapagos “parques nacionales de reserva”, with this designation endowing the islands with laws that made it “illegal to colonize or modify unsettled areas” and to capture or remove certain animals, like “tortoises and their eggs”. Additional protection laws came into effect in the 1970s (Grimwood & Snow 1966, MacFarland *et al.* 1974). The CDF administered in the capacity of “scientific adviser to the Ecuadorian Government” but also had authority to implement practical conservation measures including

the destruction of feral animals, while the Ecuadorian Navy had a law-enforcement role (Grimwood & Snow 1966). During the first decade of the existence of the GNP, as the CDRS was being built, key conservation issues identified, tortoise recovery programmes initiated, and recommendations for the administration of the GNP drafted, the CDF recognised that for the success of its conservation aims, namely “the protection of endangered species and the control



Figure 19. The Park monument at Tagus Cove, Isabela, 12 April 2017, and close-up view of the plaque, 2 Aug 2017. (Photos: GBE, KTG)

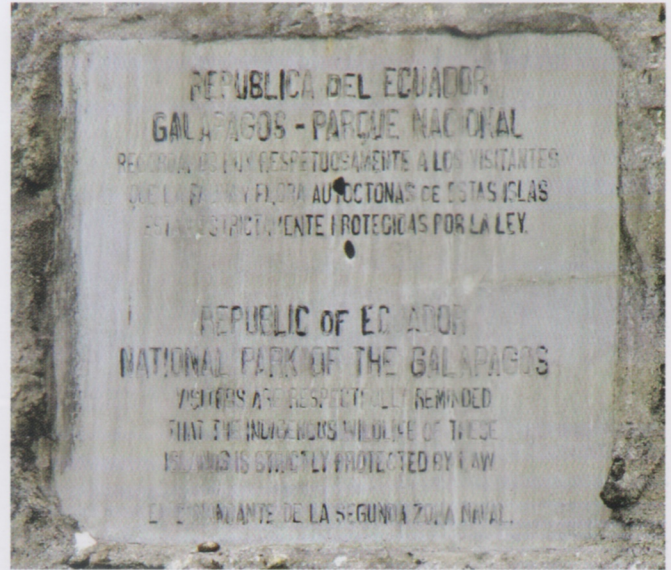


Figure 20. A close-up view of the plaque at Punta Suárez, Española with its two bullet holes, 24 Nov 2019. (Photo: KTG)

or elimination of introduced species of mammals, plants and invertebrates”, urgent steps were needed to control human activities in the islands (Corley-Smith 1975). For roughly 300 years, a succession of pirates, whalers, sealers, fishermen, colonists, museum collectors and scientists had hunted and collected the native wildlife and introduced alien species, and the devastation was continuing as new generations of residents and visitors killed wildlife for food and sale, cleared and occupied new lands, and brought in more non-native plants and animals (Grimwood & Snow 1966, Corley-Smith 1990). The National Park designation itself was attracting more tourists, in unregulated groups who arrived on supply ships (notably the *Cristóbal Carrier*) (Perry 2004, Basset 2009), on the occasional cruise ship (e.g. the *Navarino* which made visits from Peru in 1967 and 1968) (Lindblad & Fuller 1983) and on private yachts, at least two dozen of which were arriving each year in the mid-1960s (D. Balfour pers. comm.). All these people “were capable of doing serious harm and there was nobody to prevent them” (Eibl-Eibesfeldt 1976). Tourism, regulated so as to be compatible with conservation, appeared to be the answer, as it would raise international awareness of

the importance of protecting the islands and generate the funds to do so (Perry 2004). The Ecuadorian government, run by a military junta between 1963 and 1966, was supportive of the idea, especially after Prince Philip entertained officials on the royal yacht *Britannia* during a visit in 1964, and convinced them of the economic value of Galapagos protection and nature tourism (Perry 2004). Ian Grimwood (national parks expert) and David Snow (CDRS Director 1963–4), drew up a list of recommendations for the Park’s administration, including for curtailing harmful activities and developing tourism in the islands (Grimwood & Snow 1966).

The fabrication of the Park notices, bearing a text composed by the director of the CDRS and “signed” by the commander of the Second Naval Zone, was one of the first measures taken consequent to this seminal report, to address “the human-interference” problem (Corley-Smith 1990) and pave the way for nature tourism.

Choice of Sites

The Park monuments were distributed widely throughout the archipelago (Fig. 10) to ensure that visitors would encounter at least one and be reminded of the protected status of Galapagos. They were placed at ports of entry and

at sites on uninhabited islands which were being harmed by frequent and unregulated visits by locals, fishermen, private yachtsmen, scientists and military personnel (J. Villa pers. comm.). Darwin Bay, Tagus Cove, Plaza Sur, Bartolomé and Post Office Bay, for example, were popular stopping places for private yachts, where graffiti painting, souvenir hunting, collecting native animals for “pets”, and other damaging activities were often conducted. Plaza Sur and Santa Fé islands were regularly visited by residents of neighbouring Santa Cruz, who went there to hunt land iguanas and goats. Española and Genovesa were used as target practice by the navy, who, despite lending a vital and effective enforcement hand to the CDF’s conservation efforts, still tended to consider the Galapagos as their privileged preserve (Perry 1965a, 1969, 2004). Tagus Cove, Santiago, Pinzón and Pinta were frequently visited by local and foreign fishermen, who camped on these and other shores to hunt tortoises and other animals for food, poach young tortoises to sell “for the international pet trade” (MacFarland *et al.* 1974) and kill sea-lions and fur-seals for their teeth and fur, which they then sold to tourists (Perry 1965b, 1969, 1970a). On Pinta they also introduced goats, which multiplied and devastated the native vegetation (Weber 1971).

Most of the sites chosen for Park monuments later became official tourist visitor sites, after David Balfour, Carl Angermeyer and Bernhard Schreyer, who all knew the archipelago well from ferrying scientists around the islands from 1963 to 1967, recommended several for their safe anchorages and landings, seabird colonies, congregations of iguanas, picturesque landscapes and other tourist attractions (Barlow 1967, D. Balfour pers. comm.). These sites included the CDRS, where tour groups stopped for coffee with the director. A Park monument was not a pre-requisite, however. Daphne Major, a first stop for *Golden Cachelot* passengers after they arrived by plane to Baltra, and Conway Bay (Santa Cruz), which was on the itinerary of the *Lina A* in 1970, are two visitor sites without monuments. Conversely, Pinta and Pinzón had monuments but never became terrestrial visitor sites, although both are now dive sites. Pinzón is also regularly visited for snorkelling, as it occasionally was in the 1970s (G. Shreyer and S. Divine pers. comm.).

Reception

The Park monuments were not well received by everyone. One of the early challenges of the CDRS was to change local attitudes from exploitation to conservation, and to persuade residents to accept the implications, there being “of course, settlers who dislike the restrictions imposed upon them by nature conservation” (Eibl-Eibesfeldt 1976). Progress was made in “reconciling local opinion with the idea of conservation” thanks in large part to education programmes initiated by Roger Perry and expanded by subsequent CDRS directors (Corley-Smith 1990). Initially, however, “there was considerable local opposition” to the CDRS and its conservation programs (Corley-Smith 1990) and it is generally believed that the damage to the Park plaques at Punta Suárez (Española) and Pinzón in 1969 and 1970 was caused by fishermen acting on the animosity they felt towards the CDRS. These two islands were the focus of the CDRS’s earliest tortoise conservation programs, and it may be no coincidence that the Pinzón plaque was destroyed the same year (1970) that the first CDRS-reared Pinzón tortoises were released onto the island (MacFarland 1976, Corley-Smith 1990).

One of the main points of contention between the CDF and the residents was territory. The CDF was tasked with “determining the areas to be included in the park” (Grimwood & Snow 1966) and, until the boundaries were delimited, there was great confusion about how much land on the inhabited islands would constitute National Park. On Isabela, San Cristóbal and especially on Santa Cruz there was a general “increase in movement to occupy [new] land” before the boundaries between the GNP and colonised zones could be officially marked, a task that was carried out between 1969 and 1975 (Perry 1966, 1967, 1968, 2004, MacFarland 1976, Corley-Smith 1990). There were even attempts to claim land on uninhabited Santiago (Perry 1966, 1968, 1969, 2004). On Floreana the settlers feared that the whole island “had been proposed as a reserve and that [they] ... would be required to vacate their land” (Perry 1967). Some suspect that the vandalism of the Post Office plaque (before the monument itself was removed) was exacted by certain Floreana settlers in response to this misperceived threat.

Boundary issues may also explain why some of the monuments erected on the inhabited islands have since disappeared. The Park notices imply, if not declare, that the site they stand on is National Park land, but for four of the six monuments that have disappeared (Baltra, Puerto Villamil, Puerto Baquerizo Moreno and Black Beach) this was simply not true. With the possible exception of the Black Beach monument, which may not have been erected at all, these monuments were probably taken down shortly after the GNP boundaries were established, once it was clear that the land they stood on was not GNP land, and perhaps also to make way for municipal development. The Post Office Bay monument may also have been dismantled for a similar reason, for although Post Office Bay lies within the GNP, in 1975 it was declared a “Special Use Zone”, an area “traditionally ... used by settlers” (Corley-Smith 1975), which could have been interpreted as licence for the monument’s removal, either by locals in defiance, or officials in concession.

Epilogue

This story is incomplete, in part because we could not speak with everyone involved in the planning and construction of the monuments. Many of the early Station and Park personnel have passed away, including Miguel Castro, Roger

Perry, Juan Black, Jacinto Gordillo (who represented the CDRS on Isabela in the 1960s) and Rolf Wittmer (hired by Perry to monitor the flamingos on Floreana), and the memories of those that remain are naturally limited. Our initial list of monuments, compiled solely from our own memories, included structures on Marchena, Rábida and North Seymour Islands. We are now confident there were never monuments on Rábida or North Seymour, but though we have found no evidence for one on Marchena either, including among photographs we took during field trips there in the 1980s and early 1990s, Lenín Cruz and Tjitte De Vries (pers. comm.) also “remember” one there. We hope this article will prompt others to come forward with photographs of the missing monuments listed in Table 1, and substance for a sequel.

We have referred to the structures and their plaques as “monuments” because, with the passage of time, the notices and their plinths have become true monuments in the sense of “something that by its survival commemorates and distinguishes a person, action, period, event ... or that serves as a reminder of, or witness or tribute to, a way of life, attitude, achievement, etc.” (<www.oed.com> consulted 15 Dec 2019). The Park monuments stand testament to the monumental dedication and perseverance of the instigators of the conservation movement, a diversity of Ecuadorian and international groups and individuals working together to protect the islands and their wildlife. The remaining monuments commemorate conservation successes with dignity, while the damaged plaques and echoes of the fallen plinths remind us that the battle was hard fought.

We hope this article will inspire new appreciation of the venerable Park monuments which, despite provoking visitors’ curiosity, are often dismissed as uninteresting relics of the past with a redundant message: it is now common knowledge that Galapagos is a National Park and its wildlife protected by law. However, it is for this very message that these dignified obelisks should be protected and their plaques re-inked. All too often old edifices get torn down when their initial purpose is thought to have expired and before their deeper significance is realised. We echo the sentiment of T. De Vries (pers. comm.), a key player in the construction of the monuments and the development of other conservation measures in Galapagos: “I hope they do not take all the monuments of the 1960s away even though they are somewhat deteriorated”. The monuments are still being used by the wildlife they were put up to protect, and often it is the hawks, boobies, iguanas and other animals perched on them that draw our attention to them and invite us to reread the message they hold. Over 50 years ago, by declaring Galapagos a National Park, forming the CDF, CDRS and GNPS, and funding and supporting these institutions with nature tourism, humans made a pledge to protect the Galapagos. The monuments should not be torn down; in the midst of the current global devastation, we need their reminder of this like never before.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We thank the many people who provided recollections and reflections about the monuments and the early days of the CDF, CDRS, GNPS and Galapagos tourism industry. They include Tjitte De Vries, José Villa and Oswaldo Chappy, who were particularly helpful, and Steve Divine, Marc Patry, Heather Blenkiron, Peter and Rosemary Grant, Elizabeth Hunter, Arturo Izurieta, Lenín Cruz, Wálter Cruz, Gundi Schreyer, James Gibbs and David Balfour. We also thank Shirley Sandoz, Shuzo Ito, Daniel Lara and James Gibbs for the use of their photographs and María-Eulalia Balfour for sharing documentation about the inauguration of the CDRS.

LITERATURE CITED

- Armada del Ecuador 2014. *Historia Resumida de la Armada del Ecuador, compilado por Vargas Molina, José Gabriel*. Instituto de Historia Marítima, Guayaquil.
- Barlow, T.E. 1967. The research vessel “Beagle II”. *Noticias de Galapagos* 9/10: 5–7
- Barlow, T.E. 1969. Beagle III. *Noticias de Galapagos* 13: 8–10
- Basset, C.A. 2009. *Galapagos at the Crossroads: Pirates, Biologists, Tourists, and Creationists Battle for Darwin’s Cradle of Evolution*. National Geographic Books, Washington, D.C.
- Bridge, A. 1970. Galapagos. *Pacific Discovery* 14(1): 1–15.
- Corley-Smith, G.T. (ed.) 1975. The Master Plan for the Galapagos National Park. *Noticias de Galapagos* 23: 9–13.
- Corley-Smith, G.T. 1990. A brief history of the Charles Darwin Foundation for the Galapagos Islands 1959–1988. *Noticias de Galapagos* 49: 1–36.
- Dorst J. & Laruelle, J. 1967. *The First Seven Years of the Charles Darwin Foundation for the Galapagos Isles, 1959–1966*. Palais des Académies, Brussels.
- Eibl-Eibesfeldt, I. 1976. Twenty years after. *Noticias de Galapagos* 24: 4–8.
- Epler, B. 2007. *Tourism, the Economy, Population Growth, and Conservation in Galapagos*. Charles Darwin Foundation, Puerto Ayora.
- Kramer, P. (ed.) 1972. *Conservation and Scientific Report 24*. Charles Darwin Research Station, Puerto Ayora.
- Grant, K.T. & Estes, G.B. 2016. Alf Wollebæk and the Galapagos Archipelago’s first biological station. *Galapagos Research* 68: 33–42.
- Grimwood, I. & Snow, D. 1966. *Recommendations on the Administration of the Proposed National Park of the Galapagos Archipelago and the Development of its Tourist Potential*. Unpubl. typescript, Charles Darwin Research Station.

- Laycock, G. 1970. The Galapagos. *Boys' Life* July 1970: 20–21, 34–35.
- Lindblad, L. & Fuller, J.C. 1983. *Passport to Anywhere: the Story of Lars-Eric Lindblad*. Times Books, New York.
- MacFarland, C.G. (ed.) 1976. News from Academy Bay. *Noticias de Galapagos* 24: 1–4.
- MacFarland C.G., Villa, J. & Toro, B. 1974. The Galapagos Giant Tortoises (*Geochelone elephantopus*). Part 1: status of the surviving populations. *Biological Conservation* 6: 118–133.
- Monsalve, G. (ed.) 2014. *The Charles Darwin Research Station: 50 years of a Successful Partnership between the Ecuadorian Government and Science in Galapagos*. Charles Darwin Foundation, Puerto Ayora. <<https://www.galapagos.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/CDRS-50th-aniversary.pdf>>
- Monteverde Granados, C. 2003. *Historia Marítima del Ecuador. Tomo XII: Época Contemporánea*. Instituto de Historia Marítima, Guayaquil.
- Mountfort, G. 1970. The problems of tourism to island reserves. *Noticias de Galapagos* 15/16: 11–13.
- Oxford, P. & Watkins G. 2009. *Galapagos. Both Sides of the Coin*. Imagine, New York.
- Perry, R. 1965a. *Scientific and Conservation Report* 2. Charles Darwin Research Station, Puerto Ayora.
- Perry, R. 1965b. *Scientific and Conservation Report* 3. Charles Darwin Research Station, Puerto Ayora.
- Perry, R. 1966. *Scientific and Conservation Report* 7. Charles Darwin Research Station, Puerto Ayora.
- Perry, R. 1967. *Scientific and Conservation Report* 10. Charles Darwin Research Station, Puerto Ayora.
- Perry, R. 1968. *Scientific and Conservation Report* 15. Charles Darwin Research Station, Puerto Ayora.
- Perry, R. 1969. *Scientific and Conservation Report* 17. Charles Darwin Research Station, Puerto Ayora.
- Perry, R. 1970a. *Scientific and Conservation Report* 18. Charles Darwin Research Station, Puerto Ayora.
- Perry, R. 1970b. *Scientific and Conservation Report* 19. Charles Darwin Research Station, Puerto Ayora.
- Perry, R. 2004. *Island Days*. Stacey International, London.
- Smith, A.G. 1965. The Galapagos International Scientific Project. *Pacific Discovery* 16(5): 7–10.
- Steinberg, S.H. 1966. *The Statesman's Year-Book. Statistical and Historical Annual of the States of the World for the Year 1966–1967*. MacMillan, London.
- Weber, D. 1971. Pinta, Galápagos: une île à sauver. *Biological Conservation* 4: 8–12.