



Comenius project- National Parks of Europe

Describing people in Aukštaitija's National Park

For meeting in Bulgaria, Sopot , 9th of October



Aukštaitija National Park

The oldest national park in Lithuania, founded in 1974 in order to preserve the unique landscape at the junction of the three existing Žeimena downstream ecosystem and its natural and cultural values. The park is on the north-eastern Lithuania. Park's area is 40,574 ha, the water holds 15.5 per cent. Forests take 69 percent of the territory.





People who come or live there:

- ☐ Inhabitats (small farmers)
- ☐ Working in the tourism
- ☐ Working in the museums
- ☐ Tourists
- ☐ Fishers
- ☐ Volunteers



People in Aukštaitija's National Park

We have not only trees, lakes, mushrooms, just nice nature, we have people! People who live, work, have a rest, fish or have holidays.



Inhabitats



There are 116 settlements and 2300 inhabitants scattered in the park. According to their density, the park can be divided into a northern part where small villages hide in the woods near lakes or rivers, and central and southern parts where agriculture is more developed, population density is higher and settlements are much bigger. Such villages make one third of all park settlements and are the most typical for its landscape. Very few settlements left which have 100 to 200 inhabitants.

Inhabitats

The largest settlement is Kaltanénai Town with more than 300 inhabitants. The smaller is the village, the older are people who live in it. 71% of all population in 49 villages that have up to 10 inhabitants are retired people. Young people live only in largest settlements. There are very few children – young families have 1-2 kids. The park is known for its long-livers comparing to the rest of country. In 1996 even 32 citizens were more than 90 years old. The secret of their age is the active way of life and, of course, pure environment.





The guides and workers of the **Museum of Ancient Beekeeping**

Visitors are welcome here every year from May to October. Local servant of the museum guides guests, tells and explains them many things in order to make their excursion very informative, interesting and memorable. Every year the 15th of August a nice fest is held there called "Medkopio šventė" – the fest of honey and bread. It is an entertaining summer fest where people taste fresh honey, listen to local musicians playing and stories also myths told.





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People who go fishing for pleasure

We have lot of fish. Like: pike, bass (not music), crucian carp. Lithuanian fish is very delicious.





People who rent boats, make tours or rent canoes

To explore the largest area of the park, one should plan on an outdoor excursion. Staff of the ANP Visitor Information Centre will help you schedule the time and method, as well as the route of the trip. Water tourism is the oldest kind and has a well developed infrastructure. Need a rowing boat? Three boat rentals are ready to help you. Want a kayak or canoe? No problem – the same boat rentals in Palūšė and Šakarva as well as canoe and kayak rentals in Kaltanėnai and Strigailiškis will provide you with all necessary equipment. Water trips can take from one day to a week – depending on which route is chosen. In Palūšė, there are 3 boat rent centres.



Hiking in the park

Hiking in the park has become increasingly popular, maybe because no special equipment is needed. The most popular two-day route leads from Palūšė to Tauragnai. Cyclists and car drivers can try the Small and the Great Ring – 40 and 80 km long loops. The newly opened hiking-cycling route passes all the most beautiful sights and places of the park. The region is known for the longest snow season in Lithuania. Therefore in winter it is the best destination for the cross country skiing.



People who rent campsites

There are 18 campsites and 320 places to stay in Palūšė Tourism centre. It is opened for all seasons.



People who spend holidays

Major tourists come to see attractions of the mounds of Taurapilis, Ginučiai, Puziniškis, Linkmenys, Vajuonis and others, the ancient defensive rampart of Rėkučiai, the tumuli of Minčia, Vyžiai, Šakarva, Palūšė, Kaltanėnai, Šventas and others, and Stone Age settlements, villages of Salos, Varniškės, Vaišnoriškės, Šuminai (Pabaluošė), Strazdai, Kretuonys, Benediktavas, the urbanistic complex of Kaltanėnai, the Palūšė Church ensemble, and 6 water mills (Ginučiai mill has preserved full authentic equipment), the beekeeping museum in Stripeikiai.



The workers of the park

In 2010 authorities of Aukštaitija National Park and Labanoras Regional Park have united. Headquarters are located in Palūšė, Ignalina dst. About 40 employees take care of nature and culture reserves, monuments and other valuable objects. They organise scientific researches, collect data and information about natural and cultural values within the area and provide it to visitors in the Palūšė and Labanoras visitor centres or in publications. Main task for them is to create conditions for visiting the park without making harm to nature as well as environmental education.

Park has volunteers from other countries every year.



The description of the people was done by:

Lithuanian team:

Minolė Petronytė- Kairienė

Inga Subačienė

Justina Rutkauskaitė

Ieva Karalevičiūtė

