



Rašelinště Jizerky National Nature Reserve

Welcome to the northernmost mountain range of the Czech Republic, to a landscape of meadows, pastures, rocks and extensive forests. Rocky slopes with old beech forests rise prominently to a plateau where spruce forests conceal mysterious peat bogs, lending a Nordic character to the landscape. Ravines with boulders and high peaks can be seen here along with deep valleys with waterfalls and shallow floodplains featuring brooks, blooming mountain meadows and scree slopes. The foothills offer a picturesque variety of meadows, field hedgerows and groves, interspersed with brooks and small rivers, typical local buildings and old rural architecture. Welcome to Jizerské hory (the Jizera Mountains).



Paličník viewing point

The Jizerské hory Protected Landscape Area is one of the oldest such areas in the Czech Republic. It was declared in 1968, and underwent dramatic development in the past. Two major influences on the region were glassmaking and the forced expulsion of most of the German inhabitants after the war. The landscape below the forest line features meadows, pastures, groves and typical rural buildings. Granite forms a major part of the bedrock, and appears in many rocks, rock walls, rock towers, rock towns and boulder fields.

Water plays an important role in the appearance of the Jizera Mts. It flows from numerous spring areas on mountain ridges, and runs across peat bog basins and down stony torrents. It flows through ravines and wild waterfalls into the foothills, slows in meanders, and continues to the Baltic Sea and North Sea. Forests cover almost three-quarters of the area. In the past, however, man converted much of them into a spruce monoculture. This makes

the mountain and waterlogged spruce forests, preserved on the plateau and resembling primeval forests, as well as the large mixed and beech forests on the hillsides, all the more valuable. Meadows and meadow wetlands are a unique environment here, formed and preserved thanks to man's careful management. In spring and summer, you can admire in them blooming orchids and other rare plants, such as the bogbean or arnica.

The real gem here is the field gentian, *Gentianella campestris* ssp. *baltica*. The most prized meadows are, for instance, in Maxov or the village of Jizerka. The pearls of the Jizera Mts. are peat bogs, home to many Nordic plant species. They are the only places where you will find the insectivorous round-leaved sun dew, or the inconspicuous dwarf birch. The landscape of the Jizera Mts. is beautiful but also harsh. Hundreds of crosses and remembrance stones speak about the hard life people endured in the mountains.



The boreal owl, the symbol of the Jizerské hory PLA Information Centre at Mariánskohorské boudy

Boreal owl is my name, I am a severely endangered species of small forest owl. Plumage also grows on my legs. I am a night-time hunter, catching mostly small rodents. I live in both coniferous and broadleaved forests. I usually nest in cavities made by the black woodpecker, or use nesting boxes made by people. They put them in places where bark beetle outbreak and air pollution forced them to log dead trees, and there were not enough nesting trees. You can hear my persistent singing already in late February at night, and sometimes also by day, reminiscent of a distant train whistle. I am an excellent hunter, and help to regulate the numbers of rodents in the forest, giving seedlings and young trees a greater chance to grow.



Crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*)



Round-leaved sun dew (*Drosera rotundifolia*)



The river Černá Desná

The Jizerské hory House of Nature is the main visitor centre for the protected landscape area, and offers the public an interactive exhibition on the natural sciences, called "The Jizera Mountains through All the Senses". It also includes an information centre which sells regional publications and minor refreshments, and offers accommodation. Education programmes about the Jizerské hory and the Jizerskohorské bučiny nature reserves are available for schools and groups.

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The Jizerské hory PLA Information Centre at Mariánskohorské Boudy

is situated on the site of a former pasture settlement near Josefův Důl founded in 1705. Thanks to EU finances, the original building was reconstructed and now also includes an interactive exhibition.

Informační středisko CHKO Jizerské hory –
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The Information Centre is operated by the Bučina NGO.

The Jizerské hory PLA is managed and administered by the Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic (AOPK), Liberecký regional office, U Jezu 10, 460 01 Liberec, tel.: +420 951 424 730, e-mail: jizhory@aopk.gov.cz, jizerskehory.aopk.gov.cz

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Did you know that ...

-  The Jizera Mts. have been declared a special bird area as part of the Natura 2000 system? The aim is to protect the populations of the boreal owl and the black grouse.
-  It is important for many animals that old and decomposing trees with hollows are left in the forest? They create an environment rich in fungi and insects, which birds feed on. Many bird species nest in these hollows.
-  You can go down by up to a thousand years in a peat bog? The peat moss grows steadily, but only 1 mm per year. The decayed lower parts create layers of peat thousands of years old.
-  The European mountain ash is now being planted in the Jizera Mts.? Its fruits are a source of food while its fallen leaves improve soil quality and its roots improve its resistance to wind and frost.

Thank you for acting considerably towards our joint natural heritage, and for:

-  driving and parking your cars only where permitted
-  keeping to marked pathways while in the national nature reserve
-  showing consideration to the natural sites around you as well as other visitors when cycling
-  camping and lighting fires in designated areas only; not camping in reserves
-  leaving animals and plants alone in their natural habitats
-  taking your rubbish home with you



Globe flowers and Bukovec hill



Souš dam



Jedlová waterfall



Malá Strana nature reserve



Tips for Trips: A Full-day Hike

Those who wish to stay for a whole day in the Jizera Mts. are free to follow our tip for a 20-km long hike. Take the yellow-marked hiking trail from Josefův Důl to Mariánskohorské boudy enclave. It is only a short distance from there to the Burst dam (Protržená přehrada), a technical monument with remnants of the dam, sluice gate and the spillway. The dam burst in 1916, causing much damage and the loss of 62 lives. Take the Jezdecká trail and climb the Vlašský ridge to the monument to the foresters of the Jizerské Mts., offering a lovely view of the Souš dam. It is a short hike now to the mountain village of Jizerka, from where you can continue down the 'Tři Iseriny' nature trail to the Jizerka peat bogs with the Vyháldková meadow and the Bukovec nature reserve with its preserved scree forest. The Souš dam, a source of drinking water, can be reached via the blue-marked Umrlčí trail from Jizerka. At the dam, take the red-marked trail down the valley of the Černá Desná, featuring a system of waterfalls, rapids, rock plateaus and 'giant pots', or evorsion holes. When in Desná village, you can also take the nature trail 'In the Footsteps of Riedel the Glassmaker'.



Tips for Trips: The Waters of the Jizera Mts.

The Jizerské Mts. are one of the important spring areas of the Czech Republic. Water runs from the plateau down steep hillsides into rapids and waterfalls. Starting at the Josefův Důl train stop, take the Gustav Leutelt nature trail, or the yellow-marked hiking trail via Peklo (a local name) to the Čertovy kameny viewing point. The original chalets still stand there on a steep slope along the Šumicí brook, once used as workshops for glass cutting and pressing. The glassmakers built a sophisticated system of water reservoirs and flumes, remnants of which are visible, and some are even still in operation. From there, you can go to the edge of the forest to reach Pekelská lodge, and take the Zámecká trail back, or continue north down the blue-marked trail to Jedlový důl valley, where you will see the Pekelný waterfall below Pekelné rocks. The local nature trail presents the interesting places in the Jedlový důl nature reserve. The trail runs to the most attractive waterfall on the river Jedlová. You can take the same trail to return, or continue to Mořská trail, which will comfortably lead you back.



Tips for Trips: Meadows in the Foothills And More

Take a hike to Maxovský ridge to enjoy blooming meadows, fresh green trees and the silence of forest. The junction at Josefův Důl – Sklárna near the train station is your starting point. Take the blue-marked hiking trail which runs along the Gustav Leutelt nature trail, steeply ascending south to Dolní Maxov. The pleasant forest trail will take you around Maxovský hill, via Sedmidomý saddle and Maxovský ridge to Slovanka, the oldest steel viewing tower in the Czech Republic. From there, take the red-marked trail north to Karlov, where rural submontane architecture has been preserved. Continue through Podkova, where chalets built into a semicircle surround a small meadow enclave with peat meadows as well as dryer sites, and the revitalised brook Tichá říčka. The trail continues down a narrow valley to the river Kamenice and back to Josefův Důl.

The Jizera Mts. Environmental Disaster

1968



1 Industrial Revolution and Its Effects on Forests The 19th and 20th centuries saw a great surge in production, trade and consumption. Electricity was necessary, at that time produced mainly by burning coal. That led to many problems.

1978



2 Acid Rain and Destruction of Forests With the increased consumption of electricity vast amounts of smoke were put out by coal-fired power plants. Emissions full of sulphur polluted the air, and in the form of acid rain damaged forest soil and impaired the health of trees.

1985



3 Pests Attacking Forests The weakened trees were easy prey for pest insects. Millions of bark beetles and bud moths attacked the trees and made them slowly die. Large spruce growths started to die out.

2003



4 Change in Forest Landscape The dead trees were logged and the landscape thus changed for a long time. It took huge efforts to renew the forests. Aerial liming was used to improve the soil and deciduous trees were planted by the foresters. However, animals feeding on young trees were another problem.

2025



5 The Forests Are Back, But the Road to Complete Renewal Still Continues After more than 40 years, the Jizera Mts. are green again; yet the soil and the life in it are slow to regenerate. New sources of pollution, mainly from transport, hinder their full recovery. It will still take many decades.

Illustrations: Klára Žabková

