



REPUBLIC OF CROATIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENTAL  
AND NATURE PROTECTION



*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

GUIDE TO NATIONAL PARKS AND NATURE PARKS  
IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

# Parks of Croatia



# We cherish the riches that nature has been creating for centuries



**Mihael Zmajlović**  
Minister of Environmental and Nature Protection

If we measured the extent to which nature is preserved, Croatia would be among the richest countries of Europe. We have every right to say proudly that Croatia is the national park of Europe. A third of our territory belongs to the world's largest network of protected areas, the Natura 2000 network. Under the title of Parks of Croatia there are 8 National Parks and 11 Nature Parks.

Each one is unique, regardless of their location in Croatia – on the sea, in the coastal area, continental or mountainous parts. Everyone will surely find the incredible diversity of landscape fascinating. Apart from the natural beauty, the parks offer various other facilities and services to their visitors – walks, visitors' centres, bike and mountain trails, boat rides or for example mountain climbing, canoeing and deep-sea diving for the more adventurous ones.

That is why they are all worth the visit which is confirmed by about 3 million visitors who are attracted to them every year.

This brochure presents the natural riches of Parks, their particular features and attractions managed by the employees of public institutions governing the Parks whose preservation is the objective of activities implemented by the Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection. You can plan your visit on the joint web site [www.parkovihrvatske.hr](http://www.parkovihrvatske.hr), or even apply to do some voluntary work in one of the Parks.



[www.parkovihrvatske.hr](http://www.parkovihrvatske.hr)



# Symbols:



HIKING



HORSE RIDING



MOUNTAIN TRAIL CLIMBING



SKIING



ROCK CLIMBING



SPELEOLOGY



CYCLING



PARAGLIDING



FISHING



SWIMMING



SAILING



SCUBA DIVING



KAYAKING



SNORKELING



BOAT TRIPS



BIRDWATCHING



FORTRESS



RESTAURANT



WILD ANIMALS



ACCOMMODATION



# Contents:

Introduction .....	2
<b>National Parks</b>	
Plitvička jezera .....	6
Paklenica .....	8
Risnjak .....	10
Mljet .....	12
Kornati .....	14
Brijuni .....	16
Krka .....	18
Sjeverni Velebit .....	20
<b>Nature Parks</b>	
Kopački rit .....	22
Biokovo .....	23
Medvednica .....	24
Velebit .....	25
Telašćica .....	26
Lonjsko polje .....	27
Papuk .....	28
Vransko jezero .....	29
Učka .....	30
Žumberak - Samoborsko gorje .....	31
Lastovsko otočje .....	32
About <a href="http://www.parkovihrvatske.hr">www.parkovihrvatske.hr</a> .....	33
Volunteer program .....	34

**Publisher:** Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection and Slobodna Dalmacija

**Authors:** Igor Kreitmeyer, Marija Grgurević

**Contributors:** Marija Jurčević, Ivana Horvat Pisljak, Alma Radoš

**Photography:** Croatian Tourist Board, Agency Cropix, Ministry, S.Bionda, M.Vrdoljak, I.Pervan, F.Bosnar, B.Krstinić, N.Smoje, B.Dmitrović, Novena Ltd.

**Print:** Slobodna Dalmacija print Ltd.

The opinion of the authors in this publication does not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the United Nations, UNDP or their member states.





### MAIN FEATURES

Proclaimed as National Park: 1949  
 Inscribed into the UNESCO world heritage list: 1979  
 Area: 296,8 km<sup>2</sup>  
 16 lakes  
**Biggest lakes:** Kozjak and Prošće  
**Main attraction:** Veliki slap (Great Waterfall), 78 m the biggest waterfall in Croatia  
**Highest peak:** Seliški vrh, 1279 m  
**Cave open for tourists:** Šupljara  
**Number of visitors:** over a million 80% foreign visitors, mostly German, Dutch and Italian

### POINT OF INTEREST

The name of the Park comes from the word „plitvice“, „pličine“ which means something shallow, a shallow basin created in the sedimentation process of limestone.

### EVENT OF THE YEAR

A swimming marathon in June

### FLORA AND FAUNA

**Plants:** Siberian rayflower, Dalmatian squill, round-leaved sundew, 58 types of orchids – lady's slipper  
**Animals:** brown bear, wolf, lynx, Ural owl, otter



*Ticket price: between 55 HRK and 180 HRK depending on the time of the year*

 You can find online tickets at [www.croatia-tickets.com](http://www.croatia-tickets.com)



### Did you know?

According to a legend, there was a queen, Black Queen, who came down the mountain and after a very dry season sent a strong wind and thunder storm to the local people to finally end the drought. After the rain, 16 lakes remained. The people were very grateful and the queen said: „From now on, people will be coming from all over the world to see these beautiful Plitvice Lakes“.



# Place of magical beauty

Between Mala Kapela and Lička Plješivica, next to the road connecting Dalmatia to Zagreb, there are 16 cascade-lined lakes with magnificent waterfalls, surrounded by forests with abundant fauna. Plitvička jezera (Plitvice Lakes) was the first Croatian national park whose value was also recognized by UNESCO having placed it on the world natural heritage list.

The two biggest and deepest lakes, Kozjak and Prošće, together with ten other smaller lakes on dolomite substrate make up a group of Upper Lakes, whereas the Lower Lakes are situated downstream from Kozjak in the 70 – 80 meter deep limestone canyon. Just before entering Proščansko Lake, the two rivers, Crna and Bijela, merge into the joint Matica, whereas the River Rječica enters Kozjak Lake and the beautiful Korana River is its effluent. Next to it, at the most impressive part of the park, at Sastavci, together with the waterfalls of the last lake falls the 78 meter high waterfall of the Plitvice Rivulet. The River Korana, on its way to Golubinjača, the deepest cave in the national park, and further on towards Karlovac also forms some amazing waterfalls.

Even though the altitude of Plitvice Lakes is not very high, the rich forests surrounding it give the impression of mountainous landscape; also the best preserved area of original beech-fir forest spreads into the virgin forest of Čorkova Cove.





### MAIN FEATURES

Proclaimed as National Park: 1949

Area: 95 km<sup>2</sup>

Highest peak: Vaganski vrh, 1757 m

Main attractions: impressive canyons of Velika and Mala Paklenica carved into the mountain from the sea level to the highest peaks of Velebit

Biggest Croatian rock for climbers: Anića kuk, 712 m

Cave open for tourists: Manita peć

Number of visitors: 120.000

85% foreign visitors, mostly German, Austrian, Czech, Slovenian, Italian

### POINT OF INTEREST

The name of the Park comes from the word „paklina“ which means black pine resin

### EVENT OF THE YEAR

International gathering of climbers in May

### FLORA I FAUNA

Plants: sandwort and lady's slipper

Animals: chamois, brown bear, wolf, lynx, golden eagle



Ticket price: between 40 HRK and 50 HRK  
Special offer: 3-day and 5-day tickets.

CROATIA TICKETS > You can find online tickets at [www.croatia-tickets.com](http://www.croatia-tickets.com)



### Do not miss

Through the wild gorge of Velika Paklenica where long time ago highlander women used to carry salt, figs and shallot („ljutika“) on their way back from the coast, and also carried wheat from the fertile land of Lika to the coast, there is a pleasant hiking trail today with many road signs in both Croatian and English.



# Heaven for climbers and adventurers

Was it the beauty of this place that the locals from the village at the bottom of Paklenica talked about when they passed on for generations the legend about the fairies that charmed and lured all those who would look at them?

Carved vertically into the south banks of Velebit, the canyons of Velika and Mala Paklenica are filled with rock sculptures amid forests and valleys rich with mountainous flora and fauna. Endemic bellflowers, dense black pine tree forests, orchids and lilies, then various species of butterflies and birds attract nature lovers, whereas steep rocks of Velika Paklenica are a favourite destination for hikers and mountain climbers.

A lavish underground world is best seen in Manita peć, a 175 meter long cave, divided in two chambers of numerous stalagmite, stalactite and calcite columns. The cave entrance is at the altitude of 570 meters, and the ascent from the parking area in Velika Paklenica to the cave takes about an hour and a half.

Visitors who wish to avoid dangerous adventures are attracted by impressive scenes of Velebit overlooking the holiday resorts of Starigrad-Paklenica, Selina and Tribanj. If you wish to see for yourself all the beauties of the National Park, choose one of the 150 kilometer long mountain trails and relax in the best possible way in the beauty of Velebit, in the shades of giant beech and pine forests.





### MAIN FEATURES

**Proclaimed as National Park:** 1953  
 Expanded to the Kupa source and Snježnik massif in 1997  
**Area:** 63,5 km<sup>2</sup>  
**Entry points:** from Crni Lug, from the pass of Gornje Jelenje and from Kupaska dolina  
**Highest peak:** Veliki Risnjak, 1528 m  
**Main attractions:** the source of the River Kupa and the Risnjak massif with a guest house  
**Particular feature of the Park:** edelweiss and hairy alpenrose  
**Number of visitors:** 20.000  
 Domestic visitors 70%

### POINT OF INTEREST

The name of the Park comes from the Croatian word for the lynx – „ris“

### EVENT OF THE YEAR

A local celebration in August, the so-called „Furman Day“

### FLORA AND FAUNA

**Plants:** edelweiss, hairy alpenrose, Alpine butterwort, great yellow gentian, lilies, orchids, arnica, silvery yarrow, false aster  
**Animals:** lynx, brown bear, wolf, grayling, butterflies



**Ticket price:** 45 HRK  
**Special offer:** family ticket



### What to visit?

It is best to follow the Leska educational trail and its 23 viewpoints to encounter the natural and cultural heritage of the National Park Risnjak. It is a pleasant walk even for those who are not in their best shape. The source of the River Kupa and the first five kilometers of its flow are definitely worth visiting together with the massif of Risnjak and Snježnik, and the beautiful mountain grasslands.



# In the land of the lynx and edelweiss

Fragmented and steep rocks, abyss, cracks in limestone and sink-holes up to 200 meters deep, coves and karst valleys are the main features of Risnjak National Park located in Gorski kotar, about 15 kilometers to the northeast from Rijeka. On a relatively small area of the Dinarides there are fourteen main types of mountain forests together with about thirty plant communities. Apart from Risnjak Mountain, the National Park also includes the Snježnik mountain massif, as well as the source of the Kupa River. It is possible to reach the source, the only unique blue and green karst spring, following a well marked attractive winding trail from the village of Razloge or from the northern side of Kupaska dolina, following a more pleasant but longer road from the village of Hrvatsko.

The National Park Risnjak is abundant with diverse flora and fauna so it's a unique place in Europe where you can still see a bear, a wolf or a lynx in their natural habitat. The lynx, predator of big and small game especially deer, is a loner and hunts primarily in the twilight or at night. The mountain massif of Risnjak was named after the lynx („ris“) since it wanders around those forests. Nature lovers will enjoy the perfect stone sculptures, rich forests and meadows where you can still see edelweiss, a rare protected flower, and you will surely remember the unique view from Veliki Risnjak or Snježnik on Kvarner bay for a long time.





**MLJET**  
 Nacionalni park  
 National Park



### MAIN FEATURES

Proclaimed as National Park: 1960

Area: 53,7 km<sup>2</sup>

Island surface: 100,4 km<sup>2</sup>

Great Lake: 46 m deep

Small Lake: 29 m deep

How to reach the island: by regular ferry lines or by own boat

24 sea miles away from Dubrovnik

Number of visitors: 100.000

### POINT OF INTEREST

The name of the Park comes from the latin words Melita, Meleda

### EVENT OF THE YEAR

The Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

### FLORA AND FAUNA

Plants: Aleppo pine, holm oak, orchids, Dubrovnik knapweed, sea lavender

Animals: Audouin's gull, European shag, European honey buzzard, common kestrel, Eurasian eagle-owl



Ticket price: **100 HRK**, including the boat ticket to the Islet of St. Mary.



### Did you know?

In the coastal part of the sea around Mljet and in Mljet Lakes there are about 150 species of bivalves, of which more than 40 species live in Small Lake. The populations of shell St Jacques in Great Lake are among the best known in the Adriatic and the age of some specimen can reach up to 17 years.



# Gorgeous island of the nymph Calypso

According to a legend, the island of Mljet is Homer's Ogygia, the beautiful island of the nymph Calypso where Odysseus stayed for seven years while wandering the Mediterranean. The specifically indented coast of the island with two salt „lakes“, the forests of Aleppo pine, holm oak and maquis, as well as the rich cultural heritage are the reason why many people consider Mljet as the most beautiful island on the Adriatic. The landscape beauty is one of the best recognized values of the island. Its north-western part is a national park known for the Mljet lakes which are actually flooded valleys created after the last ice age when the sea penetrated through a narrow opening into carst depressions. The sea enters through the 30 m long and 13.5 m wide canal on the location of Veliki Most, thus creating Great Lake and Small Lake.

The island of Mljet has a rich cultural and historical heritage which can be traced without any interruptions from the times of Illyrian tribes, the Roman Empire, the Republic of Dubrovnik until today. The settlement of stone houses, Govedari, as the home of the first settlers in the 18th century is particularly impressive. The National Park Mljet is abundant with numerous gorgeous coves such as Zaobraslo prijeslo, shallow Blace, beaches of Grabove and Polača where numerous islets protect the entrance into one of the safest harbors on the Adriatic. The sights worth visiting on the rest of the island include the Odysseus Cave next to Babino Polje and old settlements such as Korita and Prožure.



## MAIN FEATURES

**Proclaimed as National Park:** 1980

**Area:** 217 km<sup>2</sup>

**Largest island:** Kornat 32,5 km<sup>2</sup>

**Large islands:** Piškera, Kurba Vela, Levrnaka, Lavsa

**Biggest settlement:** Vrulje on Kornat island

**Highest peak:** Metlina, 237 m

7 sea miles from Murter island and 15 sea miles from Šibenik and Zadar

How to reach the Park: by boat hired in a tourist agency or by own boat

**Entry points:** Opat and Vela Proversa

**Number of visitors:** approx. 120.000

**Foreign boaters:** approx. 80%

## POINT OF INTEREST

The name of the Park comes from the Latin word „corona“ which means a crown

## EVENT OF THE YEAR

A pilgrimage to the church of Our Lady of o'Tarca in July

## FLORA AND FAUNA

**Plants:** Adriatic iris, bunch-flowered daffodil

**Animals:** European shag, noble pen shell, giant tun, loggerhead sea turtle, bottlenose dolphin, pallid swift



*Ticket price: 150 or 300 HRK for the smallest vessel depending on the place where ticket was purchased*



## What to visit?

Each of the nine diving zones in the National Park Kornati brings its own particular excitement and impression. However, diving in Kornati is only allowed in organized and authorized diving groups. However, swimming in the lush sea is unlimited.



# Created out of tears, stars and breath

The Irish writer George Bernard Shaw described this magical archipelago in the Middle Adriatic with the following words:

„On the last day of Creation God desired to crown His work, and thus created the Kornati islands out of tears, stars and breath.“ This is the most indented group of islands in the European Mediterranean of the most exceptional landscape value which was given the status of national park in 1980. More than three quarters of the Park's surface belong to the sea, whereas the land part consists of 89 islands, islets and reefs in the total surface of 50 km<sup>2</sup>.

The two groups of islands in the Park, Kornatski and Pučinski set of islands, are equally beautiful and interesting, however the islands of Pučinski set with their „crowns“ (craggs or cliffs) are the most valuable ones. The highest peak in the National Park is Metlina located on the longest island of Kornat which also holds the 34 meter long cave in the Stiniva Cove.

Behind the scenes of the occasional settlements on the islands there are remains of Illyrian settlements, Roman saltworks and the Roman fishpond, the Tureta fortress (6th century), medieval saltwork on the Lavsa island and a small church from the 16th century on the Piškera island.

There are no water springs nor any water flows on the Kornati islands; fresh water stays only temporarily in the Tarac and Knežak ponds or in carst basins. That is why many water tanks have been built on the islands. Nevertheless, cruising by the „crowns“ that vertically rise from the sea, stone houses and the crystal clear sea are undoubtedly breathtaking and worth the visit.





# With a touch of luxury

## MAIN FEATURES

**Proclaimed as National Park:** 1983  
**Area:** 33,9 km<sup>2</sup>  
 14 islands and islets  
**Entry points:** by boat from Fažana or by own vessel  
**Main attractions:** exotic animals  
**Activities:** golf, tennis, bocce, electric car rides, bike rides  
 Number of visitors: 150.000

## POINT OF INTEREST

The name of the Park comes from the words „brevona, brevogno“ which means shallow sea

## EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Days of Open Doors in November  
 The Ulysses Summer Theatre

## FLORA AND FAUNA

**Plants:** holm oak, Mediterranean maquis and exotic species  
**Animals:** hares, squirrels, deer game, exotic animals, sponges, bivalves, sea turtles, dolphins



*Ticket price: between 125 HRK and 210 HRK depending on the time of the year*



## Do not miss

The educational underwater trail will show you the underwater part of an ancient complex of Roman vila from the 1st century. It is approximately 500 meters long and you will need to use an audio guide, a diving mask and a snorkel. Apart from numerous populations of fish there is also the famous noble pen shell, a rare and highly protected Mediterranean endemic species.



The mild climate and the favourable geographical conditions, deep retracted bays and easily defensible elevated fortifications, have secured a continuum in the human activity on the island from a pre-historic age until the present day. On a relatively small archipelago, of an area of around 7km<sup>2</sup>, have been registered some hundred sites and buildings of archaeological and cultural-historical value and which comprise the period from the first Neolithic settlements, the dugouts in the bay of Soline, until the creation of an elite summer and health resort at the beginning of the last century by the Austrian industrial entrepreneur Paul Kupelwieser and the presidential residency visited by statesmen from all over the world since 1954 until today. This concise curriculum vitae of the island, which carefully preserves the traces of 5000 years of human history, makes the legend of its creation even more real and when arriving to the island a part of Heaven discloses in front of our eyes in the unique harmony of the island's flora, fauna and heritage. A unique blend of the green islands sank into the turquoise-blue sea whose bays and hills are laced with the white Istrian rocks. An exquisite landscape has been created by transforming agricultural and forest areas into parks with spacious open meadows. Nowhere on the Croatian coast can you find such a coherent space where holm oak and laurel blend together and some islands hold the most preserved areas of maquis in this part of the Mediterranean.





**KRKA**  
Nacionalni park  
National Park



### MAIN FEATURES

Proclaimed as National Park: 1985

Area: 109 km<sup>2</sup>

Length of Krka: 72 km

Biggest waterfall: Manojlovac 59,6 m

Most visited sites: Skradinski buk and Roški slap

Organized trips by boat and by bus inside the Park

Number of visitors: 800.000

Foreign visitors 89%, mostly German and Polish

### POINT OF INTEREST

The name of the Park comes from the name of the River whose 2/3 flow through it

### EVENT OF THE YEAR

Burnumske ide in August

### FLORA AND FAUNA

Plants: chimney bellflower, grassy bells, forests of downy oak and oriental hornbeam

Animals: olm, bats, otter, Visovac trout



*Ticket price: between 30 HRK and 110 HRK depending on the time of the year*

 You can find online tickets at [www.croatia-tickets.com](http://www.croatia-tickets.com)



### Do not miss

Take the educational trail from Visovac Lake (Stinice) to Roški slap, then take the stone-carved stairs up to Ozidana pećina Cave and experience some unforgettable scenes of nature, together with rich flora and fauna, geological phenomena, cultural and historical localities of Krka. The 8,5 kilometer long walk takes three hours.



# Green oasis of the Mediterranean

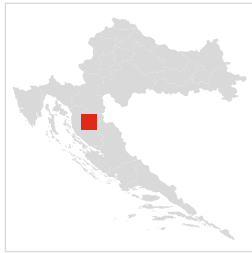
A lively canyon of the River Krka builds waterfalls over travertine barriers and the river continues to flow towards the sea. Out of seven waterfalls, the most often visited and the most beautiful ones are Skradinski buk and Roški slap with ethnographic monuments, some of which have been renovated. Between them lies a three kilometer long picturesque lake, Visovac, in the middle of which rises an islet of the same name with a Franciscan church and monastery. In the middle of the Krka River canyon, in Carigradska draga, lies Krka Monastery, an important spiritual centre of the Orthodox Dalmatian Eparchy.

You can visit the Krka National Park on foot and one part by bike following the Skradin-Skradinski buk bike trail. On the way there are old water mills, stone facilities for washing clothes and monuments of rural architecture.

Apart from the particular beauty of its canyon and cascade course, the Krka River attracts also with its free-flowing lakes and green valleys. Even if you have visited the river many times, you will always be impressed by its beauty. After a long walk you can relax in a restaurant serving traditional dishes.

It is best to visit Krka in spring and summer to discover medieval fortresses such as the largest one, Ključica, then fortresses Nečven and Trošenj located on the very edge of the canyon, and archeological sites of Burnum near Kistanje where tourists can visit the remains of a Roman military camp and an amphitheatre. According to the number of endemic fish, the Krka River is one of the richest rivers of the Adriatic basin. Also, taking into consideration that there are 225 species of birds, this area has been recognized as ornithologically very valuable.





### MAIN FEATURES

**Proclaimed as National Park:** 1999  
 Velebit Mountain was included in UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB) in 1978.  
**Area:** 109 km<sup>2</sup>  
**Highest peak:** Veliki Zavižan, 1676 m  
**Highest weather station in Croatia:** Zavižan, 1594 m  
 The area of Zavižan is one of the coldest parts of Croatia where snowy winter lasts longer than seven months  
 Endemic species of Velebit degenia can be found in the botanical garden.  
 16 km of Premužić Trail passes through the National Park  
**Number of visitors:** 15.000

### EVENT OF THE YEAR

Bike race „Ascent to Zavižan” in June

### FLORA AND FAUNA

**Plants:** Croatian bittercress, Croatian sibirea, Velebit pink, Kitaibel's columbine  
**Animals:** brown bear, wolf, lynx, chamois, capercaillie, woodpeckers, owls, subterranean fauna



*Ticket price: 25 -45 HRK - valid for 3 days*



### Did you know?

Sjeverni Velebit is famous for its deep vertical caves or pits. Almost 400 of them have been discovered and partly explored, including the three deepest pits in Croatia whose depth exceeds 1000 meters (Lukina jama - 1431m, Slovačka jama - 1320m and Jama Velebita - 1026m). The most famous endemic species living there in Sjevneri Velebit is the Velebit leech.



# Mountain that conquers

The huge and at first glance naked blocks of rock with numerous crevices, impenetrable forests, small and large grassy karst valleys, pits, sinkholes, ice caves, ponds and cracks in limestone.... this is all Sjevneri Velebit, a mosaic made up of most diverse habitats which are home to many species of fungi, plants and animals. Since the ecosystem is well preserved here, the northern Velebit is a natural habitat of the bear, wolf, lynx and golden eagle. The territory of the Park has been widely explored and about 1,5 thousand species of plants, fungi and animals have been registered. Zavižan and Alan are areas where open grasslands alternate with green forests and enormous limestone blocks surrounded by peaks offering fascinating views of the sea and Lika. In the Velebit botanical garden you can enjoy the diversity of flora, whereas Štirovača area is abundant with coniferous forests, as it is also the only moist part of the Park. Lubenovac, a spacious Velebit grassland with numerous remains of dwellings and drywalls bears witness to a life style that once existed on the mountain. The Premužić trail will take you through the most beautiful parts of Sjevneri Velebit. Once they discover the secrets of Sjevneri Velebit, the lovers of an active holiday in the middle of untouched nature always return. It is said that mountains need to be conquered but Velebit is a mountain that conquers its visitors.





**KOPAČKI  
RIT**  
Park prirode  
Nature Park



## What to visit?

The Bijeli Lopoč Walk and a boat trip to the zoological reserve are the most attractive activities for tourists. The place called Tikveš is known for the 19th century residential facility and a hunters' country villa built by the Habsbourg family and used as a hunting hub, thus famous all over Europe.

## MAIN FEATURES

Proclaimed as Nature Park: 1976  
Area: 231 km<sup>2</sup>

## POINT OF INTEREST

The name of the Park comes from the Hungarian words „kapocs” which means „a buckle” and „rét” which means „wetlands meadow”.

## EVENT OF THE YEAR

Day of Open Doors in July

## FLORA AND FAUNA

**Plants:** Hungarian iris, European white waterlily, common sedge, flowering rush, Siberian iris  
**Animals:** white-tailed eagle, European beaver, otter, deer



Ticket price: 10 HRK

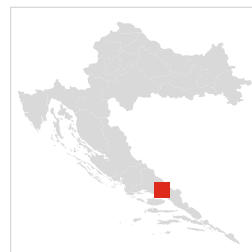
Trips between: 40 HRK - 250 HRK

# Empire of 300 bird species

Located between the rivers of Drava and Dunav, the nature reserve Kopački rit is an attractive tourist destination and also one of the best preserved wetlands in Europe. Even though every visitor will surely remember the endless floodplains of cane and reed giving this area its particular characteristics, the largest areas in the Park are actually covered with white willow forests, whereas the oak grows on higher altitudes. The rivers and fluvial wetland in Kopački rit created its unusual relief abundant with sandbanks and river islets, as well as numerous backwaters. Many rare and endangered species of plants and animals found their home there and due to a very diverse fauna, the southern part of the Park has been given the status of special zoological reserve. The birds of Kopački rit are certainly the specific feature of this Park. There are 300 species registered, of which 141 are the species of regular or occasional nesting birds.



**BIOKOVO**  
Park prirode  
Nature Park



## What to visit?

Do not miss to visit the Biokovo botanical garden „Kotišina”, only 3 kilometers away from Makarska.

## MAIN FEATURES

Proclaimed as Nature Park: 1981

Area: 194 km<sup>2</sup>

Highest peak: Sveti Jure, 1762 m

More than 400 caves and pits, the deepest one is Mokrenog ( - 831 m)

Endemic species and symbol of Biokovo: Biokovo bellflower

Number of visitors: 55.000, foreign visitors 85%, mostly Czech

## POINT OF INTEREST

The name of the Park comes from the words for snowy white - „bil, bilak, biokova”. Long time ago, ice was taken from the ice pits and carried to the coastal area.

## EVENT OF THE YEAR

International bike race in May, Makarska - Sveti Jure, 0-1762 m

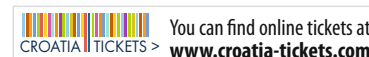
## FLORA AND FAUNA

**Plants:** Biokovo bellflower, Dalmatian bellflower, miltkia, Biokovo knapweed, Illyrian iris

**Animals:** wolf, golden eagle, wildcat, nose-horned viper, southern festoon, chamois, mouflon



Ticket price: 50 HRK



# The closest to the sea from the highest tops

Above the beautiful beaches of Makarska coast rises the fascinating mountain of Biokovo – the mountain whose roots are in the sea, whose head is in the clouds and whose top, Sv. Jure is the second highest point in Croatia. It can be reached following a road with many viewpoints from which it is even possible to see Italy. Those who are in good shape may choose to go on a trip by bike, or on foot or combine hiking with some transport, however it is necessary to bear in mind that this is a very demanding and challenging mountain where the Mediterranean and Alpine climates meet. There are also many archeological sites on Biokovo, as well as stone tumuli, shepherds' dwellings, churches and chapels, towers and fortresses. Today they tell the story of a life that once existed in this area, the customs of local people, their adjustments to the harsh conditions on this beautiful and relentless mountain.







### Did you know?

Only in the Medvednica Nature Park can you adopt a bat for 150 HRK and help this protected species to remain in its habitat – the unique Veternica Cave.

### MAIN FEATURES

Proclaimed as Nature Park: 1981  
 Area: 179,4 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Highest peak: Sljeme, 1035 m

### EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Medieval Days on Medvednica  
 European Night of Bats  
 Fantastic Film Festival  
 Vip Snow Queen Trophy  
 Medvedgrad Music Nights

### FLORA AND FAUNA

**Plants:** yew, beech, snowdrop windflower, military orchid, Carniolan lily  
**Animals:** common buzzard, white-throated dipper, yellow-bellied toad, European crayfish, rosalia longicorn, Schreiber's bent-winged bat, Mediterranean horseshoe bat



Ticket price: **30 HRK** – Veternica Cave,  
**23 HRK** – Zrinski Mine, **15 HRK** – Medvedgrad



## A step away from Zagreb

The medieval town of Medvedgrad, Zrinski mine from the 16th and 17th centuries, castles of Gornja Bistra and Golubovec are only a small part of the rich heritage of the Nature Park Medvednica. It holds eight forest reserves and also three trees as monuments of nature – Gupčeva lipa (Gubec linden tree) in Donja Stubica, an old yew on Šupljak and another old yew by Horvatove stube. The rich forests of beech, fir, maple, ash and sessile oak hide numerous creeks and springs, as well as abundant flora and fauna. The canals of Veternica Cave are home to 18 species of bats. Take one of the mountain or hiking trails and discover for yourself numerous chapels and guest houses. If you are a passionate athlete, discover the Park by bike. In winter, the highest peak Sljeme opens its ski slope for all skiers but with all its tourist facilities, Sljeme is equally attractive all year round.



### What to visit?

In the southern part of Velebit do not miss the Cerovac Caves (Cerovačke špilje), one of the largest cave bear sites in Croatia. Out of the three caves with more than six kilometers of explored passages, tourists can visit 700 meters of Lower and Upper Caves. Located near Jablanac, the Zavrtnica Cove will fascinate you with its beauty, mystique and purity of the sea.

### MAIN FEATURES

Proclaimed as Nature Park: 1981  
 Inscribed in UNESCO network of MAB: 1979  
 Area: 2200 km<sup>2</sup>

### EVENT OF THE YEAR

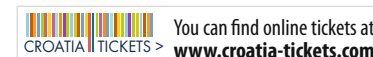
Park Day in May

### FLORA AND FAUNA

**Plants:** Velebit degenia, Velebit bellflower, Croatian sibirea  
**Animals:** capercaillie, wolf, lynx, chamois, brown bear, golden eagle, otter, Croatian minnow



Ticket price: **50 HRK** Cerovačke špilje



## The largest park in Croatia

Whichever educational trail you take in the Nature Park Velebit, you will enjoy the natural and historical riches of this largest protected area in Croatia. The most attractive trail, Premužić Trail, will take you to the most beautiful parts of Velebit. On the Terezijana Trail you will walk on a part of the road built as early as 1786, which used to connect the towns of Karlobag and Gospić. The „Kudin most“ trail takes you to the oldest bridge on the Krupa, the river of lavish waterfalls and travertine cascades. If you decide to walk from Starigrad Senjski to Donja Klada you will take the road that was marked back in 1847 and on your way you will see beautiful Adriatic coves, among which Zavrtnica stands out as protected landscape.







## Three phenomena



### Did you know?

The small island of Taljurić, only three meters high, is entirely underwater during storms so there is no vegetation on it and it looks like a flat surface from afar. Did you know that the carnivorous sponge was found in the underwater cave on Garmenjak Veli at the depth of only 24 m? This inhabitant of great depths has so far only been found in such shallow waters in France.

### MAIN FEATURES

Proclaimed as Nature Park: 1988

Area: 70,5 km<sup>2</sup>

Scope: southern part of Dugi otok and adjoining islets

The Park is a haven for donkeys

### POINT OF INTEREST

The old name Tilagus means three (connected) lakes

### EVENT OF THE YEAR

Days of Medicinal Herbs in May

### FLORA AND FAUNA

Plants: Dubrovnik knapweed, tree spurge

Animals: red coral, European shag, bottlenose dolphin, short-toed snake-eagle, Eurasian eagle-owl, peregrine falcon, greater noctule bat



Ticket price: 25 HRK for land entry  
Between 150 HRK and 200 HRK for  
smallest vessel

In the south-eastern part of Dugi otok, the nature was generous so a relatively small area contains steep shores and tame coves, forests and fields, vineyards and olive groves, as well as harsh Dalmatian karst. Together with the view on the beautiful Kornati islands, the Nature Park of Telašćica holds three phenomena particularly interesting for boaters. There is a calm cove called Telašćica as one of the safest and largest natural harbors on the Adriatic. Then there are cliffs, locally called „Stene“, showing the relentless and wild side of the sea and Dalmatian environment. Finally, salt lake Mir gives an entirely different impression. Mir is home to the species of eel, locally called „kajman“. Telašćica has been inhabited since ancient times, as can be seen from numerous archaeological remains found in the area like the burial mounds, the Illyrian mounds and the remains of Roman buildings from the first century.



### What to visit?

Picturesque villages with traditional wooden houses of Posavina, next to the River Sava and its tributaries perfectly fit into the landscape and simultaneously reflect very strict rules about organizing the space, given the constant threat of water and floods. One such village is Čigoč, the first to be given the title of the European Village of White Stork and also Krapje, the village of architectural heritage. Furthermore, the villages of Mužilovčica, Repušnica and Osekovo should not be neglected since they offer a fascinating view on Lonjsko polje, whether flooded or dry.

### MAIN FEATURES

Proclaimed as Nature Park: 1990

Inscribed in IBA in 1989 and RAMSAR in 1993

Area: 50 650 km<sup>2</sup>

### EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Day of the European Stork Villages in June

Day of the Architectural Heritage in September

### FLORA AND FAUNA

Plants: alluvial forests of pedunculate oak and narrow-leaved ash, European watercress

Animals: 250 bird species – white stork, black stork, white-tailed eagle, spoonbill



Ticket price: 35 HRK

## Discover the undiscovered

The Nature Park of Lonjsko polje is another example of how much diversity there is in Croatia. This is one of the largest protected floodplains of the Danube basin, located by the River Sava between the towns of Sisak and Stara Gradiška. You can enjoy the beauty of the landscape and preserved wooden architecture, moist meadows and pastures, riparian lowland forests of pedunculate oak and narrow-leaved ash, as well as picturesque scenes of traditional system of pasturing. Among many activities you can also enjoy birdwatching, walking, canoeing, cycling, horse riding, photo safari or fishing. Tributaries, ponds, wetlands and pastures are a habitat for wetland birds, together with some very rare species in Europe. So far, 250 bird species have been registered in this area of which 170 species nest here, so some areas such as Krapje Dol and Rakita have been protected as special ornithological reserves. Lonjsko polje is one of the biggest hatcheries in Europe and its pastures feed some original breeds of domestic animals such as Posavac horse, Slavonian-Srijem Podolian cattle, Croatian coldblood and Turopolje pig.







### Did you know?

Due to significant lithological diversity of rocks, minerals, fossils, geological structures and textures, and karst phenomena, the Papuk Nature Park became the first Croatian geopark in 2007 and was inscribed in UNESCO's network of geoparks.



### MAIN FEATURES

Proclaimed as Nature Park: 1999

Area: 336 km<sup>2</sup>

Highest peak: Papuk, 953 m  
95% of the Park is forest

### EVENT OF THE YEAR

Geoparks Week in May or June

### FLORA AND FAUNA

Plants: greater pasque flower, Slender fritillary, marsh gentian, lady orchid

Animals: snake-eyed skink, alcon blue, Mediterranean barbel, collared flycatcher, Bechstein's bat



Ticket price: 25 HRK

## Forest oasis at the heart of Slavonija

In the middle of the endless Slavonian plain mountains rise to almost a thousand meters above ground. One of those mountains is Papuk, the most beautiful one in Slavonija. The diverse and dense forests of Papuk are a habitat and haven for deer, doe, wild boar, fox and marten.... Furthermore, there are habitats of many bird species, whereas fast and cold mountain creeks provide habitat for specific fish species, amphibians and reptiles. The Jankovac Park-Forest is particularly rich with water and water resources. The dominating feature of the Park is certainly the 35 meter high waterfall Skakavac, known for its unique beauty all around Slavonija. The most significant geological site is Rupnica which became the first Croatian geological monument of nature already in 1948. A great number of medieval fortifications, most of them originating from the 13th century, testify about the importance of the Papuk Hills, especially at the time of the Turkish invasions. Near the town of Orahovica stands the most beautiful and most preserved "old citadel" – Ružica, a valuable example of Gothic and Renaissance art. You can spend a day or a weekend in the Papuk Nature Park enjoying some adventurous activities or just walking, cycling, visiting events or just admiring nature.



### Did you know?

Long time ago Vransko jezero was called „Vedro blato“. Its cultural and historical features date back to the year 2000 BC.

### MAIN FEATURES

Proclaimed as Nature Park: 1999

Area: 57 km<sup>2</sup>

Visitors' centres: Prosika port and Kamenjak viewpoint

### POINT OF INTEREST

Vransko jezero is the largest lake in Croatia and the name of the Park comes from the medieval town of Vrana, seat of Croatian viceroy (ban), the Benedictines and Knights Templar

### EVENT OF THE YEAR

Workshop „Vransko jezero Drywalls“ in October/ November

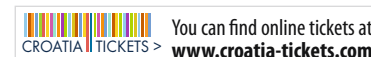
### FLORA AND FAUNA

Plants: 700 species of plants of which 1/3 are wetland and water plants

Animals: 256 species of birds, 102 breeding birds – pygmy cormorant, purple heron, 18 fish species – European eel, common carp, European catfish, northern pike



Ticket price: 20 HRK



## Largest natural lake in Croatia

Vransko jezero (Vransko Lake) is the favourite destination for birdwatchers and sport fishermen, however cyclists and hikers will surely enjoy the 40 kilometer long bike trail with the dominant scent of sage, stone viewpoints, rich wetland vegetation and drywalls in the Mediterranean maquis. The northwestern edge of the biggest natural lake in Croatia became a special ornithological reserve because of the great number of wetland birds. Moreover, Vransko jezero has been on the list of important European ornithological areas for more than twenty years now, nevertheless two years ago Vransko jezero joined the world network of wetlands. Hardly anywhere else could you encounter three entirely different landscapes – the sea coast with a rich archipelago, the Mediterranean wetland and its rich ecosystem and the lively rural environment of Ravni kotari.







### Did you know?

Back in 1852, a group of mountain climbers from Rijeka completed their first ascent on Učka. The ascent was described in the Zagreb magazine „Neven“ under the article title of „Dawn on Učka“, thus being the oldest travel chronicle about a mountain ascent in Croatian literature. This is how Učka, until then interesting only to scientists, became a favourite destination among mountain climbers, as well as tourists who were on holiday in Opatija.

### MAIN FEATURES

Proclaimed as Nature Park: 1999

Area: 160 km<sup>2</sup>

Highest peak: Vojak, 1401 m

Main attractions: Vojak, Vela draga Canyon, Korita

### EVENT OF THE YEAR

Učka Fair in September

### FLORA AND FAUNA

Plants: Učka bellflower, Justin bellflower, Istrian spearwort, sweet chestnut - marron

Animals: golden eagle, subterranean beetle –

Božičević's filtrator (lat. *Croatoidirus bozicevici*), alpine salamander



Free entry into the Park

## Mountain with magnificent view

The Nature Park Učka includes the mountain of Učka and part of the Čičarija massif stretching along the west coast of Kvarner Bay, at one of the most northern points of the Mediterranean. The proximity of the sea and different climate conditions contributed to the development of highly diverse flora and fauna. A special feature of this area is definitely the combination of natural resources and human activities in the form of many tangible remains and archaeological sites testifying about the presence of man in this place since pre-historical times. In 1911 a tower was built on the mountain top Vojak which is in a way the symbol of the Park today as well as its viewpoint of 360 degrees.

Učka attracts all those who enjoy mountain cycling and hiking, but it particularly attracts free climbers. They passionately climb, in spring and autumn, the rocks of Vela draga Canyon, the geomorphological monument of nature with 62 prepared climbing directions.



### Did you know?

Žumberak has always been the centre of Greek Catholics in Croatia. Their churches were built in the 18th century and still attract visitors with their beauty, such as the church of St. Nikola in Badovinci, St. Petka in Budinjak, St. Juraj in Stojdraga, St. Petar i Pavao in Sošice next to which stands also a Roman Catholic church of Blessed Virgin Mary.

### MAIN FEATURES

Proclaimed as Nature Park: 1999

Area: 333 km<sup>2</sup>

Highest peak: Sveta Gera, 1178 m

Special protection area: Slapnica near Krašić, Japetić, Okić Grad and the surrounding area

### EVENT OF THE YEAR

„Thousand years of culinary art“ – culinary workshops in September

### FLORA AND FAUNA

Plants: mountain grasslands with more than 40 species of plants on one square meter

Animals: bear, wolf, 11 species of bats, 110 species of birds and numerous endemic cave organisms



Free entry into the Park

## Ideal getaway

With more than 347 kilometers of hiking trails, 200 kilometers of bike trails and two climbing facilities – Okić and Terihaji, then two registered paragliding fields, Japetić and Plešivica, the Nature Park Žumberak – Samoborsko gorje (Žumberak-Samobor Hills) is an ideal destination for a getaway. Visitors and hikers are thrilled by the views from Okić, Plešivica, Japetić or Sv. Gera. Even though it is clear at first sight that this is a typically karst area, the Park holds 828 springs, 260 water courses and 164 ponds. Particularly beautiful are the waterfalls such as Sopotski slap on the River Kupčina near its spring and waterfalls Brisalo and Vranjički slap on the River Slapnica. The traditional way of life and customs in local villages are in tune with the preserved nature, as can be seen from endless vineyards on Plešivica and its top quality wines.







**LASTOVSKO  
OTOČJE** Park prirode  
Nature Park



### What to visit?

Choose one out of many hiking and cycling trails and discover 38 old stone churches hidden around the island, dive into the Adriatic at some of the most attractive locations and then lift your head up towards the second darkest sky in Europe and observe galaxies as if laid out for you on a silver platter.

### MAIN FEATURES

Proclaimed as Nature Park: 2006

Area: 53 km<sup>2</sup> land surface and 143 km<sup>2</sup> sea surface

Settlements: Lastovo, Zaklopatica, Skrivena luka, Ubli, Pasadur

Number of islands: 44 islands, islets and reefs

Largest islands: Lastovo, Sušac

Number of hours of sunshine: 2700 annually

Number of visitors annually: 12.000; foreign visitors 80%

### EVENT OF THE YEAR

Lastovo Carnival („Lastovski poklad“), a 500 year old custom

### FLORA AND FAUNA

Plants: white alyssum, Mauritanian grass,

stenoendemic Dalmatian Biserrula, Sušac mustard

Animals: crustaceans – colonies of the European spiny lobster, European lobster, Mediterranean slipper lobster and European spider crab, gastropods – Triton's trumpet, zoned mitre and giant tun, several species of dolphins and sea turtles



Ticket price: 30 HRK

# Fumari - witnesses of life

Lastovsko otočje of mystical beauty with dense forests and fertile fields, enriched with ponds, steep shores, land and underwater caves, as well as numerous rare sea and land species and habitats are among the richest and best preserved treasures of biodiversity on the Mediterranean.

Many stone churches reflect the rich cultural and historical heritage as do the picturesque chimneys called „fumari“ which were built to show the status of home owners. The event called „Lastovski poklad“ (Lastovo Carnival) gathers all of the islanders. The small town of Lastovo is in the shape of an amphitheatre. There are still stone houses there built in the 15th and 16th centuries.

Lučica is the last preserved example of a baroque fishermen's settlement. The highest peak Hum is the most beautiful viewpoint on the island.



# All information in one place

The new and interactive web site [www.parkovihrvatske.hr](http://www.parkovihrvatske.hr) provides all the information on the National Parks and Nature Parks in Croatia in four different languages. The simple and user-friendly web site will take you on a virtual tour around all of the 19 protected locations. You can find the information on available services, as well as all recommendations and current events. Tickets are also available online. Once you've toured these magical places, we believe you will feel the need to share these moments, so please do that at [www.parkovihrvatske.hr](http://www.parkovihrvatske.hr) and become a part of our community of positive energy.







# The challenge of volunteering in the Parks of Croatia

Do you enjoy the fresh air and open air activities? Would you like to experience something new and make new friends? Would you like to do something useful for our planet? Are you ready to participate in making positive changes regarding nature preservations? If you have recognized yourself in the sentences above, then volunteering in the Parks of Croatia is the right choice for you.

The Parks of Croatia offer a possibility for enthusiastic people to do some voluntary work

during summer months at some of the most beautiful locations on the Adriatic coast, islands or inland. The biggest problem may be which location and activity to choose among so many attractive places. For example, if you like being surrounded by people, you can conduct surveys and provide information to visitors in the Nature Parks of Mljet and Paklenica. If however you prefer more physical activities, you can join our teams working on Mediterranean drywall repairs or the teams in charge of olive groves in Telašćica. We are also looking for vol-

unteers interested in working on educational trails on Velebit. All those who wish to develop their artistic and creative side can participate in the development of artistic trails on Učka. Animal lovers will surely enjoy their activities of protecting original species on Biokovo. You can find more information on volunteering

activities at <http://volonteri.parkovihrvatske.hr/> and choose what suits you the most. Simply send your application form – we are looking forward to it!







Print@home tickets for Parks of Croatia

Don't wait in line, buy on-line!

[www.croatia-tickets.com](http://www.croatia-tickets.com)

**SLOBODNA  
DALMACIJA**

