



Orchid meadows with early purple orchid in Vsetín Region

Welcome to the largest protected landscape area in the Czech Republic, where all our great predators such as Eurasian lynx, grey wolf and brown bear can still find their place to live. Welcome to the region of long mountain ranges, deep valleys, vast forests, blooming meadows and pastures with flocks of sheep, wooden churches and cottages. Mountains on Moravian-Slovakian borders constitute only a part of massive arc of the Carpathians, which stretch hundreds of kilometres to the east and south. Welcome to the Beskydy Mountains.



Virgin forest in the Mazák National Nature Reserve

The Protected Landscape Area includes three Carpathian Mountains ranges – Moravian-Silesian Beskydy Mountains, Vsetín Beskydy Mountains and Javorníky Mountains. Nowadays, forests cover approximately 71% of the Protected Landscape Area. Yet at the end of the 19th century most of the local hills were deforested and used intensively for sheep grazing. Today's forested landscape of Beskydy Mountains is something new. This is what makes its indigenous mountain spruce groves in the highest locations and fir-beechen forests on the mountain sides very precious. Unfortunately, most of other forests in the area contain artificially planted spruce groves. Only in recent these are being replaced by the indigenous woody plants.

The Beskydy landscape owes its diversity especially to the so-called Wallachian and pastoral colonization in the 16th – 18th century. The Beskydy Mountains were populated by people perhaps as the last area in our country. People were felling and burning the forests at the mountain ranges, mountain farmsteads started to appear and thousands of sheep were grazing in the sheepfolds. This period has also become an indelible part of folk architecture and folklore which are still living here.

Forests of the Beskydy Mountains are habitat to a number of rare fauna species. Eurasian lynx is a permanent resident of the Beskydy Mountains,

the traces of its sojourn are being found and it has been captured by environmentalists' camera traps. So far the wolf and bear come rather to visit the Beskydy Mountains from Slovakia. All three predators are protected and a Special Area of Conservation has been proclaimed for them here. Nowhere else you can see Ural owl – a great forest owl, a Carpathian newt or Carpathian blue slug, which is an unusually blue coloured gastropod. The local forest and meadow flora is also likewise rich. The most precious and most beautiful plants include orchids, march orchids, cephalantheras, platantheras, fragrant orchids and round headed orchids, all from the orchid family. The Carpathian gentian and aconitum firmum moravicum are true jewels and out of the whole country this is the only area where they grow.



## Brown bear, the mascot of the Beskydy PLA Information Centre

The brown bear (in Latin *Ursus arctos*) represents a symbol of the Experience Centre and Information Centre. It could be seen as a real king of Beskydy animals. Big, strong, intelligent. Bears have always been an inspiration to people; they are heroes of fairy tales and myths, pictured in the towns' coats of arms. A teddy bear is still the most popular toy in the world.

Although the bear is a predator, it lives mainly on plants – from the grass through sprouts to various forest fruits or windfall apples. Apart from that the bear diet contains insects, sometimes it rummages ants nests, knocks over stones and stumps for larvae and beetles and even eats carcasses. And as in fairy tales, it truly loves honey.

Among all European great predators, the bears are perhaps the most threatened due to their habitat destruction. These are the natural forests where bears can find suitable shelters, sufficient food and no disturbance by humans.



Eurasian lynx



Wallachian Museum

## The Beskydy PLA Information Centre at Dolní Lomná

The Information Centre is located in the premises of URSUS experience centre, whose main mission is to bring the natural values and beauty of the Beskydy Mountains in the Western Carpathians to the public through a permanent interior exhibition called "Water as part of all that happens". A water drop as a symbol guides the visitor through the story of creation and development of Beskydy Mountains.

Look at the Beskydy Mountains from the bird's eye perspective, familiarize yourself with the animals living in the rivers, with nature of the Beskydy Mountains or traces of animals. Can you recognize the trace of lynx, wolf or squirrel? You can test your newly acquired knowledge using the latest audiovisual technology and sweeten up your trip by visiting the cinema café and refreshment offering regional specialities and souvenirs.

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### Did you know that...

-  Lysá Mountain (1324 m) is the highest peak of the Moravian-Silesian Beskydy Mountains and offers some of the most beautiful views in our country? During good visibility you can enjoy a view of Jeseníky Mountains to the High Tatras.
-  a symbol of the local virgin forests could also be, besides a bear, the Ural owl – great owl that lives only in the Beskydy and Šumava Mountains? Hardly anyone knows that it hunts for food also in the day.
-  The Beskydy Mountains hide one of the longest sandstone caves? Cyrilka, the pseudo-karst cave emblazoned with legends, is 550 m long. Instead of a treasure it hides rare bats; therefore it is closed to the public.
-  in the Beskydy Mountains and its foothills, we can find the greatest number of wooden churches and chapels (more than 20).
-  in the Czech Republic with its area of 1,200 km<sup>2</sup> the Beskydy Mountains are the greatest protected landscape area?

### Thank you for being considerate towards our natural heritage and for:

-  driving and parking your car only where permitted
-  keeping to marked trails
-  riding your bicycle on cycle paths and respecting nature and other visitors
-  camping and lighting fires only in designated places
-  leaving animals and plants alone in their natural habitats
-  taking your rubbish home with you

 **Tip for a trip:**  
**Through the land of ancient highlanders**

The nature trail starts at the Information Centre in Dolní Lomná at Matyščina louka (car park, bus stop). The nature trail will lead you by the reconstructed Polana Chalet to the ridge of Malá Kykula (789 m) that runs above the valley of Lomná towards Kozubová Mountain. This trail has less than 4 km. Seven stations offer a view to the local beautiful countryside seen by the eyes of the highlanders who were living here a century ago. Beside the stories about the land and its people, the trail provides unexpectedly nice views to the valley of Lomná and to nearby Mionši virgin forest. The Information Centre offers worksheets for children and leaflets containing the English or Polish versions of wording placed on the nature trail panels.

 **Tip for a trip:**  
**From Lower to Upper Lomná village – Along the Rear Mountain ridge**

Lovers of challenging mountain hiking will definitely not miss the trip on the border ridge of the Moravian-Silesian Beskydy Mountains. From the centre of Dolní Lomná, you can climb the ridge along the blue tourist mark on the crossroad of Kostelka. It is just a short walk from here to Kamenná Chalet under the Velký Polom Mountain. You can get some refreshment here as well as visit the Tetřev lookout tower with its exhibition dedicated to nature of the Protected Landscape Area of Beskydy. The red-marked ridge trail will lead you to the ridge of Velký Polom. You can relax by the chapel with a spring at the saddle below the hill of Muřinkový vrch. Long-distance hikers may continue further along the ridge to Bílý kříž. The others are recommended to descent to Horní Lomná through the valley of Přelač, where the line bus will bring you back to Dolní Lomná.

 **Tip for a trip:**  
**To the Jablunkov pass hillfort, to see the orchids and stone balls**

You can set up for an easy walk from the village of Mosty. A unique historic sight can be seen here – ruins of the anti-Turkish hillfort from the 17th century that guarded the strategically important Jablunkov Pass. After a visiting the hillfort, return to the Šance-school crossroad and continue along the yellow tourist trail towards Slovakia boarder. An effortless trail will lead you by the nature landmarks of Motyčanka and Filůvka with typical submontane wetland meadows. Hundreds of red blooming western march orchids and white platantheras can be seen here at the turn of May and June. Take a look to the Megoňky stone quarry a few metres behind the state border, where you can spot stone balls, one of the natural wonders of Kysúce.



Sheep grazing has been forming the local countryside for centuries



Kamenitý settlement in Horní Lomná



The valley of Lomná



Western march orchid, a typical orchid of Motyčanka and Filůvka

## Facts about Brown bear



It builds its lair in the ground, under the tree windthrows, or uses rock niches and hollows. Here, the bear overwinters from December to March and even gives birth to its cubs.



Nibbled, scratched or urine marked trees are important communication spots of the bears.



In the late summer and in autumn, young bears come back to the Beskydy Mountains to search for food. Up to 90% of their food is covered by plants.



Cubs leave the lair in April and May and learn about their surroundings. They become independent at the age of 1.5 to 3.5 years.



The bear is the greatest European predator; adult male may reach the weight of up to 150 – 350 kg

Illustration Ludvík Kunc.

