

BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPE

Suwałki Landscape Park is a synonym of one of the most beautiful spots in Poland. There's no coincidence that in 1976 a new form of protection – landscape park was established in order to protect this place. Therefore it is the oldest landscape park in the country.

Suwałki Landscape Park charms with multitude of elevations and hillocks separated from each other with deep river valleys and numerous lakes, among which the deepest Polish Hańcza Lake dominates. Last glaciation created this landscape, when melting ice sheet masses and postglacial waters formed moraine elevations, kame mounds and eskers shafts. Due to mass and strength of flowing water tunnel of Hańcza Lake was grooved and deepened. Long after glacier withdrawal there were still dead-ice blocks lying in extensive river Szeszupa basin (which is within present Park grounds), that after melting down created picturesque lakes complexes: Kleszczowieckie and Szurpilskie, and other lakes that Szeszupa flows through. Other postglacial relics are large boulders transported here with the ice sheet all the way from the Scandinavian mountains and the bottom of Baltic Sea that form extensive rock fields.

Beyond diversified relief, northern Suwalszczyzna is characteristic of extremely harsh climate with long, snowy and frosty winters – and consequently short vegetation period. This region is also known for strong and gusty winds.

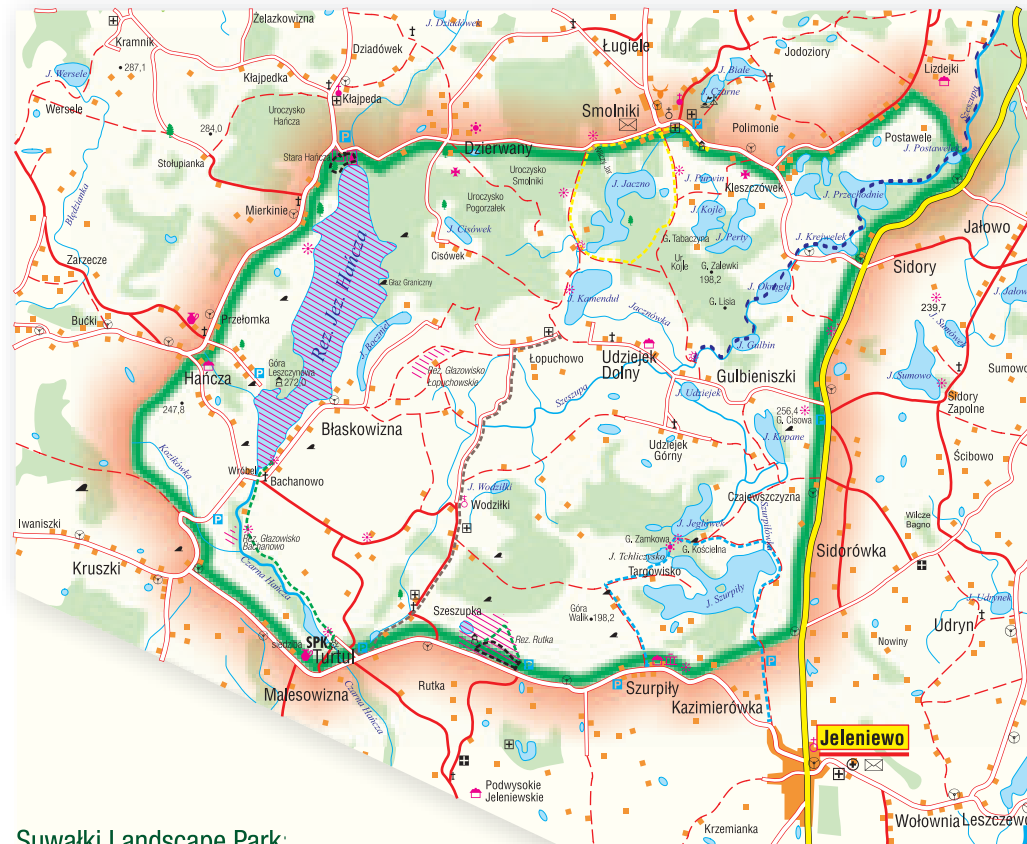
VALUABLE NATURE

Mosaic of habitats and climatic conditions are conducive for plant and animal diversity. We can find here, next to each other, northern (boreal), southern and montane species and habitats. Some rare plant communities occur in the forests: boreal spruce growing on peat, marshy coniferous forest or alder carr on vaudusian springs nearby Jaczno Lake. Open spaces in the Park are covered by flowery meadows, among which appears singularity in form of thermophile plant habitats. Among 700 herbaceous plant species, plenty are rare and under protection, often also as postglacial relicts e.g. great horsetail, Jacob's Ladder, *Liparis loeselii* (fen orchid), *Cladium mariscus* (saw-sedge).

Very interesting animals can be found in deep, clean and well-oxygenated Hańcza waters. These include typically riverine (!), rare fish species: Alpine bullhead, European bullhead, Common minnow and also postglacial relicts: amphipod *Pallasiola quadrispinosa* and Taylor's spire snail. Moss animals (Bryozoa), which require very clean, well-oxygenated water and *Spongilla lacustris* – freshwater sponge that's considered as a biological indicator of water quality can be found in the Park's rivers. Reed beds at lakesides and marshes are an emplacement for many wetland birds species, inter alia, Eurasian bittern, great crested grebe, Eurasian reed warbler and Savi's warbler. However, the real king of this land is mammal – European beaver.

RICH HISTORY

Together with glacial withdrawal and climate warming human appeared and his activities had an impact on Park's present landscape. Agriculture and pasturage caused reduction of forest areas and their transformation to open agricultural spaces and settlements. Yotvingians history, Baltic people that lived in this area in the Middle Ages, is very interesting and still mysterious. They were enslaved by Teutonic Knights at the end of 13th century and forced to leave their land. Not much evidence of Yotvingians existence left as traces of settlements and forts, among which the most interesting and the most beautifully situated is Castle Hill in Szurpiły. Other remarkable places are for instance post-manorial park in Stara Hańcza, village of Old Believers Wodзилki or Evangelical Cemeteries in Szeszupka and Łopuchowo.



Suwałki Landscape Park:

Established in 1976

Area – 15528 acres

Location by administrative division:

Podlaskie Voivodeship, Suwałki County,

gminas: Jeleniewo, Przerośl, Rutka-Tartak, Wiżajny

Location by geomorphological distribution:

Lithuanian Lake District makroregion,

Easternsuwałki Lake District mezoregion

Structure of use: agricultural land – 60%, forests – 24%,

water – 10%, swamps – 4%, built-up area – 2%

Nature conservation:

Nature reserves: "Hańcza Lake",

"Bachanowo Rock Field over Czarna Hańcza",

"Łopuchów Rock Field", "Rutka"

Ecological sites: lakes Kojle, Perty, Szurpiły,

Jeglówek and Purwin

Natural monuments: 22 single trees,

linden alley and 15 glacial erratics

Natura 2000 Ostoja Suwalska Area

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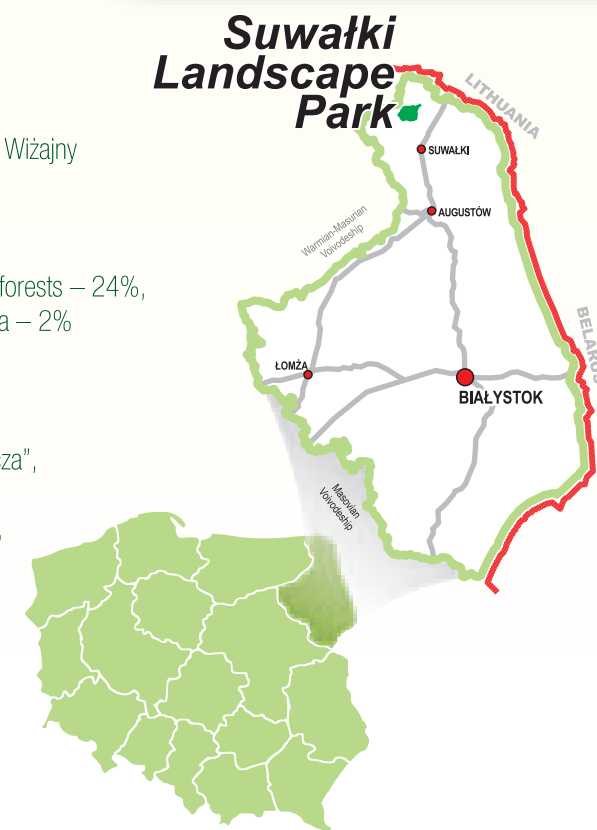
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SUWAŁKI LANDSCAPE PARK ATTRACTIONS



“Hańcza Lake” (reserve, 753,67 acres)
— is the deepest lake in Poland and North European Plain (108,5 m). Water is clean, cool, well-oxygenated and organic compound deficient at the same time. Hańcza's lakeshores are covered by thick layer of boulders.

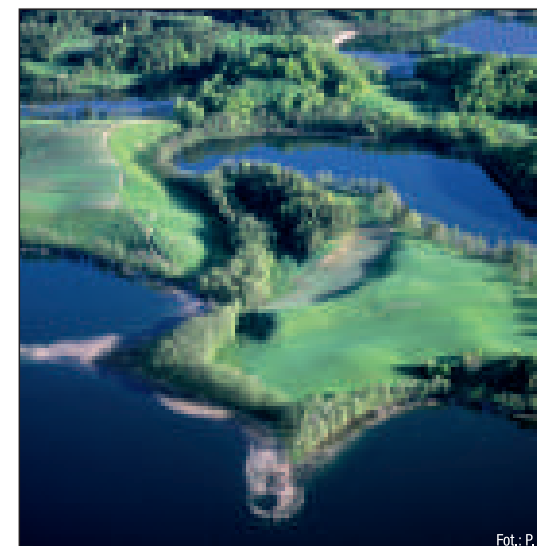
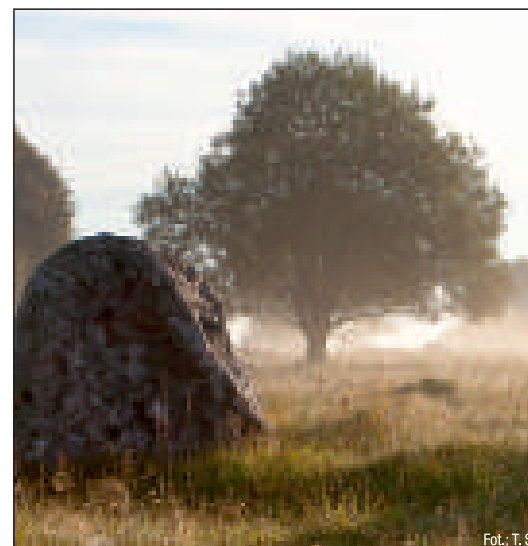
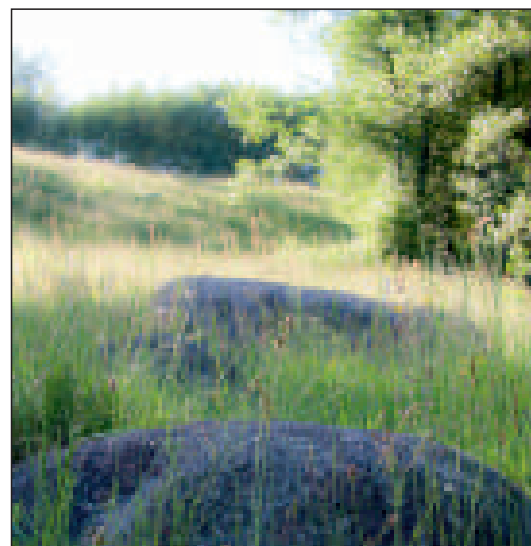
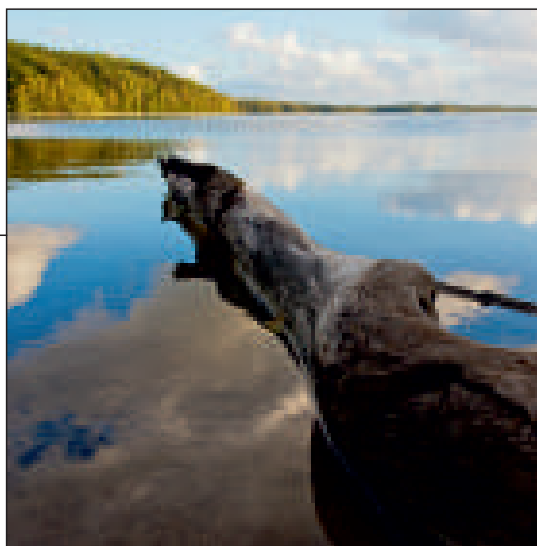
“Bachanowo Rock Field over Czarna Hańcza” (reserve, 2,42 acres) — there are about 10 thousand boulders in this reserve.

“Łopuchów Rock Field” (reserve, 39,54 acres)
— large amount of boulders situated on two moraine elevations, from which a beautiful view on Szeszupa basin and Cisowa Hill extends.

Turtul esker — string of 13 hills, are situated on the bottom of Czarna Hańcza valley. Esker is an elongate shaft (or hill strings) made of sand and gravel brought by waters flowing in glaciers slit or underneath it. The headquarters of the Suwałki Landscape Park is located on one of the turtul esker's hill.

Cisowa Hill (256 mamsl)
— also called “Suwałki Fujiyama”, is considered as a Suwalszczyzna's symbol and it is one of the most attractive viewpoints in Suwałki Landscape Park.

Stara Hańcza — since XVII century, has been an extensive landed estate. Most often mentioned owner of the assets is duke Tomasz Bogumił Światopełk-Mirski, mostly known of sumptuous life. Duke's debts led to the estate confiscation; and until mid-nineteenth century its owners changed frequently. The Manor house in Stara Hańcza was destroyed by fire in 1946. Today you can see the remains of post-manorial park and rest by the Hańcza Lake.



Castle Hill (228 mamsl)
— Yotvingians defensive fort and tribal center, is surrounded by four lakes (Szurpiły, Jegłówek, Jagłowieczek, Kluczysko).

“Rutka” (reserve, 121,1 acres)
— extensive rock field and an interesting kettle hole, is filled with Linówek Lake's water.

Jaczo Lake — picturesque body of water is situated in deep trough surrounded by forests. Viewpoint on the Jaczo Lake is on top of the hill which is 125 m above the lake surface. It is the biggest denivelation in “Polish Plain”. In the summer, the lake's water turns malachite because of Chlorella algae blooming.

“U Pana Tadeusza” viewpoint in Smolniki — situated on the edge of Szeszupa basin, has the view on kleszczowieckie lakes panorama. These sceneries were used in a screen version of “Pan Tadeusz” (directed by Andrzej Wajda) and “Dolina Issy” (directed by Tadeusz Konwicki).

Turtul — farmstead located in Czarna Hańcza Valley where from 17th century to the sixties of 20th century water-mill functioned. Appellation “Turtul” probably came from first miller's name (turtulis means wealthy, rich man in Lithuanian). Nowadays headquarters of Suwałki Landscape Park is located here.

Wodziłki — village set in 1788 by Old Believers. This group came to Suwalszczyzna looking for shelter from religious persecution in Russia. To this day their posterity live in Wodziłki, where you can see monumental Old Believers church (Molenna) and bajnia (steam-bath).

