



IN TOUCH WITH NATURE

Biosphere reserves in Germany



Nationale
Naturlandschaften



Foreword



Seals, dippers, Rhön sheep, orchids, salt marshes and more: the German biosphere reserves are characterized by a great diversity of habitats with a varied range of animal and plant species. With their ancient beech forests, clear lakes, rugged karst landscapes, and craggy peaks, they are representative of unique natural and cultural landscapes. Their objective is to promote sustainable development in all areas of life and economy, where people and nature are in harmony. As such, they are internationally representative model regions.

In Germany, these fascinating landscapes and valuable ecosystems extend from the Wadden Sea to the Alps, from Neuwerk Island to Berchtesgadener Land. They are integrated into the global network of UNESCO biosphere reserves.

Over 700 such model regions in more than 120 countries are linked through UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) programme. In Germany, UNESCO has recognized 16 biosphere reserves to date, accounting for about 3.5 per cent of the land area. These German biosphere reserves protect a wealth of threatened plant and animal species and form part of 'National Natural Landscapes', an important component of the National Strategy on Biodiversity. Today, National Natural Landscapes comprise 18 biosphere reserves, 16 national parks, 103 nature parks, and a certified wilderness area.

In a sense, biosphere reserves are real-world laboratories for living and working in harmony with the cycles of nature. The aim is to preserve long-term livelihoods for all of us. For this purpose, biosphere reserves test and implement a type of environmentally friendly land use through innovative and traditional forms of management. The marketing of local products, environmentally friendly tourism, and training in sustainable development are other important tasks for biosphere reserves. Development of the biosphere reserves should also provide insights for research and science: what are the interactions between natural and societal processes?

UNESCO biosphere reserves must develop in line with the 17 sustainability goals of Agenda 2030. The Federal Government supports this by supporting protection and development measures, for example in the context of large nature conservation projects or research projects.

Biosphere reserves also contribute to regional value creation through sustainable tourism and creating jobs in structurally weak rural regions. They offer space for leisure, recreation, and to experience nature – be it on foot, by bike, or on the water. In this way they inspire us about nature and landscape, make us aware of the need to use them carefully, and invite us to help design a future where our lives, nature, and the environment are harmonised.

This booklet takes you on a journey through the diversity of the German biosphere reserves. I cordially invite you to take part.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Svenja Schulze". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

SVENJA SCHULZE
Federal Minister for the Environment

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Typical log cabin in
Spreewald Biosphere
Reserve

Biosphere Reserves

Sustainable life, sustainable economy

The term “biosphere reserve” is composed from the words “biosphere” (from the Greek “bios” for “life” and “sphaira” for “globe”) and “reserve” (from the Latin verb “reservare”, meaning “save” or “keep”). Biosphere reserves protect, maintain, and develop primarily cultural landscapes that have evolved over centuries, creating valuable habitats in the process.

The most important task of biosphere reserves is to develop and test models of how humans and nature can coexist in harmony, and in doing so, how to bring people and nature together (again).

Peter Südbeck chairs the Board of Nationale Naturlandschaften e.V. (National Natural Landscapes, an NGO), the umbrella organization of German national parks, biosphere reserves, nature parks, and a certified wilderness area. He is also the head of the Lower Saxony Wadden Sea National Park and UNESCO Biosphere Reserve administration. He explains what “biosphere reserve” means in practice, their role in protecting biodiversity, and why they are so special for visitors.

What are biosphere reserves and what are their tasks?

Biosphere reserves are large-scale, representative sections of natural and cultural landscapes that have a transregional importance due to their natural features and nature and environmentally compatible land use. Working together with the people who live and work within their boundaries, biosphere reserves are tasked with developing natural and cultural landscapes in a model way, maintaining natural cycles, and protecting valuable habitats.

Biosphere reserves are accountable to the Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB) of UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific and Culture Organization). They are recognized by UNESCO and are regularly reviewed. MAB is designed to support the protection of nature and natural resources, sustainable regional development,



In September 2019, a German-language MAB youth forum on “UNESCO Biosphere Reserves – Sustainable life, sustainable economy” was held for the first time. Young adults who live in biosphere reserves and/or are committed to them were invited to Rhön Biosphere Reserve.

research and environmental monitoring, and training in sustainable development. For this purpose, biosphere reserves need to be protected by nature protection laws, which in Germany is usually achieved through the Federal Nature Conservation Act (Section 25 BNatSchG), under which “biosphere reserve” is a specific legal designation. This category of protected area was introduced specially to facilitate access to the UNESCO Programme. The Wadden Sea Biosphere Reserves are also designated as national parks, which similarly fulfils their protection mandate.

Biosphere reserve, biosphere area, biosphere region? Is there a difference?

UNESCO explicitly employs the international designation “UNESCO biosphere reserve”. However, at the national level, it is possible to deviate from this. Some federal states have chosen to use a different term that, perhaps, gives a better idea of the meaning than the term “reserve”.

How did biosphere reserves develop, how did the idea come about?

In 1968, UNESCO addressed the environmental problems that had been ever-increasing since the beginning of the 20th century, and the associated decline in biodiversity, within the context of a first “Intergovernmental Conference of Experts on the Scientific Basis for Rational Use and Conservation of the Resources of the Biosphere”. Following this Biosphere Conference, the interdisciplinary, intergovernmental programme “Man and the Biosphere” (MAB) was established in 1970. MAB was designed to address the challenge of exploring and reconciling the interactions between human activity and the natural environment.

Following the introduction of MAB, the first international biosphere reserves were recognized in 1978. One year later, the first two German biosphere reserves, Middle Elbe and Thuringian Forest, followed. The global network of UNESCO biosphere reserves now includes more than 700 protected areas.

What is the structure of biosphere reserves?

Biosphere reserves are divided spatially into three zones, each of which is subject to a different degree of human impact. They are designated as core, buffer, and transitional zones, with each zone fulfilling different tasks.

In the core zone, which should make up at least three per cent of the total reserve area, nature can develop undisturbed by human use. This is where many species find habitats and refuges. No human activities are permitted here, except for research and monitoring. The core zone is surrounded by the buffer zone, which makes up at least ten per cent of the total reserve area. The buffer zone contains particularly sensitive or representative sections of the characteristic cultural landscape, such as heathland, species-rich meadows, orchard meadows, or forests that are managed in a semi-natural way. The majority of the reserve’s total area is taken up by the transitional zone, which ideally surrounds the buffer and core zones and serves as a space where people can live and engage in economic and recreational activities. The main priority of this zone is to trial and promote balanced regional development in a sustainable manner and to strengthen the (rural) area.

What role do biosphere reserves play for biodiversity in Germany?

In the core zone of the biosphere reserves, biodiversity can develop in its own way: in particular, habitats can develop to support animal and plant species typical of later stages of succession (e.g., species in dead or rotting wood). The extensive care of different habitat structures in the buffer zone (such as mountain meadows, juniper heath, orchard meadows, or hedges) also helps to ensure diversity in the landscape. Without human use, such valuable habitats would not exist for the many rare species of animals and plants that have adapted to them. Biosphere reserves and their historically modified landscapes therefore play an important role for biodiversity overall, both nationally and internationally. The conservation of these valuable natural and cultural landscapes also offers great added value to people – if biodiversity is dwindling, so is the base of our livelihoods.

As model regions for sustainable development, biosphere reserves make an active and global contribution to meeting the objectives of the 1992 International Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), including the conservation of biodiversity. At the national level, this objective is anchored in the National Biodiversity Strategy.

Germany has 16 UNESCO biosphere reserves plus two areas that are in the process of applying for this special seal of quality. What role does UNESCO play and what does recognition as a biosphere reserve mean for the individual protected areas?

UNESCO's MAB Programme provides the content and the organizational framework for the establishment of biosphere reserves. The selection and recognition of biosphere reserves by UNESCO is based on how representative the landscape is. In each country, the assessment is carried out by the respective MAB National Committee, which reviews the status quo every ten years.

Recognition as a biosphere reserve commits its managers to preserve and develop the character and beauty of these valuable natural and cultural landscapes in a sustainable manner. The two fledgling biosphere reserves Drömling and Karst Landscape South Harz still aspire to this special recognition by UNESCO.

How will German biosphere reserves develop in the future?

In March 2016, the fourth World Congress of Biosphere Reserves adopted the Lima Action Plan for the further development of biosphere reserves until 2025. In conjunction with a new MAB strategy (2015 to 2025), adopted by the UNESCO General Conference, the Lima Action Plan provides a framework for the coming years. The Lima Action Plan also calls on UNESCO biosphere reserves as model regions in the implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of Agenda 2030, which were adopted by the member states of the United Nations. An overview of the resulting future tasks has been drawn up jointly by the German National MAB Committee and the permanent working group of biosphere reserves.

The world faces enormous challenges: climate change and the global extinction of species are two major trends that threaten to compromise or complicate a good (co-)existence in the future. Biosphere reserves are important places: real-world laboratories as it were, where individual, future-proof solutions to these challenges can be developed. In this process, the joint search for solutions with local people, and the mutual learning and exchange of experience in the global network of biosphere reserves, both play significant roles. Biosphere reserves are true model regions for the future of our planet. Their significance is being made particularly clear in the times of the Corona pandemic.

What makes biosphere reserves interesting for visitors and what in particular do you recommend to visitors?

With their diverse natural landscapes and wide range of cultural activities on offer, biosphere reserves are popular leisure and recreation destinations for visitors and residents alike, offering space to experience and discover nature in a variety of ways. In addition, biosphere reserves offer a multitude of regional products, as well as sustainable tourism and environmental education services for the whole family.

If you want to get to know the biosphere reserves, and make use of sustainable products and services, we recommend visiting our partners. The 'Partners of National Natural Landscapes' are reviewed and certified nationwide according to uniform quality criteria, which makes them representatives of sustainable development of their region. As experts and ambassadors of their biosphere reserve, they offer visitors and residents a varied range of events and experience. A visit is definite definitely worthwhile.



Peter Südbeck, head of the Lower Saxony Wadden Sea National Park and UNESCO Biosphere Reserve administration, and chairman of the board of the NGO National Natural Landscapes, the umbrella organization of German national parks, biosphere reserves, nature parks and a certified wilderness area



UNESCO Biosphere Reserves

Wadden Sea and Hallig Islands
of Schleswig-Holstein

Hamburg
Wadden Sea

Lower Saxony
Wadden Sea



Where the seabed meets the horizon

A view of the distant horizon, fresh air and the delightful cooling effect of soft, invigorating mud on the feet – a pure pleasure for many people. At the same time, water and the coastal areas are important habitats for numerous plants and animals. The unique character of the Wadden Sea is underscored by its designation as a UNESCO Natural World Heritage Site.

Wadden Sea and Hallig Islands of Schleswig-Holstein Biosphere Reserve

The Halligen islands off the North Sea coast of Schleswig-Holstein are truly unique. They are a natural and cultural treasure for the whole nation and an indispensable protective barrier for the entire western coast – not to mention a highlight for North Sea tourists. The Halligen are small and unprotected by dykes. When the tide is particularly high, as in the case of a spring tide, they are completely flooded by the North Sea, a state the locals call “Land unter” (land submerged). For this reason, houses are built on man-made hills called “Warften”. The salt marshes are home to numerous plants and animals that could not survive elsewhere. From the stormy sea, to ubiquitous flocks of birds, vast salt marshes, and fresh sea air – no one can ignore nature on the Halligen. Holidaymakers and day-trippers alike enjoy the unique landscape between land and sea and join birdwatchers from all over the world in observing the flocks of migrating brent geese at close hand. The region comprising the National Park and the Biosphere Reserve also holds culinary delights: North Sea shrimp, mussels and oysters, and numerous species of fish. Other regional specialities include North Frisian Poltinger lamb and Dithmarsch cabbage.

Hamburg Wadden Sea Biosphere Reserve

In the Elbe estuary near Cuxhaven the tidal flats and a sky full of birds stretch far into the distance. The landscape a network of islands, tidal creeks, dunes and beaches – the Hamburg Wadden Sea Biosphere Reserve is a jewel of nature. In the middle of it all lies the inhabited island of Neuwerk with its dikes, monuments and ancient cultural landscape. The island is one of Hamburg's oldest districts, despite being located over 100 kilometres from Hamburg City Hall, and it has a colourful history. It was at various times a medieval fishing port, a haven for pirates, a fortification, and pastureland. Its maritime history has given Neuwerk, which was surrounded by dykes in 1556, a distinctive face. Today, the island has about 30 residents who cater for up to 100,000 visitors every year. With its salt marshes, the Neuwerk foreshore is an important breeding and resting area for waders and waterfowl. The uninhabited islands of Scharhörn and Nigehörn consist solely of sand dunes. The uninhabited islands of Scharhörn and Nigehörn consist entirely of sand dunes. Natural coastal processes cause the islands to grow each year, in different directions, together. They are refuges for many seabirds. Nigehörn is the most recent addition to the group: Hamburg's youngest island was created in 1989, when 1.2 million cubic metres of sand were deposited in only five weeks. Since then, the island has been left to develop through natural coastal processes.

Lower Saxony Wadden Sea Biosphere Reserve

Villages in the typical local style of construction, churches with organs of trans-regional renown, all shaped by the centuries-old struggle for survival against the sea; marsh, geest, moors, and the islands' golden sand beaches, over-arched by an indescribably vast sky. The exploding fireworks of a sunset over the sea after a summer storm. Silent and serene, a perfect place for rest and contemplation. These are just a few of the many facets of Lower Saxony Wadden Sea Biosphere Reserve. Many people are surprised to learn that the Wadden Sea is the second most productive ecosystem in the world, after the tropical rainforest. Millions of migratory birds feed here, accumulating the reserves of fat that they will need to breed successfully in the Arctic, or for their flight to their winter quarters in distant regions to the south. The Wadden Sea also serves as nursery for many species of fish that appear on local menus. At the same time, the area is also one of Germany's leading tourist destinations.

Wadden Sea and Hallig Islands of Schleswig-Holstein Biosphere Reserve

Ferry transfer and National Park Centre

Take the ferry from Schlüttsiel to Hallig Hooge. At the ferry terminal there are bicycles to rent. Or, if it is raining, take a carriage across the Hallig. Thousands upon thousands of brent geese stop to rest here in spring and autumn. Take a tour of the Hallig, visit the church and the Königspel Museum, and take in the beautiful natural vistas. If the weather is unpleasant (what the locals call "Schietwetter"), stop at the restaurant on the Hanswarft. A visit to the Conservation Station's (Schutzstation Wattenmeer) National Park seminar building is a sure hit with children.

Birdwatching and shrimp rolls

Monday: Arrival at the holiday apartment on Hallig Langeneß. In the evening, we take a walk, eat fish rolls and have coffee in Café Pharisäer.

Tuesday: Bicycle tour across the Hallig and a visit to the Hallig church and the Captain Tadsen Museum, followed by a hike over the tidal flats and birdwatching organised by the Conservation Station.

Wednesday: Boat ride to Hallig Hooge, guided tour to the church, the National Park Centre and the Königspel Museum. Then we stop for tea punch at the cosy "Halligkrog".

Thursday: Sunshine at last! We enjoy a swim at high tide and watch the terns. Delicious North Sea shrimp in the evening.

Friday: Excursion with a picnic basket, taking Theodor Storm's "Schimmelreiter" for something to read. What luck! The children find a piece of amber while collecting shells.

Saturday: Breakfast as the sun rises over the tidal flats. The calls of curlews accompany us on our way to the ferry that will take us back to Schlüttsiel.



General information

A delightful experience:
walking on the bottom
of the Wadden Sea

Facts and figures

Location: North Sea coast of Schleswig-Holstein, from the border with Denmark to the mouth of the Elbe

Size: 4,431 square kilometres

Elevation: –15 to +8 metres above sea level

History: The Biosphere Reserve was established and recognized by UNESCO in 1990. The Biosphere Reserve occupies the same area as the National Park (established in 1985), but additionally includes the five large, inhabited Halligen.

Landscape types: tidal flats, islands, Halligen, dunes, sandbanks, tidal creeks, salt marshes and sea



Biosphere Reserve information

Landesbetrieb für Küstenschutz, Nationalpark und Meeresschutz Schleswig-Holstein / Biosphärenreservatsverwaltung Schleswig-Holsteinisches Wattenmeer und Halligen
Schlossgarten 1
25832 Tönning
Phone: +49 4861 616-0, fax: -69
nationalpark@lkn.landsh.de
www.nationalpark-wattenmeer.de/sh/
biosphaerenreservat

Geschäftsstelle Biosphäre Die Halligen
Marktstraße 6
25813 Husum
Phone +49 4841 7707570
biosphaere@halligen.de
www.halligen.de

Nationalpark-Zentrum Multimar Wattforum
Dithmarscher Straße 6a
25832 Tönning
Phone: +49 4861 96200
www.multimar-wattforum.de

Accommodation

Nordsee-Tourismus-Service GmbH
Phone: +49 4841 8975-0,
fax: +49 4841 4843
www.nordseetourismus.de

Nationalpark-Partner
www.nationalpark-partner-sh.de

Books and maps

UNESCO Weltnaturerbe Wattenmeer
ISBN-10 3529054909

Die Halligen
ISBN-10 3898765164

*Inseln und Halligen im
schleswig-holsteinischen Wattenmeer*
ISBN-10 3898764222

Maps of the National Park:
Sehkarte Westküste Schleswig-Holstein
ISBN-10 3926137452

*Kreis Nordfriesland Topographische
Kreiskarte 1:100.000*
ISBN 978-3-89130-352-8

Directions

By train to Heide (connection to Büsum), Husum (connection to St. Peter-Ording), Niebüll (connection to Dagebüll/bus from there to Schlüttsiel or Westerland)

By car: Autobahn A 23, direction Heide, then north on the B 5. The car ferry to Sylt departs from Niebüll. Ferries to the islands and the Hallig islands depart from the ports of Dagebüll and Schlüttsiel.

Cattle grazing alongside
a tidal creek on Hallig
Hooge

**Biosphärenreservat
Schleswig-Holsteinisches
Wattenmeer und Halligen**





Scharhörn and Nigehörn dune islands

Wadden Sea of Hamburg

Salt marshes and tidal aquarium

The island of Neuwerk and the dune islands of Scharhörn and Nigehörn are located in the middle of the tidal flats. Depending on the tide, you can reach Neuwerk on foot, in a horse-drawn carriage (the so-called Wattwagen), or by boat. Walking the ring dyke that protects the island from the high tide is a good way to get to know the island. The 700-year-old Neuwerker Tower, the oldest professional building on the German North Sea coast, offers a magnificent view of the Biosphere Reserve all the way to the mouth of the Elbe, and the large container ships. Close to the tower is the the Biosphere Reserve and National Park Centre with an exhibition on the Hamburg Wadden Sea and a tidal aquarium. Following a marked path through the restored salt marshes on the eastern foreshore of the island, you can see birds at close range, whether they are breeding here or just passing through. The wonders of bird migration can be observed in spring and autumn.

Touring the island: on foot or with the Wattwagen

Monday: Arrival at Neuwerk with the passenger ship MS Flipper. Settling in at a cosy guest house or – for families and groups – at a “hay hotel”. A first tour of the island on the ring dyke gives an inkling of everything that we may want to explore later.

Tuesday: It's raining, so we sleep in and read a novel about the pirate Störtebeker. In the afternoon, we dress in “Frisian Mink” (the typical yellow raincoat) to visit the Biosphere Reserve and National Park Centre. The adventure trail offer interesting information about the Biosphere Reserve and the National Park.

Wednesday: The sun is shining. Fitness programme in the morning: a climb to the top of the 700-year old lighthouse to enjoy a view of the landscape – natural and man-made. We breathe in the fragrance of meadows and sea on an afternoon tour with the Jordsand Association through the restored salt marshes on the eastern foreshore, watching oystercatchers and Sandwich terns and their newly hatched young.

Thursday: Out early to spend the whole day on the tidal flats experiencing nature in the core zone of the Biosphere Reserve. In good condition and weather conditions, hike with the ranger to the bird island Scharhörn.

Friday: With a ranger we hike to the “Kleiner Vogelsand”, a high ridge on the tidal flats on the northern coast of Neuwerk. Amber is often found here after storms.

Saturday: After a morning swim – at high tide – we say goodbye to Neuwerk in the afternoon. At low tide, the horse-drawn “Wattwagen” takes us over the mudflats to Sahlenburg. See you again at Hamburg Wadden Sea Biosphere Reserve!

General information

Haus Seeblick (Hotel und Wattführungen)

Phone: +49 4721 20360

info@cassen-eils.de

www.seeblick-neuwerk.de

Thomas Fischer (Wattwagen)

Phone: +49 4721 28770

www.wattwagen-fischer.de

Facts and figures

Location: at the mouth of the Elbe, near the Lower Saxony mainland near Cuxhaven (Hamburg exclave)

Area: 117 square kilometres

History: The Biosphere Reserve was established and recognized by UNESCO in 1992 and occupies the same area as the National Park that was set up in 1990.

Elevation: Up to 6 metres above sea level

Geographic features: tidal flats, islands, sandbanks, tidal creeks, salt marshes, grassland and sea

Biosphere Reserve information

*Biosphärenreservat-/Nationalpark-Verwaltung
Hamburgisches Wattenmeer*

*c/o Behörde für Umwelt, Klima, Energie
und Agrarwirtschaft*

Neuenfelder Straße 19, 21109 Hamburg

Phone: +49 40 42840-2457

www.nationalpark-wattenmeer.de/hh/

biosphaerenreservat

Biosphärenreservat-Nationalpark-Station Neuwerk

Turmwurt, 27499 Insel Neuwerk

Phone: +49 4721 69271

np-station@bukea.hamburg.de

Biosphärenreservat-Nationalpark-Haus Neuwerk

27499 Insel Neuwerk

Phone: +49 4721 395349

np-haus@bukea.hamburg.de

Accommodation and Wattwagen companies

Das alte Fischerhaus (Hotel und Wattwagen)

Phone: +49 4721 29043

info-neuwerk@t-online.de

www.neuwerk-hotel.de, www.wattfahrten.de

Nige Hus & zum Anker (Hotel)

Phone: +49 4721 29561

info@inselneuwerk.de

www.inselneuwerk.de

Hus Achtern Diek (Hotel und Wattwagen)

Phone: +49 4721 29076

info@husachterndiek.de

www.husachterndiek.de

Books and maps

Nationalparkatlas Hamburgisches Wattenmeer

(Available as a PDF from publications at

www.nationalpark-wattenmeer.de)

Herzlich Willkommen in unserem Nationalpark

Nationalparkbroschüre Hamburgisches Wattenmeer

(Available as a PDF from publications at

www.nationalpark-wattenmeer.de)

Directions

By train/“Metronom” or car to Cuxhaven.

From there, you have three options of getting

to Neuwerk: on foot from Sahlenburg (bus

connection from Cuxhaven station); with the

horse-drawn Wattwagen from Sahlenburg

or Duhnen (various providers); or with the

MS Flipper from Cuxhaven “Alte Liebe”

(shipping company Cassen Eils,

Phone: +49 4721 667600, www.cassen-eils.de).



By Wattwagen to
Neuwerk

**Biosphärenreservat
Hamburgisches
Wattenmeer**



Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony

Sielhafen Museum and tearoom

On fine days a day trip from Neßmersiel to the island of Baltrum is recommended. At low tide, groups led by a National Park guide stroll over roughly eight kilometres of tidal flats to the smallest of the seven East Frisian Islands, where they will have about four hours to explore the “Sleeping Beauty” in the Wadden Sea. At high tide, a ferry takes the visitors back to the mainland. A visit to the Sielhafen Museum and the Carolinensiel National Park Centre is worthwhile, rain or shine. Don't miss a traditional East Frisian tea ceremony at a tearoom in the historical Sielhafen.

Bicycle tour and rhubarb cake

Monday: Arrival with bicycles at Bremerhaven station. From there by ferry to Nordenham. We pedal our way west along the dyke. Cosy guest houses are everywhere.

Tuesday: Trip to the marshland outside the dyke in Sehestedt (National Park Interactive Station) and to Dangast. The old “Kurhaus” in Dangast serves delicious rhubarb cake – but it is only open at weekends. Overnight stay in Varel (Dangast).

Wednesday: Bike tour along Jade Bay. In Cäcilienroden we discover the salt marsh adventure trail that was constructed in 2010 and is accessible to the disabled. On rainy days, a visit to the UNESCO Wadden Sea World Heritage Centre in Wilhelmshaven is on the programme.

Thursday: Today's destination is Harlesiel (Carolinensiel). An excursion to Minsin and a visit to the Wangerland National Park Centre are worthwhile activities. By the time we arrive, we have earned our swim in the North Sea.

Friday: Day trip by boat to Wangerooge (without bicycles). We ride the island train through salt marshes in bloom and stroll through a fragrant landscape of dunes.

Saturday: The last stage of the bicycle tour takes us to the picturesque beer-loving town of Jever.



General information

Facts and figures

Location: North Sea coast of Lower Saxony from the mouth of the Elbe near Cuxhaven to the Dutch border

Area: 2,400 square kilometres

Elevation: Sea level

History: The Biosphere Reserve was established and recognized by UNESCO in 1992. It encompasses the National Park of the same name, which was set up in 1986.

Geographic features: tidal flats, islands with dunes, beaches and salt marshes, moors, heath, sandbanks, tidal creeks and sea, marsh, and geest

Biosphere Reserve information

*Nationalparkverwaltung
Niedersächsisches Wattenmeer
Virchowstraße 1, 26 382 Wilhelmshaven
Phone: +49 4421 911-0, fax: -280
poststelle@nlpv-wattenmeer.niedersachsen.de
www.nationalpark-wattenmeer.de/nds/
biosphaerenreservat*

*Nationalpark-Haus Fedderwardsiel
Phone: +49 4733 8517, fax: 8550
nlph.museum-butjadingen@ewetel.net
www.museum-fedderwardsiel.de*

*Nationalpark-Haus Greetsiel
Phone: +49 4926 2041, fax: 2303
nationalparkhaus@greetsiel.de
www.nationalparkhaus-wattenmeer.de/
nationalpark-haus-greetsiel*

*Nationalpark-Haus Wangerland
Phone: +49 4426 904704, fax: 904702
nationalparkhaus@wangerland.de
www.nationalparkhaus-wattenmeer.de/
nationalpark-haus-wangerland*

*Nationalpark-Zentrum Cuxhaven
Phone: +49 4721 2868 1, fax: 69245
nationalparkzentrum.cuxhaven@ewetel.net
www.Nationalpark-Wattenmeer-Cuxhaven.de*

*Nationalpark-Haus Seehundstation Norddeich
Phone: +49 4931 8919, fax: 8222-4
info@seehundstation-norddeich.de
www.seehundstation-norddeich.de*



Lower Saxony Wadden Sea
Biosphere Reserve – linking
natural and cultural landscapes
in the Wadden Sea region

Books and maps

*Vögel beobachten im Nationalpark
Niedersächsisches Wattenmeer
ISBN 978-3-7959-0910-9*

*Unterwegs auf Wangerooge
ISBN 978-3-930333-19-6*

*Harlebucht erfahren (Radtouren)
www.harlebucht-erfahren.de*

Accommodation

*Die Nordsee-Marketing GmbH
Olympiastraße 1, Gebäude 6
26419 Schortens
Phone: +49 4421 956099-0, fax: -9
kontakt@die-nordsee.de*

Directions

*Train stations with connections to island ferries:
Sande/Harlesiel (to Wangerooge), Esens
(Spiekeroog and Langeoog), Norddeich/Mole
(Norderney, Juist), Neßmersiel via Norddeich
(Baltrum), Emden Outer Harbour (Borkum).*

*Other train stations (arrival): Wilhelmshaven,
Varel, Nordenham, Bremerhaven, Cuxhaven.*

*By car: via A 27, A 28, A 29 or A 31 to
Bremerhaven, Cuxhaven, Wilhelmshaven, Sande,
Varel, Emden, Norddeich.*



A photograph of a traditional white building with a steep, conical thatched roof. The building is surrounded by a lush garden of various flowers, including purple lupines, yellow flowers, and pink flowers. The background shows a green field and a blue sky with white clouds.

UNESCO
Biosphere Reserve
South-East Rügen



Culture, landscape, sea and more

South-East Rügen fascinates us with its beautiful, varied interplay of land and sea, of peninsulas, headlands, and promontories, forests and bare hilltops, as well as the farmers' fields. In such a small space (many biosphere reserves are larger) there is an unusual variety of places and habitat types, such as cliffs, beach ridges, dunes, centuries-old forests, and almost every type of wetland in north Germany. Man has left his mark here over the last five millennia, creating wood pastures, heathlands, dry grassland, as well as salt meadows and wet meadows with their great biodiversity.

For several years now you have been able to see rare "guests" on the coast as well as in the Baltic Sea and Bodden waters of South-East Rügen Biosphere Reserve – grey seals and common seals have returned to this area. International protection measures and the reduction of pollution have contributed to this welcome development for the seal population in the entire Baltic region.



The small coastal fisheries are an example of compatible development on the coast – one of the most ecologically-sound fishing methods. With passive fishing gear such as gill nets, traps or longlines, they catch fish such as herring, cod, garfish, and flounder in the coastal waters off Rügen. In the water they have red flags on gill nets, while black flags show eel baskets or longlines.

Rügen's products are sold in farm shops and markets. Under the label of Rügen Produkte Verein e.V., products and services are offered which are made and processed in strict compliance with the precepts of sustainable management. It's worth stopping to have a look.

Left: Pfarrwitwenhaus
("Parish widow's house")
in Groß Zicker

Right: Fishermen on the
beach at Binz



Fishing boats in
Thiessow harbour

Cistercians, Großer Zicker and sailing boats

Breakfast in Sellin. Afterwards a bicycle trip to Mönchgut. The route leads through Baaber Heath to Middelhagen. The church and manor park are evocative of the Cistercian monks. On the dyke you can go to Lobbe. Here one should choose a fish dish from the local waters for lunch. Next, on to Groß Zicker. Visit the "Pfarwitwenhaus" ("Parish widow's house"). Then walk in the Zicker hills. On Bakenberg you can enjoy the fantastic view over the Bodden and the Baltic Sea, the colours of the dry grassland and the singing of the skylarks. Then along the Bodden coast back to Klein Hagen and Alt Reddevitz. Cross Baaber meadows and pause on Baaber Bollwerk, with its colourful sailboats and rowing ferry to Moritzdorf.

Rasender Roland and Caspar David Friedrich

Saturday: Comfortable apartment in Göhren. Walk around the town: resort architecture, Mönchgut museums.

Sunday: Beach life and stroll along the pier.

Monday: To Granitz Hunting Lodge by "Rasender Roland", a steam-powered narrow-gauge railway. Fantastic panoramic views from the lodge tower. Walk through Granitz to Sellin and on the beach towards Göhren. Fresh fish for dinner.

Tuesday: Take "Rasender Roland" to Putbus. Evening at Putbus Theatre.

Wednesday: Take the boat MS "Julchen" to the Isle of Vilm. Guided walk through the nature reserve with its impressive ancient forest.

Please note: reservation required by calling +49 38301 61896.

Thursday: Trip to Jasmund National Park. Hike along the chalk cliffs in the footsteps of Caspar David Friedrich.

Friday: Sunrise at Bakenberg with splendid views. Then pack our bags. But Rügen is addictive: we'll be back.

General information

Facts and figures

Location: south-east part of the Baltic island of Rügen in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania

Size: 229 square kilometres

Elevation: 0 to 107 metres

History: established in 1990 and designated by UNESCO in 1991.

Landscape types: coastal landscape with long sandy beaches, deeply indented Bodden, cliffs, dry grasslands, salt meadows, beech woods, fields and pastures.

Books and maps

Elisabeth v. Arnim
Elisabeth auf Rügen
List Tb.
ISBN 978-3-548-60247-9

Rügen – Sagen und Geschichten
Edition Temmen
ISBN 978-3-86108-409-9

Insel Rügen/Insel Hiddensee
Cycling and hiking maps
Verlag Maiwald-Karten, 6. Auflage
ISBN 978-3-932115-26-4

Schlösser und Herrenhäuser auf Rügen
Edition Temmen, 3rd edition.,
Revised and updated in 2011
ISBN 978-3-86108-912-4

Rügen – Strand & Steine
Demmler-Verlag, 2nd edition 2013
ISBN 978-3-944102-00-9

Wilhelm Malte zu Putbus und seine Fürstenresidenz auf der Insel Rügen
André Farin Verlag, 7th edition 2018
ISBN 978-3-00-0088 44-X

Das Schloss hinter dem Holunderbusch
Thomas Helms Verlag,
3rd edition, amended and expanded in 2010
ISBN 978-3-940207-64-7

Biosphere Reserve information

Biosphärenreservatsamt Südost-Rügen
Circus 1
18581 Putbus
Tel. +49 38301 8829-0; Fax -50
poststelle@suedostruegen.mvnet.de
www.biosphaerenreservat-suedostruegen.de

Accommodation and guided walks

Naturerlebnisverein Rügen e. V.
Zubzow 5a
18569 Trent
Phone/Fax: +49 38309 20126
natur-ruegen@t-online.de
www.naturerlebnis-ruegen.de

Tourismuszentrale Rügen GmbH
Circus 16
18581 Putbus
Phone: +49 3838 8077-0, Fax 254440
info@ruegen.de, www.ruegen.de

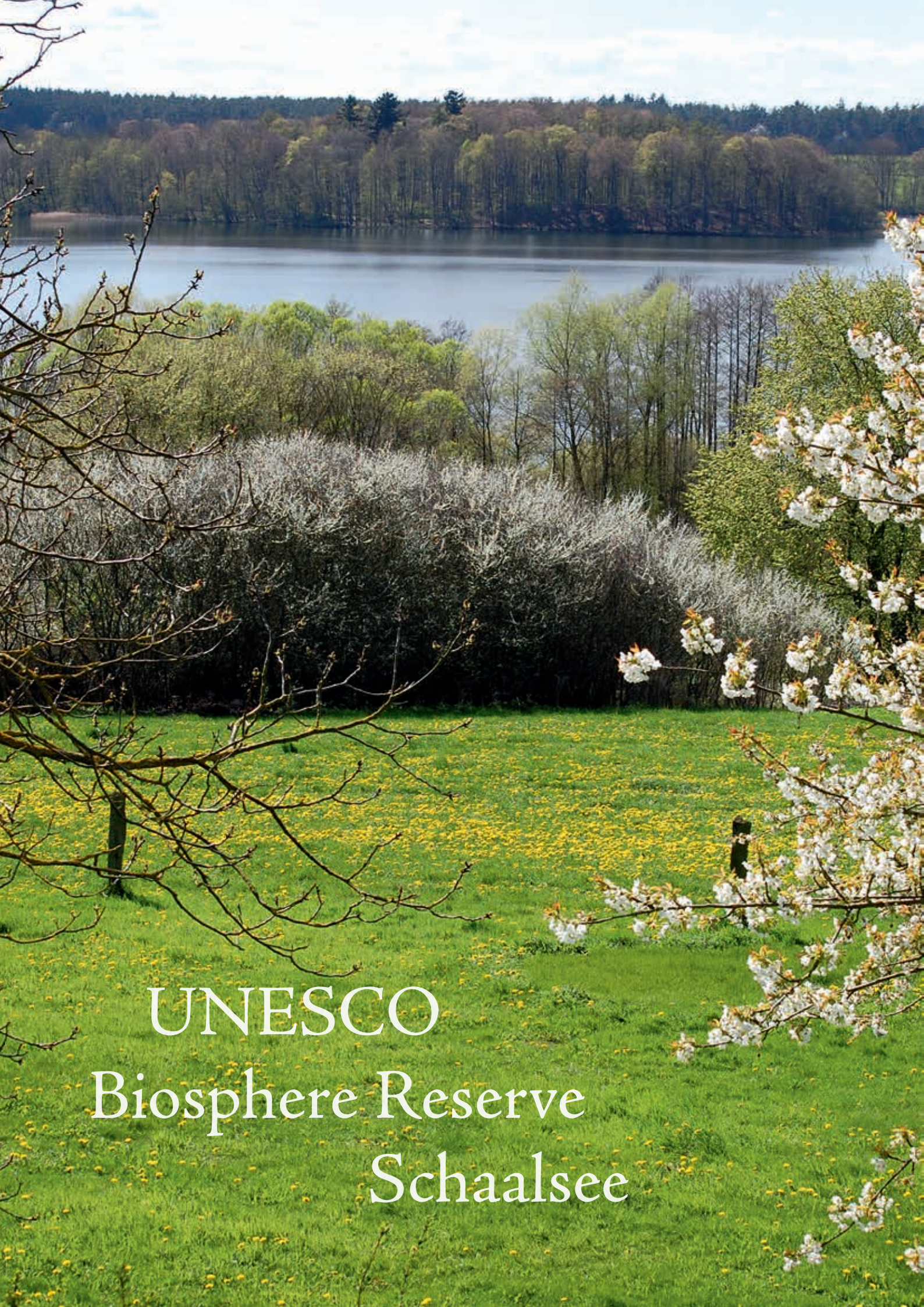
Guided nature walks
René Geyer
Leopold-Spreer-Straße 3
18581 Putbus

Directions

By train and bus: via Stralsund and Bergen to Putbus, then take the “Rasender Roland” train to Göhren or Binz. From Bergen by bus (lines 20 or 21) to Klein Zicker or Putbus (line 30 or 31).

By car: from Stralsund to Bergen and by the B 196 to Mönchgut. Or by the old ferry along “Bäderstraße” to Putbus and Mönchgut.





UNESCO
Biosphere Reserve
Schaalsee



Haven for migratory birds

Bogs and lakes, fields, pasture and wet meadows, natural beech forests – with Schaalsee in the middle of it. The lake is at the heart the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and gives it its name. Like the whole landscape with its many lakes, it is a result of the last ice age. The species richness of the landscape and the mosaic of small and large habitats make the area between the cities of Hamburg, Lübeck, and Schwerin unique. Despite the proximity to the cities, there are animals here that have not been seen in other places for a long time: kingfisher, sea eagle, and otter are the most prominent examples among many others.

People and their culture are an important part of Schaalsee Biosphere Reserve, so every visitor is welcome. Since the opening of the border, the region has gone from nowhere to a top tourist tip for nature lovers: 150 km of marked hiking and cycling trails lead through a green puzzle of forest, bogs and wet meadows, lush pastures and rolling fields. Walking under the leafy canopy of the avenues or forest trees, or along flowering



hedgerows paths is particularly romantic. There are sustainable products available in the hustle and bustle of Schaalsee Biosphere market at Pahlhuus on the first Sunday of the month in the season, from April to November.

High quality products from more than 30 producers are on offer, including fresh vegetables, fruit, meat, fish, eggs, and cheese from local often ecological production, combined with original music and cultural programme.

The regional trademark “Schaalsee Biosphere Reserve – for body and soul” is a label for regional and environmentally friendly products, services, and initiatives.

To date, 100 companies have been awarded the trademark. They all have one thing in common: the basic idea of harmony between ecology and economy, and the development of the Schaalsee region.

Left: Schaalsee at
Lassahn

Right: View from a high
seat in Kneese



Excursion to the
Schaalsee

Experience nature and culture

Pahlhuus in Zarrentin am Schaalsee offers an interesting start. A “tunnel of life”, a digital photo book, and many unusual insights of and into Schaalsee await you in this modern exhibition. You can also buy hiking maps and rent bicycles at Pahlhuus. The surrounding area offers a varied programme for a bicycle tour: observation towers in Klocksdorf and Kneese, small cafés with homemade cakes, historic churches worth seeing in Lassahn, Zarrentin, Neuenkirchen, and Döbbersen. Hike on your own or go on a tour with the Biosphere Reserve rangers.

Elves, monasteries, and border stories

Monday: The “Schaalsee-Tour” takes you by boat and electric train through the Schaalsee landscape and on foot through Kalkflachmoor. (www.schaalsee-tour.de) Then visit Pahlhuus and Zarrentin Monastery.

Tuesday: hiking day: Bauernweg (farm trail) or Elfenpfad (elves path)? The tour schedule can be found in Pahlhuus.

Wednesday: From the observation tower in Klocksdorf, watch water birds and white-tailed eagles on Röggeliner lake. Then visit Schlagsdorf Information Centre about the German-German border (www.grenzhus.de).

Thursday: Sightseeing at the medieval monastery in Rehna (www.kloster-rehna.de). Then visit Museumsanlage Gadebusch.

Friday: Schaalsee round trip, about 45 km around the lake. Afterwards, treat yourself to a massage at Tiger-Gesundheitszentrum in Zarrentin am Schaalsee.

Saturday and Sunday: Elf weekend. Discover the elves on a walk along fairy-tale bankside paths and make your own personal elf with your own hands on a modelling course (www.schaalsee-lebens-art.de).

General information

Facts and figures

Location: Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania on the border with Schleswig-Holstein

Area: 310 square kilometres

Altitude: 30 to 93 metres

Development: Established in 1990 as a Nature Park, recognized in 2000 as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve

Landscape types: deep lakes, calcareous marshes and bogs, beech forests, alder and ash forests, swamp forests, unimproved grasslands, grassland, avenues, hedges, and fields

Biosphere Reserve information

Biosphärenreservatsamt Schaalsee-Elbe
Wittenburger Chaussee 13
19246 Zarrentin am Schaalsee
Phone: +49 38851 3020
poststelle@bra-schelb.mvnet.de
www.schaalsee.de

Förderverein Biosphäre Schaalsee e. V.
Hauptstraße 13
19246 Zarrentin am Schaalsee
Phone: +49 38851 32136
info@biosphaere-schaalsee.de
www.biosphaere-schaalsee.de

Accommodation

Tourismusverband Mecklenburg-Schwerin
Phone: +49 385 59189875
www.mecklenburg-schwerin.de

Accommodation with the regional trademark
Biosphärenreservat Schaalsee – Für Leib und Seele
www.schaalsee.de

Comprehensive information about Schaalsee –
Schaalsee Info
Phone: +49 38851 333435
www.schaalsee-info.de

Books and maps

Hiking maps for Schaalsee UNESCO Biosphere Reserve

Zarrentin map
ISBN 978-3-932115-86-8

Gadebusch map
ISBN 978-3-932115-84-4

Wittenburg map
ISBN 978-3-932115-87-5

Hiking maps for Lauenburgische Seen Nature Park:

Ratzeburg map
ISBN 978-3-932115-83-4

Mölln map
ISBN 978-3-932115-85-1

Illustrated book

UNESCO-Biosphärenreservat
Schaalsee – Eine Bilderreise
ISBN-13: 978-3000511967

Directions

By train and bus: The nearest train stations are in Hagenow, Ratzeburg, and Rehna. From Hagenow you can get to Zarrentin am Schaalsee by bus www.vlp-lup.de.

By car: via the A 24 motorway (exit Zarrentin am Schaalsee) and A 20 motorway (exit Lüdersdorf). From Lübeck via Ratzeburg to Zarrentin am Schaalsee



Schaalsee Biosphere Market, first Sunday in the month (April – November) in front of Pahlhuus



UNESCO
Biosphere Reserve
Elbe River Landscape



Biosphärenreservat
Mittellelbe



Biosphärenreservat
Niedersächsische
Elbtalau



Biosphärenreservat
Flusslandschaft
Elbe-Brandenburg



Biosphärenreservat
Flusslandschaft Elbe-
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern



World culture along untamed banks

The Elbe is the third longest river in Germany, a mighty presence flowing through five German states on its 400-km course through the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Elbe River Landscape. It is one of the last semi-natural rivers in Central Europe. Interested visitors find it easy to explore, either on foot or by bicycle, following well laid out trails and paths along the riverbanks. The diverse and impressive array of habitats in the semi-natural floodplain and the adjacent marshes, tributaries, and raised areas of sand (known as geest) provide homes for a wealth of species. Alluvial hardwood forests, inland dunes, steep geest cliffs, expansive meadows, numerous bodies of water with reed beds, aggradations and marshlands all shape the landscape of the Elbe floodplain. Numerous plants and animals occur here, including many endangered species.

The beaver, which was on the verge of extinction a century ago, has returned and now lives along the entire length of the river. White storks are an everyday sight in the grasslands during the summer months. In addition to 200 species of breeding birds, barnacle geese and swans migrate through the area, resting and spending the winter.

The area also offers extensive cultural history to its visitors. A fine example is the Dessau-Wörlitz World Cultural Heritage Site, with its enchanting historical landscape gardens.

Flooding and dyke-building are also a part of the area's cultural history. After the Elbe flooded in August 2002, and again in June 2013, the need for dyke reconstruction became abundantly clear, and work is already underway at several locations in the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, including one site that is part of the large "Middle Elbe" nature conservation project, near Lödderitz, and another in the floodplain of the Mulde River near Priorau. The preservation and restoration of natural floodplains are essential aspects of modern flood protection and a very visible tool in raising public awareness of the Biosphere Reserve's role as a model for the careful use of our natural resources.

Lower Saxonian Elbe Valley Biosphere Reserve

In Lower Saxony, the semi-natural banks of the Elbe and its lowland meadows, with their many oxbow lakes and ponds, are an annual stopover for migratory birds, which rest here in large flocks. The Elbe valley floodplain in Lower Saxony is part of one of the most important staging points for birds migrating through northern Germany. Between October and March up to 100,000 barnacle geese and 3,000 whooper and Bewick's swans can be seen here. The adjacent fields of rapeseed and grain offer plenty of nutritious food – often to the chagrin of the farmers – at least until recently. An effective migratory bird management programme, funded in part by the EU, serves as an example of a successful approach to reconciling the interests of agriculture and nature conservation, as well as a practical demonstration of how a biosphere reserve works.

The interests of nature conservation and business have also been reconciled in other spheres, such as tourism. From hiking, fishing and horseback riding to boat trips, canoeing, and bicycle tours, the Elbe River Landscape has something to offer all year round. In addition to the preservation and maintenance of the natural and cultural heritage of the region, tourism also creates and preserves jobs, which is an important additional benefit. Increasing numbers of visitors have led to the development of an extensive array of services and information sources along tourist routes. These include bicycle rental and repair, pubs and restaurants typical of the region, accommodation in hotels, "hay hostels" and guesthouses catering for cyclists, taxi services, on-call buses, and many other services.

Middle Elbe Biosphere Reserve

The Middle Elbe Biosphere Reserve has been a part of the global network of Biosphere Reserves for 40 years. One reason for this, and an important one, is the presence of a truly charismatic animal known to everyone: the beaver. Or more precisely, the Elbe beaver. Roughly 1,200 beavers live in the Biosphere Reserve today – a highly gratifying result for beaver protection, which has a long tradition on the middle Elbe. Over the last few decades, the species has made a remarkable comeback from a small remnant population. Nevertheless, the Elbe beaver is still strictly protected under the provisions of the

Federal Nature Conservation Act. The beaver is native to a region that also encompasses the most important alluvial hardwood forests in Central Europe. The floodplain and its natural structures are an irreplaceable habitat for a variety of mammals, water birds, and insects. Fruit trees, riparian plants (e.g. a species of snow parsley *Cnidium dubium* and *Veronica longifolia*) and rare orchid species are found in this river landscape.

The Middle Elbe Biosphere Reserve is a managed cultural landscape that has been formed, designed, used, and altered by people in a very special way and for a long time: During the reign of Prince Leopold III, Friedrich Franz von Anhalt-Dessau (1740–1817), a cultural landscape modelled on English landscape gardens was created on the Elbe floodplain between Dessau and Wörlitz. The gardens were open to the public in keeping with the leitmotif of the Enlightenment: “to combine beauty and utility”. Avenues lined with fruit trees, solitary trees, dykes, castles, landscape parks and small-scale architecture have been preserved as a “Gesamtkunstwerk” (“integral artwork”). The cultural landscape created by the Prince has been a World Heritage Site since 2000. Two other Cultural World Heritage sites, including the Dessau Bauhaus and the Masters’ Houses, represent magnificent cultural achievements of past centuries. The thousand-year old city of Tangermünde, the cathedral and imperial city of Magdeburg, and the distinctive Jerichow Monastery are other outstanding examples of human achievement in the area.

Land under in the softwood floodplain between Dömitz and Rüterberg

Elbe River Landscape – Brandenburg Biosphere Reserve

As it crosses the North German Plain, the Elbe widens, meandering across the landscape, shaping and re-shaping its banks and forelands with the rhythm of its floods, year after year. The river level can fluctuate by more than seven metres. It forms sandbanks, flood channels and oxbow lakes. The gnarled remains of old riparian forests are also the work of the river. The different habitats along the Elbe and its tributaries (such as the Karthane, Stepenitz, and Löcknitz) are occupied by numerous plant and animal species, many of them quite rare. These species have adapted to extremely wet or extremely dry conditions, and in some cases to both. It is wonderful to see that the reconstruction of the Elbe dyke at Lenzen has created approximately 420 hectares of new floodplain!

During the breeding season, cranes can be seen and heard in a few locations, such as Rambower wetland. With just a little luck, visitors may catch a glimpse of a white stork: nowhere else in Germany can it be found in such high numbers! More than 30 pairs breed every year in the European Stork Village of Rühstädt. The feathered winter guests include several thousand whooper swans as well as an unusually high number of rough-legged buzzards, dabbling ducks and hen harriers. Huge flocks of bean geese and greater white-fronted





A flock of greylag geese

geese, Lapwings and cranes stop over during their migration. At any time of the year, a lucky visitor might see a white-tailed eagle. An almost contiguous belt of forest grows on the banks of the river, offering even more habitats for animals and plants. Visitors and locals alike have come to appreciate the abundance of nature more and more, the villages and towns of brick and half-timbered houses, the beauty of the landscape, and the diverse services for body and soul which this Biosphere Reserve has to offer.

Elbe River Landscape – Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania Biosphere Reserve

“A glacial valley in its entirety” is the motto of the Elbe River Landscape – Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania Biosphere Reserve. This refers to the various habitats in the Elbe valley, which have been formed by successive ice ages and are characterised today by wide floodplains and small tributaries, grasslands, riverbanks, inland dunes, and heaths. It also refers to the animals that live here permanently or stop over during their long migrations. Numerous rare plants are also found here. The sandy areas between the river groyne of the Elbe River and the regularly inundated floodplain near the small port city of Dömitz are home to such

species as grey hair-grass, thrift, annual vernal grass, spiked speedwell and Spanish catchfly. They also contain marshes with various willow species and black poplars – plants that occur sporadically and require very special conditions.

Another habitat worth a visit are the inland dunes, one of the geological and landscape features that make the Elbe River Landscape Biosphere Reserve so special. Located near Klein Schmölen, rising about 45 metres above sea level, 600 metres wide and about two kilometres long, the *Elbtaldüne* (“Elbe Valley Dune”) is the largest of the inland dunes. An educational trail takes visitors to the highest point, where they are treated to an impressive view of the Elbe valley. Dating back to the end of the last ice age, the partially barren inland dunes near Boizenburg-Gothmann still dominate the vast floodplain landscape.

Life on a large river like the Elbe has many advantages but, at the same time, people need to protect themselves from the dangers of flooding. In recent years, the consequences of flooding have become increasingly devastating as water does not respect borders. The open-air exhibition *EinFlussReich* (“RiverInfluence”) on Elbberg in Boizenburg explores the issue of flooding and how the people live with it: How and why does the Elbe flood? What experiences of flooding do the people on the Elbe have? How effective and useful are flood defences?



View of the Elbe
near Damnatz

Lower Saxony Elbe Valley

Picturesque villages and stork nests

A bicycle tour to see the storks (42 km) is a must during the summer months. From Hitzacker, take the Elbe ferry to Herrenhof. From there, proceed upstream past picturesque villages and numerous stork nests to the enchanted park of Wehningen Castle. After crossing over the river on the impressive Elbe Bridge at Dömitz, return to Hitzacker on the opposite bank, enjoying a wonderful view of the Elbe foreland. Winter activities include a visit to the Nature on the Elbe exhibition, in Biosphaerium Elbtalau in Bleckede, and an excursion to Neuhäuser Elbmarsch to see huge flocks of migrant birds.

Beavers, boats, and the Green Belt

- Monday:** Visit the city of Bleckede, Biosphaerium Elbtalau, and take a bicycle tour in the marshland between Radegast and Barförde.
- Tuesday:** Visit the Arche Centre in Neuhaus and the shifting dune in Stixe.
- Wednesday:** Hitzacker, with its Archaeological Centre, and experience the hike "Zwischen Weinberg und Wolfsschlucht" ("Between vineyards and Wolf Gorge").
- Thursday:** Exhibition at Dannenberg Market and take a bicycle tour through the picturesque villages of the Dannenberger Marsch.
- Friday:** Swimming and boating on Lake Gartow, climb Höhbeck, visit Nemitzer Heath.
- Saturday:** Bike tour on the Educational Border Trail, Schnackenburg Border Museum.

General information

Facts and figures

Location: on the Elbe between Schnackenburg and Lauenburg, 50 kilometres south-east of Hamburg in Lower Saxony

Area: 568 square kilometres

Elevation: 5 to 109 metres above sea level

History: Founded and recognized by UNESCO in 1997; since 2002, the Biosphere Reserve has also been protected under state law

Geographic features: Floodplains with wet grassland, oxbow lakes, and remnants of riparian forests; inland dunes with pine forests

Biosphere Reserve information

Biosphaerium Elbtalaue – Schloss Bleckede
Schlossstraße 10
21354 Bleckede
Phone: +49 5852 951414
info@biosphaerium.de
www.biosphaerium.de

Archezentrum Amt Neuhaus
Am Markt 5
19273 Neuhaus
Phone: +49 38841 759614
archezentrum@amt-neuhaus.de
www.archezentrum-amt-neuhaus.de

*Biosphärenreservatsverwaltung
Niedersächsische Elbtalaue*
Am Markt 1
29456 Hitzacker
Phone: +49 5862 96730
info@elbtalaue.niedersachsen.de
www.elbtalaue.niedersachsen.de

Accommodation

*Marketingbüro Wendland.Elbe,
Tourist-Info Hitzacker*
Phone: +49 5862 9697-0

Tourist-Info im Biosphaerium Elbtalaue, Bleckede
Phone: +49 5852 9514-0

Tourist-Info im Haus des Gastes, Amt Neuhaus
Phone: +49 38841 20747

*Accommodation provided by
Biosphere Reserve partners*
www.flusslandschaft-elbe.de

Elbe beaver



Books and maps

*Leben am Fluss: Am Lauf der Elbe –
von Lauenburg bis Schnackenburg*
ISBN 978-3-922639-20-6

*einFlussReich: UNESCO Biosphärenreservat
Flusslandschaft Elbe*
ISBN 978-3-944327-85-3

Elbe-Radweg, Teil 2
ISBN 978-3-85000-447-3

Biosphärenregion Elbtalaue-Wendland
ISBN 978-3990446157

Directions

By train to Lauenburg and Dannenberg.

By car via the B 5, B 191, B 195 and B 216.

**Biosphärenreservat
Niedersächsische
Elbtalaue**



In Luther's footsteps Visit the fisherman

Middle Elbe

With charm and biodiversity

Spend the morning in the Gartenreich Dessau-Wörlitz ("Garden Kingdom of Dessau-Wörlitz"), where, even today, visitors may learn how beauty is combined with utility. An excellent lunch is served in the kitchen building of Wörlitz Castle. Next on the itinerary is a visit to the beaver enclosure in Oranienbaum and the Auenhaus information pavilion of the Biosphere Reserve offices. In the summer, numerous butterflies and dragonflies can be admired in the outdoor area, at Lake Kühnau, and in the cottage garden that was built according to an historical plan. The Beaver cinema shows interesting film snippets of their active nocturnal life.

Monday: Take a cultural and culinary walk through the centre of Wittenberg, following the footsteps of Martin Luther. In the afternoon, travel on to Wörlitz to visit Wörlitzer Park.

Tuesday: City of Dessau-Roßlau: visit the World Heritage Sites of Park Luisium and Park Georgium in Dessau. Visit the Bauhaus and the Masters' Houses in Dessau. Have dinner at a restaurant in Dessau or, perhaps, watch a theatre production.

Wednesday: Kapenniederung: visit Auenhaus information pavilion, and follow the nature trail in Kapenniederung (about 2km). In the afternoon, walk in the alluvial forest around Lödderitz – the original area of the Biosphere Reserve – with guides from the nature conservation society. Finally, enjoy a small refreshment in the nearby Marie Gerda ship restaurant.

Thursday: Take a passenger ship to Magdeburg. Go on a bicycle tour to the Trogbrücke at Wasserstraßenkreuz (where the Mittellandkanal crosses the Elbe). Continue to Tangermünde.

Friday: Tour the historical old town of Tangermünde. In the afternoon, follow Bucher nature trail in Bucher Brack-Bölsdorfer Haken Nature Reserve (starting in Jerichow).

Saturday: Visit the House of Rivers in Havelberg; in the evening, experience an organ recital in Havelberg Cathedral.

Sunday: Take a boat ride on the Havel River to watch the Elbe beavers. Visit the fisherman: Havel zander for dinner.



General information

Facts and figures

Location: Elbe Valley lowlands and Elbe-Mulde lowlands in Saxony-Anhalt

Area: approximately 1,260 square kilometres

Elevation: 55 to 65 metres above sea level

History: Parts of the present Biosphere Reserve were recognised by UNESCO in 1979. The area was enlarged in 1988 through the inclusion of Gartenreich Dessau-Wörlitz cultural landscape, which was granted the status of a UNESCO Cultural World Heritage Site in 2000. In 1997, the area of the Biosphere Reserve was expanded to include the entire course of the Elbe River in Saxony-Anhalt and recognized by UNESCO as the Elbe River Landscape Biosphere Reserve.

Geographic features: river valleys, floodplain forests, oxbow lakes, inland dunes, wet grassland, historical cultural landscapes

Biosphere Reserve information

Biosphärenreservatsverwaltung Mittelbe
Kapenmühle, PF 1382 , 068 13 Dessau-Roßlau
Phone: +49 34904 4210
poststelle@mittelbe.mule.sachsen-anhalt.de
www.mittelbe.com
www.haus-der-fluesse.de
www.flusslandschaft-elbe.de www.gartenreich.net

Informationszentrum Auenhaus
Am Kapenschlösschen 3,
06785 Oranienbaum-Wörlitz
Phone: +49 34904 40631

Haus der Flüsse
Natura 2000 – Informationszentrum des
Biosphärenreservates Mittelbe
Elbstraße 2, 39539 Havelberg
Phone: +49 39387 609976
hausderfluesse@mittelbe.mule.sachsen-anhalt.de

Informationsstelle Magdeburg
(im Wissenschaftshafen)
Werner-Heisenberg-Straße 45
39106 Magdeburg
poststelle@mittelbe.mule.sachsen-anhalt.de

Accommodation

WelterbeRegion Anhalt-Dessau-Wittenberg e. V.
Phone: +49 3491 402610
www.anhalt-dessau-wittenberg.de

Magdeburger Tourismusverband
Elbe-Börde-Heide e. V.
Phone: +49 391 738790, fax: 730799
www.elbe-boerde-heide.de

Books and maps

Christian Antz (ed.) and Dana Trenkner
Reiseführer „Schöne Wilde Welt –
Das UNESCO Biosphärenreservat Mittelbe“
ISBN 978-3-899232-18-9

Thomas Weiss (Ed.)
Das Gartenreich Dessau-Wörlitz –
Kulturlandschaft an Elbe und Mulde
ISBN 978-3-93962 9-11-5

Radwanderkarte Dessau-Roßlau und Umgebung
ISBN 978-3-928765-28-2

Radwanderkarte Tourismusregion Wittenberg
ISBN 978-3-928765-30-5
Ernst Paul Dörfler

Biosphärenreservat Mittelbe – Reiseführer
ISBN 978-3-89920-832-0
Thomas Hinsche (photographs)

Lebensraum großer Strom – Tierwelten im
Biosphärenreservat Mittelbe
ISBN 978-3-89923-353-7

Directions

By train via Glöwen, Stendal, Magdeburg, Dessau-Roßlau and Wittenberg.

By car on the B 107, A 9 and A 2.



Elbe River Landscape – Brandenburg

White storks and the “Wunderblutkirche”

The bicycle tour begins in Wittenberge and passes interesting examples of industrial architecture. Following the dyke upstream, you stop every so often at the “nature stops”, then continue to the European Stork Village of Rühstädt. After visiting the white stork exhibition in the visitor centre, walk the historical trail in the village and/or stroll through the Schlosspark, stopping for lunch at one of the inns. On to Bad Wilsnack (“Adebar” tour) via Groß Lüben. Stop for ice cream and admire the “Wunderblutkirche” (“Church of the Holy Blood”). Rest and relax in Wilsnacker Therme, then back to Wittenberge (perhaps by train).

Beavers, felt workshop, and a dinner of Elbe lamb

Monday afternoon: Arrive at Lenzerwische, a guesthouse directly on the dyke. Stroll along the river.

Tuesday: Lenzerwische bicycle tour (25 km), visit to the granary of the manor in Eldenburg. To finish the day, drop in on the cranes and geese in the evening.

Wednesday: Visit Lenzen. There is so much to see and do: Lenzen Castle; the Nature Poetry Garden, and “Auenerlebnisgelände AuenReich”; the site of the (first large) dyke reconstruction; a felt workshop, and a former GDR shop (“Konsum”).

Thursday: Take a guided tour of Wittenberge, a boat trip on the Elbe, and visit the European Stork Village in Rühstädt. In the evening, enjoy the spa at Wilsnacker Therme.

Friday: Walk or cycle around Rambower wetland.

Saturday: Explore Klein Schmölen inland dune and visit Dömitz Fortress; in the evening, enjoy the cultural programme the Prignitz which to offer.

Sunday: Take the Elbe ferry to the borderland museum in Schnackenburg, walk in Gadower Forest, and enjoy the traditional “Elblamm” (“Elbe lamb”) for dinner.



General information

Storks near Rühstädt

Facts and figures

Location: the far north-west of Brandenburg state

Area: 533 square kilometres

Elevation: 54.5 to 13.5 metres above sea level

History: founded as a nature park in 1990.
Recognized as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 1997.

Geographic features: Elbe valley with water meadows, oxbow lakes, remnants of alluvial forests and valley sand areas



Biosphere Reserve information

Besucherzentrum Rühstädt

Neuhausstraße 9

19322 Rühstädt

Phone: +49 38791 980-25, fax: 6718

nabu@besucherzentrum-ruehstaedt.de

www.besucherzentrum-ruehstaedt.de

Besucherzentrum Burg Lenzen

Burgstraße 3

19309 Lenzen

Phone: +49 38792 5078100 or 1221,

fax: 80673

info@burg-lenzen.de

www.burg-lenzen.de

Books and maps

Elisabeth von Falkenhausen

Die Prignitz entdecken

ISBN 978-3-930388-27-1

Ernst-Paul Dörfler

Wunder der Elbe (Marvels of the Elbe River)

ISBN 978-3-7977-0454-2

Topografische Freizeitkarte Biosphärenreservat

Flusslandschaft Elbe-Brandenburg

ISBN 978-3-7490-4154-1

Directions

By train: Train stations Glöwen, Bad Wilsnack, Wittenberge, and Karstädt. Continue by bike or public transport (PlusBus) to Lenzen.

Administration

Biosphärenreservat Flusslandschaft

Elbe-Brandenburg

Neuhausstraße 9

19322 Rühstädt

Phone: +49 38791 98010, fax: 98011

br-flusslandschaft-elbe@lfu.brandenburg.de

www.elbe-brandenburg-biosphaerenreservat.de

Accommodation

Tourismusverband Prignitz e. V.

Großer Markt 4

19348 Perleberg

Phone: +49 3876 30741920, fax: 30741929

info@dieprignitz.de

www.dieprignitz.de

Dyke reconstruction in the large-scale nature conservation project in the Elbe Valley at Lenzen

**Biosphärenreservat
Flusslandschaft
Elbe-Brandenburg**





Elbe River Landscape – Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania

From village republic to fortified city

In good weather, visitors can enjoy a panoramic view of the river landscape from the observation tower in Rüterberg. Recommended activities include a hike through the “Dorfrepublik” (“village republic”), to the clay pit, and along the Green Belt on the former “Kolonnenweg” and the Elbe dyke. A visit to the Hotel Dömitzer Hafen is a good idea, and not just for lunch: short harbour tours and a boat trip on the Elbe are also on offer here. The educational dune trail leads from Klein Schmölen to the largest inland dune on the Elbe River. “Im Grunde” (“At Bottom”) – the innovative exhibition at the Information Centre in the Dömitz Fortress – provides profound insights into the foundation of our lives. Whatever the time of year, the multimedia show gets to the bottom of human actions and needs.

Hike along the dyke and cycle through stork country

- Monday:** Visit the open-air exhibition “Ein-FlussReich” (“RiverInFluence”) with a panoramic view from Elwkieker in Boizenburg-Vier. Follow this with a circular walk in Vierwald.
- Tuesday:** Bicycle tour through stork country from the Boizenburger Weidenschneck along the dyke trail to Teldau.
- Wednesday:** Boizenburg Tile Museum, guided tour of the old town, hike on the Swan Trail; visit Bollenberg, an inland dune near Gothmann.
- Thursday:** Cycle tour from Brahlstorf railway station to Dammereez English landscape park and the “Storkenkate” in Preten.
- Friday:** Lübtheen museum of local history; “Rundlingsdorf” (medieval village with a circular configuration) Vielank and its brewery; Alt Jabel forest lido; historical forest farm and forest museum in Kaliß.
- Saturday:** Visit Blücher church tower with its exhibition and observation platform high above the river landscape; take a bicycle tour around Blücher polder, including side trips to partner businesses (goat farm, pick-your-own organic fruit, ceramics workshop).
- Sunday:** Dömitz Fortress, dyke walk along the Elbe or the Müritz-Elde canal, boat trip on the Elbe.

General information

The observation towers at Elwkieker in Boizenburg or in Rüterberg provide beautiful panoramic views of the Elbe River landscape

Facts and figures

Location: south-western Mecklenburg, right bank of the Elbe River, between Boizenburg and Dömitz

Area: 461 square kilometres

Elevation: 6 to 87 metres above sea level

History: recognized as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 1997 and protected as a Biosphere Reserve under national law since 2015.

Landscape types: extensive floodplain including tributaries, wet grassland, Elbe banks and inland dunes

Biosphere Reserve information

Biosphärenreservatsamt Schaalsee-Elbe
Wittenburger Chaussee 13
19246 Zarrentin am Schaalsee
Phone: +49 38851 302-0
poststelle@bra-schelb.mvnet.de
www.elbetal-mv.de

Freiluftausstellung EinFlussReich
Elbberg 8–9
19258 Boizenburg-Vier
www.elbetal-mv.de

Informationszentrum auf der Festung Dömitz
Auf der Festung
319303 Dömitz
www.festung-doemitz-museum

Förderverein Biosphäre Elbe MV e. V.
Am Elbberg 8–9
19258 Boizenburg/Elbe
foerdereverein@biosphaere-elbe.de
www.biosphaere-elbe.de

Accommodation

Tourismusverband Mecklenburg-Schwerin e. V.
Puschkinstr. 44/Rathaus
19055 Schwerin
Phone: +49 385 59189875
info@mecklenburg-schwerin.de
www.mecklenburg-schwerin.de

*Accommodation provided by
Biosphere Reserve partners*
www.flusslandschaft-elbe.de

Maps

Rad- und Wanderkarte Elbetal
(West/East map)
ISBN 978-3-932115-07-3 and
978-3-932115-06-6

Directions

By train: Boizenburg/Elbe
(www.fahrtziel-natur.de), Brahlstorf, Pritzler.

By car via the A 24, B 5, B 191 and B 195.

Observing nature with a ranger on an Elbe River boat trip



**Biosphärenreservat
Flusslandschaft Elbe-
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern**



A serene landscape photograph of a lake. In the foreground, several weathered, dead tree trunks stand vertically in the water. The water is calm, reflecting the sky and the surrounding greenery. In the middle ground, there are several lily pads floating on the water's surface. The background is dominated by a dense, lush forest of tall trees, likely birches, under a clear blue sky. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

UNESCO
Biosphere Reserve
Schorfheide-Chorin



Landscape full of life

A quiet, sparsely populated land – and yet full of life! For centuries, small-scale and often extensive human use has formed this landscape. This management has allowed a cultural landscape to grow, which is characterized by its diversity. White-tailed eagle, osprey and lesser spotted eagle circle the skies. Adder, smooth snake and the European fire-bellied toad live here. Numerous lakes, marshes and alder carr woodlands dominate the landscape, providing room for rare plants and animals that are long gone from elsewhere, such as wild rosemary or European tree frog. Preserving this biodiversity is one of the key responsibilities of biosphere reserves in Germany. The Biosphere reserve is also characterized by its ancient lowland beech forests. One of its core zones, the “Grumsin” beech forest, is since more than 30 years developing towards a primeval forest. Since 2011, the Grumsin is a component part of the World Natural Heritage site “Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe”.

The variety of species that exist even today in the Biosphere reserve is also fostered by the adapted agricultural use, in particular organic farming. Also the cooperation with many local businesses that support the aims of the Biosphere reserve contributes to the quality of the landscape.



Schorfheide-Chorin gives its seal of approval to environmentally-sound products and services, thus helping to strengthen regional economic cycles. The certified products are predominantly made from environmentally friendly raw materials from the biosphere reserve – whether it is fruits or other products from agriculture and forestry, building craft, or gastronomic offers. Speaking of food, the Biosphere Reserve puts a lot of energy into the preservation of old fruit and vegetable varieties – which, of course, visitors can sample and purchase, for example in “Ökodorf Brodowin”.

Left: lakes dominate the landscape

Right: resting damselfly (Coenagrion)



The old beech forests are characteristic of the landscape: home to eagles, cranes and red deer.

Cloister and boat lift

Visitors arrive in Chorin by train, bike or car. Visit the famous Cistercian monastery with an exhibition and exciting guided tours. Stop at the “Klosterschänke” (Cloister Tavern) with its regional dishes. On summer afternoons, concerts are often held in the large monastery church, which is open to the inner courtyard. “Ökodorf Brodowin” is nearby, with a farm shop and restaurant, a dairy with cheese production, farm tours and various hiking opportunities.

Then on to Rummelsberg with wonderful views over lakes and forests. Finish in Niederfinow boat lift on the Oder-Havel Canal: engineered in 1930 and 2019. A suitable rail connection is available in Niederfinow for the return journey.

Wildlife Park, Werbellin Lake and the forest

Monday: arrive in Groß Schönebeck. Explore Schorfheide Wildlife Park: wolf, elk, wild horses, otters, and old breeds of domestic pets.

Tuesday: hike to “Kaisergrund” and Hubertusstock hunting lodge.

Wednesday: boat across Werbellin Lake. In Joachimsthal a walk through the town and visit the Schinkel church and the BIORAMA observation tower. To Althüttendorf to the nature observation point at the lake.

Thursday: bicycle trip or walk via Glambeck to Parlow (“Am Speicher” and exhibition in the attic).

Friday: by “Biberbus” (“beaver bus”) from Angermünde to Blumberger Mühle nature centre with its terrapin enclosure, playground, and maze. For lunch there is a burger made with regional Uckermark ingredients.

Saturday: bicycle trip from Angermünde to the World Heritage information point in Altkündendorf. Walk through Grumsin beech forest – part of the UNESCO World Natural Heritage Site “Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions in Europe”. From there to Groß-Ziethen and the Geopark Information Centre.

Sunday: trip around Oberucker Lake.

General information

Facts and figures

Location: 80 kilometres north of Berlin in the Uckermark (Brandenburg)

Area: 1,300 square kilometres

Elevation: 2 to 139 metres

History: founded and recognised by UNESCO in 1990

Landscape types: open hilly landscape, forests, outwash plain, glacial valleys, moors, lakes and kettle holes

Biosphere Reserve information

Biosphärenreservatsverwaltung
Hoher Steinweg 5–6
16278 Angermünde
Phone: +49 3331 3654-0, Fax -10
www.schorfheide-chorin-biosphaerenreservat.de

Schorfheide-Info Joachimsthal
Töpferstraße 1
16247 Joachimsthal
Phone: +49 33361 64646
br-joachimsthal@web.de

NABU-Naturerlebniszentrum Blumberger Mühle
Blumberger Mühle 2
16278 Angermünde
Phone: +49 3331 2604-0
www.blumberger-muehle.nabu.de

Accommodation & tourist info

TMU Tourismus Marketing Uckermark GmbH
Stettiner Straße 19
17291 Prenzlau
Phone: +49 3984 835883, Fax 835885
info@tourismus-uckermark.de
www.tourismus-uckermark.de

*WITO Wirtschafts- und
Tourismusentwicklungsgesellschaft GmbH*
Alfred-Nobel-Str. 1
16225 Eberswalde
Phone: +49 3334 59100
www.wito-barnim.de



Books and maps

Beate Blahy und Martin Flade
*Grumsin – Weltnaturerbe im Biosphärenreservat
Schorfheide-Chorin* (2017)
Verlag Natur+Text GmbH, Rangsdorf
ISBN 978-3-942062-20-6

Flade, M., H. Plachter, R. Schmidt & A. Werner
(eds, 2006): *Nature Conservation in Agricultural
Ecosystems. Results of the Schorfheide-Chorin
Research Project.*
Quelle & Meyer, Wiebelsheim (720 p.)

Ministerium f. Ländliche Entwicklung, Umwelt u.
Landwirtschaft des Landes Brandenburg (Hrsg.)
Regionaltypisches Bauen und Sanieren (2019)

Ministerium für Ländliche Entwicklung, Umwelt
und Landwirtschaft (Hrsg.)
Praxishandbuch – Naturschutz im Buchenwald

Ministerium für Umwelt, Gesundheit und
Verbraucherschutz (Hrsg.)
*Wanderungen im Weltnaturerbe Buchenwald
Grumsin*

UNESCO-Club Joachimsthal (Hrsg.)
*30 Jahre UNESCO-Biosphärenreservat Schorfheide-
Chorin – Innenansichten* (2020)

Directions

By train: via Berlin to Eberswalde, Templin,
or Angermünde.

By car: A 11 from Berliner Ring towards Prenzlau/
Szczecin, B 109, L 100 after Templin/Prenzlau.





UNESCO
Biosphere Reserve
Spreewald



Where the forest is reflected in the water...

The landscape of the Spreewald is crossed by a finely structured network of streams, which are considered the lifeblood of the area. They were created over 10,000 years ago, after the last ice age. Today the Spreewald barges quietly carry their loads, dragonflies flit over the water and, with a little luck, you can see a grass snake swimming. The sun shines through the canopy of leaves – the Spreewald often seems like an enchanted forest. Species live here that are threatened or already extinct elsewhere. There are a total of 81 breeding pairs of white stork in many locations. Black storks, cranes, white-tailed eagles, and ospreys prefer the quiet and damp forests; they feed in the rich fishing waters and on the wet meadows. Plus, Spreewald is also a habitat for butterflies. In the vast alder swamps and riparian forests, 937 species of butterflies and moths have been recorded – amazing but true. Many of them there are not found anywhere else in Germany, such as scarlet tiger moth or eyed hawk-moth.



At the same time, traditions, lifestyles and working methods are still closely linked to the landscape, an important characteristic of every biosphere reserve. The Spreewald was dominated by agriculture for centuries, but the small farmsteads are unprofitable under current conditions. The Biosphere Reserve has therefore initiated the establishment of a community foundation for the Spreewald cultural landscape. It promotes sustainable development and preservation of the man-made cultural and natural landscape of the Spreewald by supporting farmers active in landscape management measures or the cultivation of traditional crops such as the Spreewald horseradish. Furthermore, Spreewald is the organic farming Biosphere Reserve – 70% of the fields and meadows are farmed according to organic guidelines, so healthy milk and beef are produced. There are numerous ways for the visitor to discover Spreewald, such by traditional barge, but by canoe or bicycle are other possibilities for exploring the Biosphere Reserve.

Left: stream in
Spreewald Biosphere
Reserve

Right: Spreewald
specialties from
traditional crops



Fruit trees and lunch with linseed oil

The dispersed settlement of Burg in Oberspreewald provides manifold Spreewald impressions. On this side of the Alps you will find no other such collection of log houses. Here you can experience the typical Spreewald in a few hours. It is particularly attractive in spring, when the fruit trees and marsh marigolds bloom. From Waldschlösschen barge harbour you can take a river tour. Like a Venetian gondola, a Spreewald barge is punted by a boatman. After about two hours Kannomühle is reached. A footpath leads back into the centre of Burg. After a lunch of curd cheese and linseed oil, visit Schlossberghof Biosphere Reserve information centre with its medicinal and aromatic plant garden. After lunch with curd and linseed oil, "Kräuterey" herb garden with the farm shop of the counselling workshop work Hand in Hand GmbH.

An invitation to a Spreewald gherkin test

Monday: Start with a visit to the Schlossberghof in Burg. Here you will find the herb shop, the herb garden, and the Spreewald Biosphere Reserve exhibition.

Tuesday: Visit the "Haus für Mensch und Natur in Lübbenau". Then natural history bicycle tour in the inner Oberspreewald with the Spreewald rangers. Finally, stroll through the historic old town.

Wednesday: Spreewald gherkin test in Rabe canning factory in Boblitz. Then by bike or on foot via Raddusch to Leipe. Fish with Spreewald sauce for lunch. Later, trace the life of the Sorbs/Wends in Lehde open-air museum.

Thursday: Start by "Going underwater" at the Old Mill in Schlepzig. Afterwards explore the streams of the Unterspreewald by paddle boat. Swim in Köthener lake.

Friday: Cycle right around Straupitz. Have a look in the smock windmill!

Saturday: Go with the park rangers to the observation tower on Kockrowsberg Polder to look out for rare waterfowl. Visit the Regional Museum in Lübben.

General information

Facts and figures

Location: about 100 kilometres south-east of Berlin in south Brandenburg

Area: 475 square kilometres

Elevation: 50 to 144 metres

History: founded in 1990, recognised as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 1991

Landscape types: marsh, swamp and floodplain forests, bogs, swamps and reedbeds, semi-natural wet and dry meadows

Biosphere Reserve information

*Haus für Mensch und Natur
Informationszentrum und
Biosphärenreservatsverwaltung*
Schulstraße 9
03222 Lübbenau
Phone: +49 3542 8921-0, fax -40
br-spreewald@lfu.brandenburg.de
www.spreewald-biosphaerenreservat.de

Informationszentrum Schlossberghof Burg
Byhleguhrer Straße 17
03096 Burg
Phone: +49 35603 691-0, fax -22
br-spreewald@lugv.brandenburg.de

Informationszentrum Alte Mühle Schlepzig
Dorfstraße 52
15910 Schlepzig
Phone: +49 35472 276,
fax +49 35472 648-99
br-spreewald@lugv.brandenburg.de

Accommodation

Tourismusverband Spreewald
Lindenstraße 1
OT Raddusch
03226 Vetschau/Spreewald
Phone: +49 35433 72299, fax 72228
tourismus@spreewald.de
www.spreewald.de

Books and maps

*Kulturführer Spreewald – Spreewälder stellen
ihre Heimat vor*
ISBN 978-3-927496-30-9

*Wander- und Naturführer Biosphärenreservat
Spreewald*
ISBN 978-3-933135-04-9

Topographical map of Unterspreewald
ISBN 978-3-7490-4022-3

Topographical map of Oberspreewald
ISBN 978-3-7490-4013-1

Directions

By train: from Berlin or Cottbus to Lübben, Lübbenau, Raddusch or Vetschau.

By car: A 13 to Freiwalde, Lübbenau, or Vetschau.



A girl in traditional Spreewald costume



A scenic view of a pond with lily pads and reeds, surrounded by a dense forest under a clear blue sky. The pond is filled with numerous green lily pads and some small white flowers. The water is dark blue and reflects the surrounding greenery. The background is a thick forest of various trees, including tall pines and deciduous trees. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

UNESCO
Biosphere Reserve

Upper Lausitz Heath
and Pond Landscape



Carp ponds in the heathland

More than 350 ponds nestling in dune forests, wet meadows, unimproved fields, floodplains and heaths – an extraordinary diversity of habitats for rare plants and animals can be found in eastern Germany. The Upper Lausitz Heath and Pond Landscape has developed as a result of centuries of human habitation. Slavic settlers arrived here after 600 AD and they called this large area covered by swamps and forests “Łužica” (swampland), which evolved into “Lausitz”. The first recorded evidence of the system of fish ponds dates back to 1248. In the 15th and 16th centuries the fish ponds were already an important business. In the early 18th century a highly productive fish farming business had developed.

The continuation of semi-natural pond management for the production of carp and other edible fish is paramount for the region. Ideally, production should be based on guidelines for organic output, as has already been done in the “Upper Lusatian Organic Carp” project. The conditions for ecological management of the carp in Upper Lausitz are met Thanks to its certification as a “protected geographical indication of origin”.



The fishermen make sure there is a suitable population so that the carp can mainly use the naturally occurring organisms in the water and need only a small amount of organically produced grains to supplement their diet. This centuries-old tradition of carp production lives on again in this new and sustainable manner.

The work of the Upper Lausitz Heath and Pond Landscape Biosphere Reserve Management doesn't just focus on pond management; there is also a renaissance of old grain varieties such as “hunter's North German champagne rye” or “old Pomeranian block head wheat”. Reduced fertilizer and herbicide use creates the best conditions in arable fields for arable weeds to have a chance of survival, e.g. the corn-cockle. Long transportation is avoided because the grain is ground in a regional mill and processed by bakeries in the Biosphere Reserve, which shortens the distance from the field to the customer.

Left: Galgenteich
("Gallows Pond")
at Crosta

Right: flowering
corn-cockle
(*Agrostemma githago*)



Autumn is harvest time – fishermen from Klitten fish farm harvesting fish from Heuteich pond (Zimpel pond group)

Fishermen and white-tailed eagles

Visit the “Haus der Tausend Teiche” information centre at Wartha in the centre of the Upper Lausitz Heath and Pond Landscape Biosphere Reserve. Visit the “carp breeding in the changing four seasons” exhibition with its giant aquarium and outdoor water adventure area. Lunch with typical regional dishes. Then walk along the “Guttauer ponds and lake Olbasee” nature trail (the Olbasee is a flooded former lignite mine, which today offers camping and bathing), and after to the school museum in Wartha, with dinner at the “Eisvogel” (“Kingfisher”).

Alternatively, start the morning with our bike ride along the white-tailed eagle trail. The trip goes to Mücka via Weigersdorf and Kreba-Neudorf passing many information points and observation towers. From there to Klitten on Bärwalder Lake (this is also a former open pit). After a good rest and refreshment on the marina it's on to Uhyst, Mönau, Lieske, Neudorf/Spree and Halbbendorf/Spree and then Lömischau. Stop here for dinner in the restaurant “Gute Laune” and then back to Wartha.

“Gute Laune” and the Ornithological Station

Monday: Excursion to the wolf area, in the afternoon visit the “Schrotholzhaus” settlement in Erlichthof Rietschen and the farmstead museum. Also visit the wolf exhibition there, dinner in the Erlichthofsiedlung.

Tuesday: “Haus der Tausend Teiche” (“House of a thousand ponds”), “Guttauer ponds and Olbasee” nature trail. Lunch in “Gute Laune” restaurant with Lömischau fish from Lausitz recipes. Afterwards Wartha School Museum

Wednesday: Sightseeing in Bautzen: old town, Ortenburg, old waterworks, City Museum.

Thursday: Milkel Baroque castle with park tour. Then visit Kleinholscha fish farm, Saxony Bird Observatory and the Nature Conservation Station, visit the Baroque castle.

Friday: Visit Görlitz. Conservation zoo, historic old town, parks and Landeskronen (Hausberg).

Saturday: Visit Pückler castle and Muskauer Park (UNESCO World Heritage Site). Then Krauschwitz adventure pool.

Sunday: To the Upper Lausitz mountains. Magnificent view from the heights. Food in a cosy mountain lodge (Baude Lausitzblick, Monumentberg).

General information

Facts and figures

Location: 60 kilometres north-east of Dresden in Upper Lausitz (Saxony)

Area: 301 square kilometres

Elevation: 117 to 176 metres

History: the former landscape protection area was designated as a Biosphere Reserve in 1994 and recognised by UNESCO in 1996.

Landscape types: dune forests, floodplains, rivers, reedbeds, fresh and wet meadows, fields, bogs, dry grasslands, wet and dry heaths, and more than 350 ponds

Biosphere Reserve information

Biosphärenreservatsverwaltung
Warthaer Dorfstraße 29
02694 Malschwitz OT Wartha
Phone: +49 35932 365-0, fax -50
poststelle.sbs-broht@smul.sachsen.de
www.biosphärenreservat-oberlausitz.de

HAUS DER TAUSEND TEICHE
Warthaer Dorfstraße 29
02694 Malschwitz OT Wartha
Phone: +49 35932 3656-0, fax -61
tausendteichehaus.sbs@smul.sachsen.de
www.haus-der-tausend-teiche.de

Accommodation

Biosphärenreservatspartner
www.biosphärenreservat-oberlausitz.de

Verein zur Entwicklung der Oberlausitzer Heide- und Teichlandschaft e. V.
Gutsstraße 4c, 02699 Königswartha
Phone: +49 35931 21220
info@oberlausitz-heide.de
www.oberlausitz-heide.de

Maps and information

Cycling and hiking map of Oberlausitzer Heide- und Teichlandschaft (Publicpress-Verlag)
Scale 1:50.000, ISBN 978-3-7473-0481-5

Cycling and hiking map of Oberlausitzer Heide- und Teichlandschaft und Umgebung (Verlag Dr. Barthel)
Scale 1:50.000, ISBN 978-3-89591-147-7

Further information can be found at:
www.biosphärenreservat-oberlausitz.de

Directions

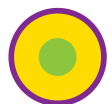
By train: to Bautzen, continue with bus line R 106 to Gutttau or Wartha.

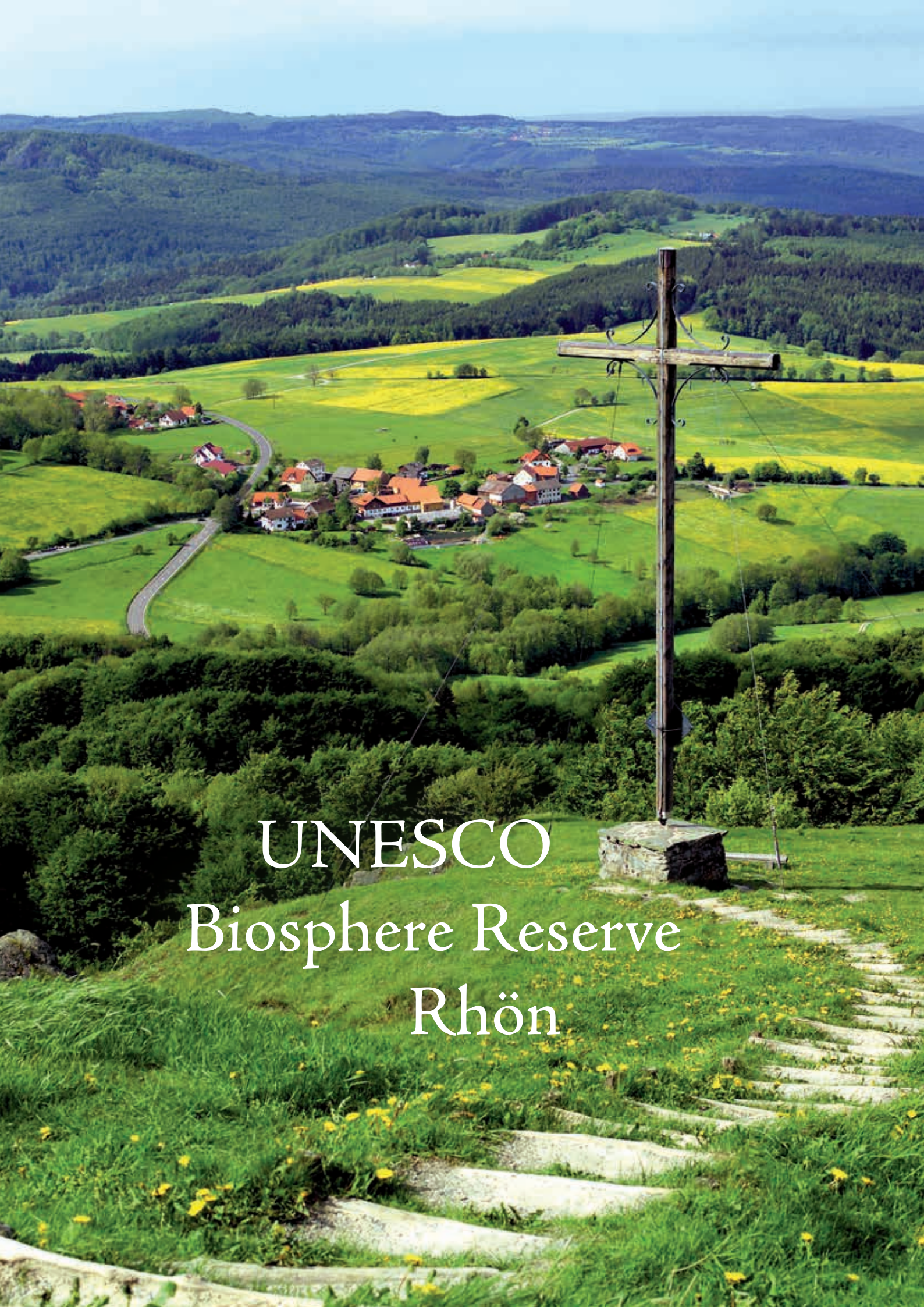
By bus: line R106 Bautzen-Niesky-Bautzen to Gutttau or Wartha.

By car: A 4 exit for Bautzen-Ost B 156 towards Weißwasser, at Stausee Bautzen turn right towards Niesky (S 109), in Gutttau turn left to Lömischau and Wartha.



Common heather
(*Calluna vulgaris*)





UNESCO
Biosphere Reserve
Rhön



A Land of vast distances

Each biosphere reserve is unique and distinctive in its geographic features, its flora and fauna, and the economic and cultural influence of human communities. Rhön Biosphere Reserve is remarkable in that it extends across the borders of three German states – Bavaria, Hesse, and Thuringia. Together, these three states have preserved and maintained an unparalleled cultural landscape in the heartland of Germany that has been shaped over the centuries by farming, haymaking, and grazing.

The roughly 100 endangered species of wild animals and plants that have found refuge here are particularly in need of protection. Two examples may serve to illustrate the diversity that characterizes the Rhön Biosphere Reserve: 40 different species of orchids and some 3,000 varieties of mushrooms have been identified here. This diversity reflects the wide range of geographic features in the region: from raised bogs, semi-natural streams, granite boulder fields, and hedgerows to extensively used meadows and pastures, and semi-natural deciduous forests.



Thanks to close cooperation with partners in the agricultural and gastronomic sectors, the entire Rhön Biosphere Reserve offers a programme of walks, hikes, sports and recreation in nature that appeals to all of the senses. Care to try something? Take your pick: tender steaks from the Rhöner Weideochsen, Rhöner apple juice and fruit spirits, bread with caraway seeds, trout, Rhön mutton chops, “Zwiebelploatz” (onion cake), and “Rhön Spatzeklöß” (bread dumplings) are on offer for appreciative guests who value organic quality. To drink there is organic wine or organic beer from the Biosphere Reserve, just as you like it!

Another special feature of the Rhön: since 2014, the biosphere reserve, where you can still experience a breathtaking starry sky, has held the title of International Star Park. With this designation by the Dark Sky Association, the region has committed itself to protecting the existing natural night landscapes by taking measures to reduce light pollution.

Left: View of
Schwarzerden

Right: Cattle grazing
on the prominent
and fabled Milseburg
Mountain, a phonolite



Propstei Zella
Information Centre
and seat of Thuringian
Administrative Office

Raised bogs, wide vistas, fine food and beverages

The hiking tour begins at Birxgraben car park in the Ulstertal (Ulster Valley) near Seiferts. It leads up to the Rhön Highlands and across expansive cattle pastures to the tri-state triangle of Bavaria, Hesse, and Thuringia. The trail proceeds through a park-like landscape to Schwarze Moor (Black Bog) car park. Rare animal and plant species can be encountered along the nature trail laid out through the bog, a raised boardwalk some two kilometres long. Schwarze Moor is the best preserved and still growing raised bog in all the low mountain ranges in Germany. The association "Verein Naturpark und Biosphärenreservat Bayerische Rhön e.V." offers guided tours by appointment. Afterwards, apple beer, lamb bratwurst, and other regional specialities are served in the Sennhütte. Returning to Schwarzes Moor car park, the tour then takes

the visitor north to Grabenberg, where remnants of the former GDR border fortifications serve as reminders of the past.

The next destination is "Gesunde Dorf" (spa village) Frankenheim, the highest settlement in the Rhön, where visitors can walk on a Barefoot Panorama Trail and visit a medicinal plant garden. Behind this mountain village, meadows and pastures extend all the way up to Ellenbogen, from where visitors may enjoy a magnificent view of the Ulster Valley. The Thüringer Rhönhaus or Eisenacher Haus hotel tempt hikers to stop, offering excellent cuisine featuring Rhön specialities. The route leads south-west along Sophienstraße and back to the starting point. The hike comes to an end with a refreshing glass of eco-beer from the Rhön and other delicacies at the "Schaukelerei" (wine press house) in Seiferts.

From early September to early December, those who aren't tired out yet can watch the work going on in the wine press and the cellar next door – or even pitch in themselves. A number of events associated with the processing of fallen fruit also take place at this time of year.

Culture, interesting facts and hiking

Monday: Visit the Information Centre “Haus der Lange Rhön” in Oberelsbach and see the exhibition. Then take a hike through the orchard village of Hausen – the model community of the Biosphere Reserve. Who can identify the most types of fruit?

Tuesday: Visit the sky showplace in Danzwiesen, from there hike to the mystical Milseburg (a former stronghold of the Celts). Visit the museum village of Tann or the open-air museum in Fladungen. In the evening, get a taste of the landscape – with hearty fare prepared from regional products.

Wednesday: Culture day. Visit medieval Kirchengurg in Ostheim and the local organ museum. Alternatively, go on an all-day excursion to the baroque city of Fulda, or to Bad Kissingen or Meiningen and a visit to the South Thuringian State Theatre.

Thursday: Visit the Haus der Schwarzen Berge Information Centre in Oberbach and its cafeteria and regional produce shop, followed by a hike to the Kreuzberg for a tour of the in-house brewery and a glass of monastery beer!

Friday: Hike through Ibengarten and visit Dermbach museum of local history. Interesting attractions include Propstei Zella Information Centre and the baroque churches in Zella and Dermbach, as well as a number of fortified churches like the one in Kaltensundheim. Next on the programme is a visit to Merkers mine and crystal grotto. Potash used to be mined here, but now the mine serves as an in-situ exhibition of its past history.

Saturday: Shop for souvenirs and stop for food and drink at the Rhönhöfe in Kaltensundheim. Hike to the former German-German border to visit the Point Alpha memorial near Geisa. Afterwards, visit the *Stiftskirche* (collegiate church) in Rasdorf. Festivals, folk, and cultural events take place in the Rhön nearly every weekend. Special highlights are the Mardi Gras celebration in February and the local fairs in the autumn. The programme also includes village anniversary festivals, folk-dancing events, club events, wine and beer festivals, and much more.

Sunday: A taste of freedom in the land of vast distances: visitors can fly over the Rhön in a glider or take in the scenery during a sight-seeing flight in a small propeller plane. Follow this with a visit to the glider museum and the Radome. An eventful week comes to an end with an afternoon of relaxation for body and mind at one of the spas.

View from Geba
Mountain



General information

Facts and figures

Location: Tri-state region of Bavaria, Hesse, and Thuringia

Area: 2,433 square kilometres

Elevation: 180 to 950 metres above sea level

History: Recognized by UNESCO in 1991.
2014: Designation as International Star Park by the IDA (International Dark Sky Association).

Geographic features: Uplands with prominent cones and crests, wide floodplains, raised bogs, meadows and pastures, semi-natural forests

Biosphere Reserve information

www.biosphaerenreservat-rhoen.de
www.rhoen.de

Biosphärenzentrum Haus der Schwarzen Berge
Rhönstraße 97
97772 Wildflecken-Oberbach
Phone: +49 9749 9122-0, fax: -33
infozentrum@rhoen.de

Biosphärenzentrum Haus der Langen Rhön
Unterelsbacher Straße 4
97656 Oberelsbach
Phone: +49 9774 9102-60, fax: -70
info@nbr-rhoen.de

Biosphären-Infozentrum Propstei Zella
Goethestraße 1
36466 Dermbach OT Zella/Rhön
Phone: +49 36964 93510
propsteizella@web.de

Biosphären-Infozentrum Hilders
Marienstraße 13
36115 Hilders
Phone: +49 661 6006 7800
info@br-rhoen.de

Black head and white legs – the Rhön sheep is our best landscape gardener.



Biosphärenreservatsverwaltungen

*Bayerische Verwaltungsstelle
Biosphärenreservat Rhön
Regierung von Unterfranken
Oberwaldbehringer Straße 4
97656 Oberelsbach
Phone: +49 931 380-1665 or -1664,
fax: -2953
brrhoen@reg-ufr.bayern.de*

*Hessische Verwaltungsstelle
Biosphärenreservat Rhön
Marienstraße 13
36115 Hilders
Phone: +49 661 6006 7800
info@br-rhoen.de*

*Thüringer Verwaltungsstelle
Biosphärenreservat Rhön
Goethestraße 1
36466 Dermbach OT Zella/Rhön
Phone: +49 361 573923330, fax: -55
poststelle.rhoen@nnl.thueringen.de*

Accommodation

*Biosphärenzentrum Haus der Schwarzen Berge
Rhönstraße 97
97772 Wildflecken-Oberbach
Phone: +49 9749 9122-0, fax: -33
infozentrum@rhoen.de*

*Kompetenzzentrum Wasserkuppe
Betreiber: Rhön GmbH
Wasserkuppe 1
36129 Gersfeld
Phone: +49 6654 91834-0
wasserkuppe@rhoen.de*

*Rhönforum e. V.
Marktplatz 29
36419 Geisa
Phone: +49 36967 594-83, fax: -84
info@thueringerrhoen.de*

Books and maps (selection)

*Hiking maps: Wanderkarte Naturpark Rhön
ISBN 978-3-86116-068-7*

*Hiking maps: Wanderkarte Hohe Rhön
ISBN 978-3-86116-145-5*

Hiking guides published by Dehler:

*Der Hoehrhöner
ISBN 978-3-00025704-9*

*Extratouren
ISBN 978-3-00-023493-4*

*Rund um die Wasserkuppe
ISBN 978-3-9813032-0-9*

*Hessisches Kegelspiel
ISBN 978-3-9813032-2-3*

*Rund um Fulda (Around Fulda)
ISBN 978-3-9813032-1-6*

*Thüringische Rhön
ISBN 978-3-9815570-5-3*

*Schwarze Berge & Sinnthal
ISBN 978-3-9813032-5-4*

Directions

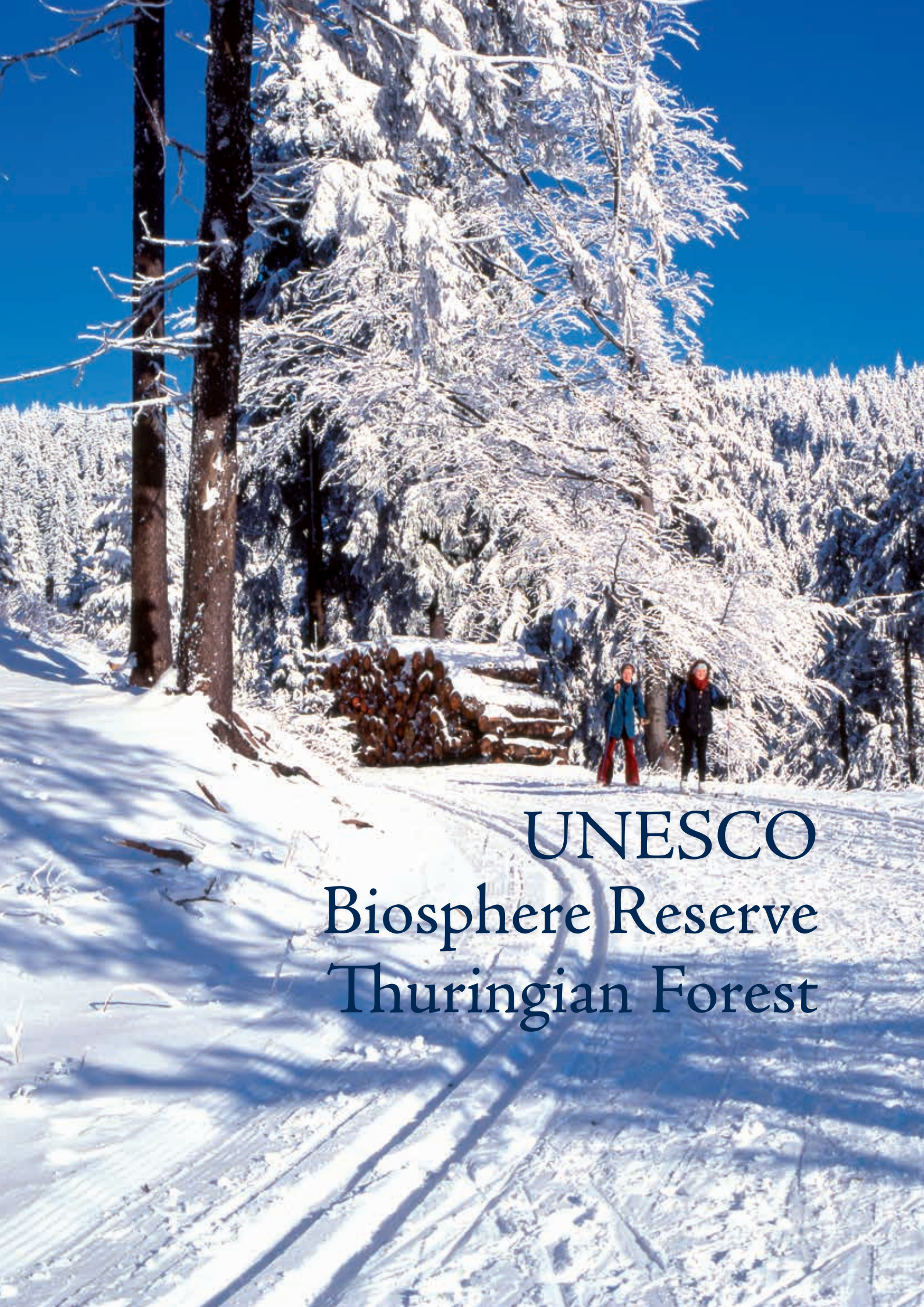
By train: to the ICE train station at Fulda, where rental cars are available; or continue by rail (Rhönbahn) to Gersfeld, via Erfurt (from the north) or Würzburg (from the south) to Meiningen, Hammelburg, Bad Kissingen, Bad Neustadt, or Mellrichstadt.

By car:
Hessian Rhön: A 7, exit Fulda-Mitte, to Dipperz via B 458, or exit Fulda-Süd, to Gersfeld via B 27/B 279.

Bavarian Rhön: A 7, exit Hammelburg; alternatively, A 71, exit Bad Kissingen, Bad Neustadt, or Mellrichstadt, then west.

Thuringian Rhön: from the north, A 4, exit Eisenach-West, B 84 direction of Bad Salzungen, B 285 direction of Kaltennordheim. From the east, A 71, exit Meiningen-Nord, then west.





UNESCO
Biosphere Reserve
Thuringian Forest



Lively silence – naturally

In these woods the black woodpecker drums, the pygmy owl raises its young, and the shy woodcock hides. The red deer is king of the forest. The Biosphere Reserve is a contiguous forest area interspersed with meadows.

The mountain meadows inspire with their many-coloured flowering periods from spring until autumn. The flowers of that well-known medicinal plant Arnica glow golden yellow. Spignel, St. John's wort, and wood cranesbill as well as numerous herbs give the meadows their characteristic aromatic fragrance. Occasionally a snipe rises from the meadow and you can hear its plaintive flight call.

The bogs, which formed on the ridges of the Thuringian Forest after the last ice age, are home to sundew, an insectivorous plant, and the delicate bog rosemary.

Numerous streams run through the woods and meadows of the Biosphere Reserve. They are clear and full of life. The fire salamander spawns in the upper streams; its larvae grow undisturbed in the cool waters. In quiet spots downstream you can



watch the red-speckled brown trout as it hunts for aquatic insects. The dipper also lives here, the only songbird that seeks food underwater.

The Biosphere Reserve is always in season – walkers come to the Thuringian Forest all year round. The Rennsteig is a particular attraction. This Thuringian Forest ridge walk runs right across the Biosphere Reserve. In winter, many skiers use the numerous cross-country skiing trails and downhill ski runs.

Left: cross-country skiing
on Rosenkopfchaussee

Right: early-flowering
wood anemone

Forest air and the scent of flowers – circular hiking trail through Vessertal

The 25 km circular hiking trail leads through the three zones of the Biosphere Reserve.

The hike leads from Breitenbach (425 m above sea level) uphill through the lower Vessertal. Up to Schneidmühlbrücke, Vessertal is a flowery meadow valley between extensive beech forests. The route continues through ancient-like mixed mountain forests with beech, spruce, sycamore, and silver fir. At the mouth of Glasbach, the Vesser is a typical natural, fast-flowing, scree-rich mountain stream. In the small village of Vesser, the village green and the baroque half-timbered church from 1712 are a popular photographer's image.

From Vesser it goes through upper Vessertal to the source of the Vesser. We continue over the Salzbergblick viewpoint to Wegscheide and through beech forests to Adlersberg (850 m above sea level). From its observation tower there is a panoramic view of the mountains of the Thuringian Forest. The next goal is Stutenhaus. The meadows below Stutenhaus have been grazed by Stuten (mares – female horses) since ancient times. The path leads downhill through Stelzenwiesengrund and Breitenbach valley past well-tended, charming meadow valleys back to Breitenbach.

The dipper – the only diving songbird

Forest landscape, meadows, and Rennsteig Garden

Monday: Hike from Neustadt a.R. through Reuscheltal to Großbreitenbach, visit the Thuringian Forest Creative Museum

Tuesday: Hike from Stützerbach on the Goethewanderweg to Ilmenau, visit “Volle Rose” show mine

Wednesday: Circular hike from Geraberg on the Climate Trail, visit the German “Thermometer Museum”

Thursday: Hike on the “Gipfelwanderweg” (Peak hiking trail) from Schmücke via Sachsenstein to Schneekopf, visit the Glass and Poaching Museum in Gehlberg

Friday: Circular hike from Oberhof via Flößgrabenweg to Ausgebrannten Stein and Sieglitzteich, visit to Rennsteig Garden

Saturday: Hike through Gießübeler-Fehrenbacher Schweiz to Rennsteigwarte in Masserberg, visit the Spice Museum in Schönbrunn

Sunday: Hike from Frauenwald via “Laura-Erlebnisweg” and Rennsteig to Rennsteig train station, visit the Biosphere Reserve information centre in Schmiedefeld a.R.



General information

Facts and figures

Location: 50 kilometres south of Erfurt in the centre of the Thuringian Forest

Area: 337 square kilometres (as of 2020)

Elevation: 420 to 982 metres

History: The first areas were declared as a nature reserve in 1939; recognised as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 1979.

Landscape types: mixed mountain forest, mountain meadows, mountain streams, raised bogs

Biosphere Reserve information

UNESCO-Biosphärenreservat
Thüringer Wald – Verwaltung
OT Schmiedefeld am Rstg.
Brunnenstraße 1
98528 Suhl

Phone: +49 361 573924610, fax -29
poststelle.thueringerwald@nnl.thueringen.de
www.biosphaerenreservat-thueringerwald.de

Informationszentrum im Haus am Hohen Stein
UNESCO-Biosphärenreservat
Thüringer Wald – Verwaltung
OT Schmiedefeld am Rstg.
Brunnenstraße 1
98528 Suhl
Phone: +49 361 573924622

Accommodation

Regionalverbund Thüringer Wald e. V.
Phone: +49 3681 35305-0
www.thueringer-wald.com

Books and maps

Wanderkarte Biosphärenreservat
Thüringer Wald
(with ski trail and cycling routes)
ISBN 978-3-866 36-324-3

Sustainable travel



Directions

By train: via Erfurt ICE train station to Ilmenau or via Würzburg (ICE) and Schweinfurt to Suhl. Continue with buses into the area

On site mobility: free for guest card with Rennsteig ticket (overnight guests)

Further information:
www.bus-bahn-thueringen.de
www.rennsteig-ticket.de
www.fahrtziel-natur.de





UNESCO
Biosphere Reserve Palatinate
Forest and Northern Vosges



Where the forest kisses the vineyards

Nature knows no boundaries – this is especially true of the Franco-German Palatinate Forest/Vosges du Nord Biosphere Reserve. Forest, vineyards, and Buntsandstein (a red sandstone), the pleasures of life, abundant sunshine and savoir vivre – right in the heart of Europe.

Fly over the largest contiguous forest in Western Europe (over 300,000 hectares) and you may think there is nothing but trees. But a closer look will reveal to the careful observer the diversity that lies beneath the canopy. Numerous rare species of plants and animals are at home in the deep valleys, on bizarre boulders of red sandstone and in the colourful meadows. The wildcat and the lynx – distinctive animals of the region – search for their prey at night, evading the gaze of curious hikers. These are typical inhabitants of these unfragmented, intact habitats.

Humans and the landscape have been closely interlinked for centuries. Forestry, mining, and viticulture were equally important in the past and continue to shape this unique cultural landscape. From the Celts to the Romans, from medieval lords to the imperialists of the early modern age, they have all left their traces between the Rhine and the Moselle. The Romans, to name but one example, brought the sweet chestnut tree to the region from the other side of the Alps to supply wood for the vineyards. Since then, dense forests of chestnut have given the landscape on the eastern edge of the mountains its distinctive look. Before the introduction of the potato, the chestnut used to be an important staple food, often referred to as



the “bread of the forest”. Today, it is a favourite of gourmets on both sides of the border. However, the real jewel in the crown of the forestry industry is the proverbial Pfälzer Werteiche (prized Palatine oak), which since the Middle Ages has been well-known for its high quality timber.

In addition to the hilly woodlands, the eastern edge of the Biosphere Reserve has a bit of Mediterranean flair. With over 1,800 hours of sunlight per year, almonds, figs, kiwis, and lemons – as well as several varieties of grapes – thrive here, in addition to the chestnut. Walking through the old villages and terraced vineyards on delightful sunken lanes you may sense the presence of a traditional form of viticulture with every step you take.

Visitors to selected partner businesses can learn how sustainable resource management works in practice, where exactly in the Biosphere Reserve the high-quality products originate, and what traditional and ecological processing methods look like. Partners include organic winegrowers, restaurateurs, farmers, beekeepers, an oil mill operator, a bio-bakery, wood processors, and marketers of game meat.

Needless to say, the love of nature shared by the Palatinate and France also includes an element of simple pleasure. Visitors are encouraged to visit one of the Franco-German biosphere farmers’ markets, which take place several times a year. Anything that is offered for sale is produced organically and in conformity with the principles of environmental safety.

Left: The silhouette of Berwartstein Castle rises from the mist

Right: The Biosphere Special – selected dishes prepared with regional products from the nature-blessed gourmet region



View over the vineyard to castle Villa Ludwigshöhe and the chair lift to the Rietburg

Mediterranean flair and abundant culinary pleasures

The Biosphere Reserve is best explored from the city of Edenkoben (where visitors can arrive by car or train). From Edenkoben, take the chairlift from Villa Ludwigshöhe Castle up to Rietburg. Delicious regional specialities are served on the panoramic viewing terrace and the view of the landscape surrounding the Weinstraße (Wine Route) is breath-taking. A hiking trail leads to the Ludwigsturm and an expansive view of the Palatinate Forest. From there, the trail continues through sparse chestnut and pine forests to Schänzelturm and Heldenstein forester's lodge. The return route takes hikers through the romantic Edenkoben Valley past the cabin of the Palatinate Forest Club back down to Edenkoben (20 kilometres in all; a hikers' bus is available for 8 kilometres of the return trip from Heldenstein).

The Biosphärenhaus and a handful of castles

- Monday:** Visit the Biosphärenhaus (Biosphere House) near Fischbach/Dahn, which offers a treetop trail and many nature adventure stations, and Berwartstein Castle near Erlenbach*.
- Tuesday:** Tour Trifels Castle, followed by a hike* to Rehberg Tower and Neukastell Castle.
- Wednesday:** Visit the Wildlife and Hiking park on the southern Wine Route near Silz.
- Thursday:** Visit the Pfalzgalerie (Palatinate Gallery) in Kaiserslautern and the Haus der Nachhaltigkeit (House of Sustainability) in Johanniskreuz.
- Friday:** Visit Limburg monastery ruins* and the Pfalzmuseum für Naturkunde (Palatinate Museum of Natural History) in Bad Dürkheim.
- Saturday:** Visit the exhibition in Hambach Castle and the old town of Neustadt an der Weinstraße.
- Sunday:** Three-castle tour* including a visit to the show mine in Nothweiler.

* Guided tours providing fascinating details of nature and culture are offered by certified biosphere guides all year round (information at www.pfaelzerwald.de)

General information

View from Wegelnburg
over the largest
contiguous forest area in
Western Europe

Facts and figures

Location: southern Rhineland-Palatinate along the border with France

Area: 1,790 square kilometres

Elevation: 150 to 700 metres above sea level

History: Founded as a nature park in 1958, recognised as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 1992 and the German part of the cross border Biosphere Reserve since 1998.

Geographic features: strongly fragmented and completely forested uplands flanked by gently sloping, intensively cultivated vineyards.



Biosphere Reserve information

Biosphärenreservat Pfälzerwald-Nordvogesen
Geschäftsstelle Pfälzerwald
Franz-Hartmann-Straße 9
67466 Lambrecht (Pfalz)
Phone: +49 6325 9552-0, fax: -19
info@pfaelzerwald.bv-pfalz.de
www.pfaelzerwald.de

Information about partner businesses at
www.pfaelzerwald.de

*Natur und Kultur – Das Biosphärenreservat
Pfälzerwald – Vosges du Nord*
Phone: +49 6325 9552-0

Großer Pfalzführer
ISBN 978-3-8134-0106-6

Die Pfalz – Eine Bildreise
ISBN 978-3-89234-589-3

Information centres

Biosphärenhaus in Fischbach/Dahn
www.biosphaerenhaus.de

Haus der Nachhaltigkeit in Johanniskreuz
www.hdn-pfalz.de

Pfalzmuseum für Naturkunde in Bad Dürkheim
www.pfalzmuseum.de

Accommodation

Pfalz.Touristik
Martin-Luther-Straße 69
67433 Neustadt/Weinstraße
Phone: +49 6321 3916-0, fax: -19
info@pfalz-touristik.de

Directions

By train: stations in Neustadt/Weinstraße, Kaiserslautern, Pirmasens, Edenkoben, Landau.

By car: A 6 to Kaiserslautern, or A 65 to Neustadt, Landau, and Bad Bergzabern, or A 63 to Pirmasens.

Books and maps

Biosphärenreservat Pfälzerwald
Südteil 1: 40,000
ISBN 978-3-945138-03-8

Naturpark Pfälzerwald
Nordteil 1: 40,000
ISBN 978-3-934895-92-8

Pfälzerwald – Porträt einer Landschaft
ISBN 978-3-9801147-1-4

**Biosphärenreservat
Pfälzerwald-
Nordvogesen**



UNESCO
Biosphere Reserve
Berchtesgadener Land





High above

Imposing peaks that tower into the sky, fragrant Alpine meadows, vast forests, colourful meadows and mysterious bogs – the only Alpine UNESCO biosphere reserve in Germany offers its visitors grandiose natural features. The combination of an unspoiled natural landscape and rural cultural landscape gives you a holiday full of experiences and relaxation.

Between the high Alpine peaks of the Bavarian Alps in the south and the banks of the river Salzach in the foothills of the Alps to the north, there are a variety of habitats with a great diversity of flora and fauna, including many special species such as edelweiss, golden eagles, ptarmigan, or otters.

The core and buffer zones of the biosphere region are essentially the Alpine Berchtesgaden National Park. The buffer zone extends across an Alpine cultural landscape, a hilly moraine landscape to the large floodplains of the Salzach.

In Alpine areas, looking ahead and resource-efficient land use have always been important. Flower-filled Alpine meadows, hay meadows and



straw meadows are the epitome of biodiversity, but they are primarily cultural habitats that are summer pasture or cultivated land for winter feed and stable bedding, which are the basic requirements for durable, functioning mountain agriculture.

Sustainable management and coexistence between man and nature therefore have a tradition in Berchtesgaden Land. Even now, family farms produce healthy food and preserve the traditional cultural landscape. A special feature of Berchtesgaden is salt extraction which has characterized the region since time immemorial. Agriculture has operated alongside the work in the salt mines and the salt pans. The resulting patchwork landscape has a high biodiversity as well as important landscape aesthetics.

Left: Bindalm invites you to rest and with the Almerlebnis Bus it is also easily accessible even for inexperienced hikers

Right: The biosphere region extends from the Salzach loop at Laufen up into the Berchtesgaden Alps

Close to the mountains

From the mountain village of Ramsau, the Alps can be easily explored with the Almerlebnisbus. Simply get off the road and into the mountain pasture where the dairymaids make traditional dairy products, or at Hirschbichl discover the interactive and cross-border theme and adventure trail "Nature knows no borders". On the way back you should definitely plan a break at the idyllic Hintersee.

Diversity is the key

Tuesday: After a tour of the historic old town of Schifferstadt Laufen, it is time to relax at the beautifully situated bog bathing lake at Abstdorfer. A visit to the Haarmooses between Laufen and Saaldorf-Surheim, the largest meadow breeding area for birds in south-eastern Bavaria, is particularly worthwhile at dusk.

Wednesday: The day begins in Ainringer Moos where fascinating natural and cultural history can both be experienced. Afterwards a visit to Freilassing and Lokwelt. Then it's only a short hop to the city of Salzburg.

Thursday: From the idyllic market in Teisendorf go by bicycle: our top tip is Höglwörther lake over to Anger with its famous village square. From there continue on the Högl at Piding where the wonderful panoramic views of Salzburg are a reward for the climb!

Friday: From the Weissbach Falls follow the Soleleitungsweg (Salt water trail) through the imposing Weissbach ravine through Schneizlreuth, Lake Thumsee and onto Bad Reichenhall. A visit to the old Salt Works rounds off this day in the land of salt.

Saturday: Walk from Bayerisch Gmain to the wildly romantic Lattengebirge up to Bischofswiesen and there end the afternoon by relaxing in the idyllic natural pool of Aschauer.

Sunday: an introduction in the truest sense is the impressive Almbach gorge in Marktschellenberg, which can be easily traversed and at the end of which lies Germany's only ball mill.

Monday: In the morning a stroll around Berchtesgaden market or a visit to the National Park centre "Haus der Berge", then to Schoenau on Lake Königssee, which fascinates everyone.

The Alpine world is characterized by incomparable natural features, as here at Funtensee.



General information

Almabtrieb (drive from mountain pastures) at Lake Königssee with Pinzgauer cattle, an old livestock breed.

In the background is St. Bartolomä

Facts and figures

Location: south-east Bavaria on the border with Austria

Area: 840 square kilometres of biosphere reserve of which 208 square kilometres is national park

Elevation: 383 to 2,713 metres above sea level

History: established as a National Park in 1978, in 1990 the National Park communities were recognized as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. In 2010, the area was extended to the whole of Berchtesgaden and renamed.

Landscape types: rock fields, Alpine meadows, dwarf shrub heaths, Alpine pastures, mixed mountain forests, lakes and ponds, fens, straw and wet meadows, lowland and mountain hay meadows, alluvial forests.

Biosphere Reserve information

*Verwaltungsstelle Biosphärenregion
Berchtesgadener Land
Außenstelle der Regierung von Oberbayern
Sägewerkstraße 3
83395 Freilassing
Phone: +49 8654 30946-10
info@brbgl.de
www.biosphaerenregion-bgl.de*

Accommodation

*Berchtesgadener Land Tourismus GmbH
Wittelsbacher Straße 15
84345 Bad Reichenhall
Tel. +49 8651 71511-0
info@bad-reichenhall.de
www.bad-reichenhall.de*

*Tourismusregion Berchtesgaden-Königssee
Maximilianstraße 9
83471 Berchtesgaden
Tel. +49 8652 65650-70
gaesteservice@berchtesgaden.de
www.berchtesgaden.de*

*Biosphärenregion Berchtesgadener Land
www.brbgl.de/tourismus/touristinfos*



Books and maps

*Das höchste Leben – Almwirtschaft
im Berchtesgadener Land (2004)
ISBN 4101530001270*

*Die Tierwelt des Nationalparks
Berchtesgaden (2006)
ISBN 3-925647-42-2*

*Die Pflanzenwelt des Nationalparks
Berchtesgaden (2003)
ISBN 3-925647-33-3*

*Nationalpark Berchtesgaden –
Im Augenblick der Zeitlosigkeit (2010)
ISBN 978-3-922325-64-2*

*Topographical map 1: 50.000
Berchtesgadener Alpen (UK 50-55) and
Rupertiwinkel (UK 50-44)*

Directions

By train: via Freilassing towards Laufen, Bad Reichenhall or Berchtesgaden. From there by bus.

By car: From Munich or Salzburg: A 8 – exits for Bad Reichenhall and Neukirchen.





UNESCO
Biosphere Reserve
Bliesgau



Land of orchids and savoir-vivre

Man and nature in harmony – this is impressively demonstrated in Bliesgau Biosphere Reserve. A visitor can see it in the valuable and beautiful meadow orchards, species-rich meadows, extensive beech forests and the floodplain of the river Blies. However, it also has a population density that is higher than the national average, a fact that makes the biosphere reserve unique in the world. Despite so many people, the region has become a refuge for many rare animal and plant species. Nature and culture are the silent architects here, connecting diversity to unify the biosphere reserve.

Bliesgau is home to around eighty percent of the Saarland population of the endangered little owl. The population of the rare marsh fritillary is particularly high and on the Muschelkalk (shell bearing limestone) soils one can admire nearly half of all orchid species occurring in Germany; their display is particularly beautiful.



However, Bliesgau is also a region in transition – shaped over the centuries by traditional extensive farming, it is now trying to resist the trend towards globalization. The biosphere reserve promotes the regional marketing of its own agricultural products. So, for example, the local fruit association Verein Bliesgau Obst e.V. helps orchard owners in the care of their fruit trees and in the marketing of the crop. Then there is the Bliesgau box, a gift idea with regional charm; it is filled individually with, for example, Bliesgau sparkling apple secco, various honeys, speciality sausages or selected handcrafts. Something that has been especially fruitful is the cooperation between Bliesgau Biosphere Reserve and the Bliesgau oil mills, which has meant that Bliesgau is one of the most diverse oil landscapes in Germany.

As a long-inhabited area, Bliesgau also offers many opportunities to search for traces of Roman and Celtic settlements. And the scenic charm in the south of the region is complemented in the north by the town of St. Ingbert, with its industrial history and extensive culture.

Left: Man and nature in harmony!

Right: pyramidal orchid, one of over 30 orchid species in Bliesgau



The "Beeder Biotop"
amid the Bliesau

Wild romanticism on foot and by bike

Begin your journey of discovery with a visit to the water buffalo in "Beeder biotope". From a viewing platform you can also watch white storks nest-building. Follow shaded paths through Tauben valley, the largest core zone of the Biosphere Reserve, and along Kirkeler rock trail with its impressive bunter sandstone formations, and reach Kirkeler castle – over 1,000 years old. In the warmer months of summer, the Kirkeler Burgsommer festival recreates the days of knights and knaves.

After a visit to the old baroque town of Blieskastel, you can cycle by e-bike from north to south through the Biosphere Reserve on the Blies valley trail, enjoying the fantastic nature of the wildly romantic Bliesau.

Donkeys and E-bikes, storks and meadow orchards

Monday: By e-bike along the Blies to the Franco-German Culture Park at Bliesbruck-Reinheim. The French town of Sarreguemines is nearby.

Tuesday: A tour on the Biosphere Bus offers the opportunity to get off at individual stops in order to explore the region.

Wednesday: In the footsteps of the St James pilgrims through the Biosphere Reserve to Gräfinthal monastery.

Thursday: Discover the southern Bliesgau region by donkey. Enjoy the landscape more slowly and consciously, at the pace of our long-eared four-legged friends.

Friday: A morning visit to Bliesgau oil and mustard mill in Einöd to sample the different oils, such as Camelina – the oil of the Celts. And in the afternoon a walk on the educational trail "Ecological backpack through Blieskasteler Forest".

Saturday: Below ground the Biosphere Reserve guarantees sensational sights with a visit to Schlossberg Caves, Europe's largest mottled sandstone caves.

Sunday: Guided tour of the orchid area in Gerseheim. As well as the numerous orchids there are other rare animal and plant species to discover.

General information

Facts and figures

Location: in south-east Saarland, on the border with France and Rheinland-Palatinate

Area: 361 square kilometres

Elevation: 190 to almost 400 metres

History: founded in 2007, recognized by UNESCO in 2009.

Landscape types: escarpment landscape. In the north, more urban influence with beech forests on mottled sandstone, in the south very rural: semi-dry limestone grassland with orchid meadows and orchid-beech forests on limestone soils, meadow orchards, Blies floodplain landscape.

Biosphere Reserve information

Biosphärenzweckverband Bliesgau
Paradeplatz 4
66440 Blieskastel
Phone: +49 6842 96009-0, fax -29
info@biosphaere-bliesgau.eu
www.biosphaere-bliesgau.eu

Infostelle Biosphärenreservat Bliesgau
„Haus des Bürgers“
Luitpoldplatz 5
66440 Blieskastel
Phone: +49 6842 926-1314

Accommodation & tourist info

Saarpfalz-Touristik
Paradeplatz 4
66440 Blieskastel
Phone: +49 6841 104-7174, fax -7175
touristik@saarpfalz-kreis.de
www.saarpfalz-touristik.de

Books and maps

Reiseführer Biosphärenreservat Bliesgau
ISBN 978-3-89920-810-8

Der Bliesgau: Natur und Landschaft im südöstlichen Saarland
ISBN 978-3-923877-42-3

Wander- und Freizeitkarte Saarpfalz-Kreis
Bestellung über Saarpfalz-Touristik
(see Accommodation & tourist info)

Der Bliesgau: Natur – Menschen – Geschichten
ISBN 978-3-96176-106-7

Wilder Bliesgau
ISBN 978-3-96227-015-5

Faszination Bliesgau
ISBN 978-3-96227-000-1

Arten, Biotope und Landschaften im Biosphärenreservat Bliesgau
von Dr. Dieter Dorda

Nationale Naturlandschaften im Saarland
Bestellung über Biosphärenzweckverband Bliesgau

Directions

By train: by ICE to Homburg or Saarbrücken, by regional train to Lautzkirchen, Kirkel or St. Ingbert; the Saarbahn runs from Saarbrücken to Kleinblittersdorf.

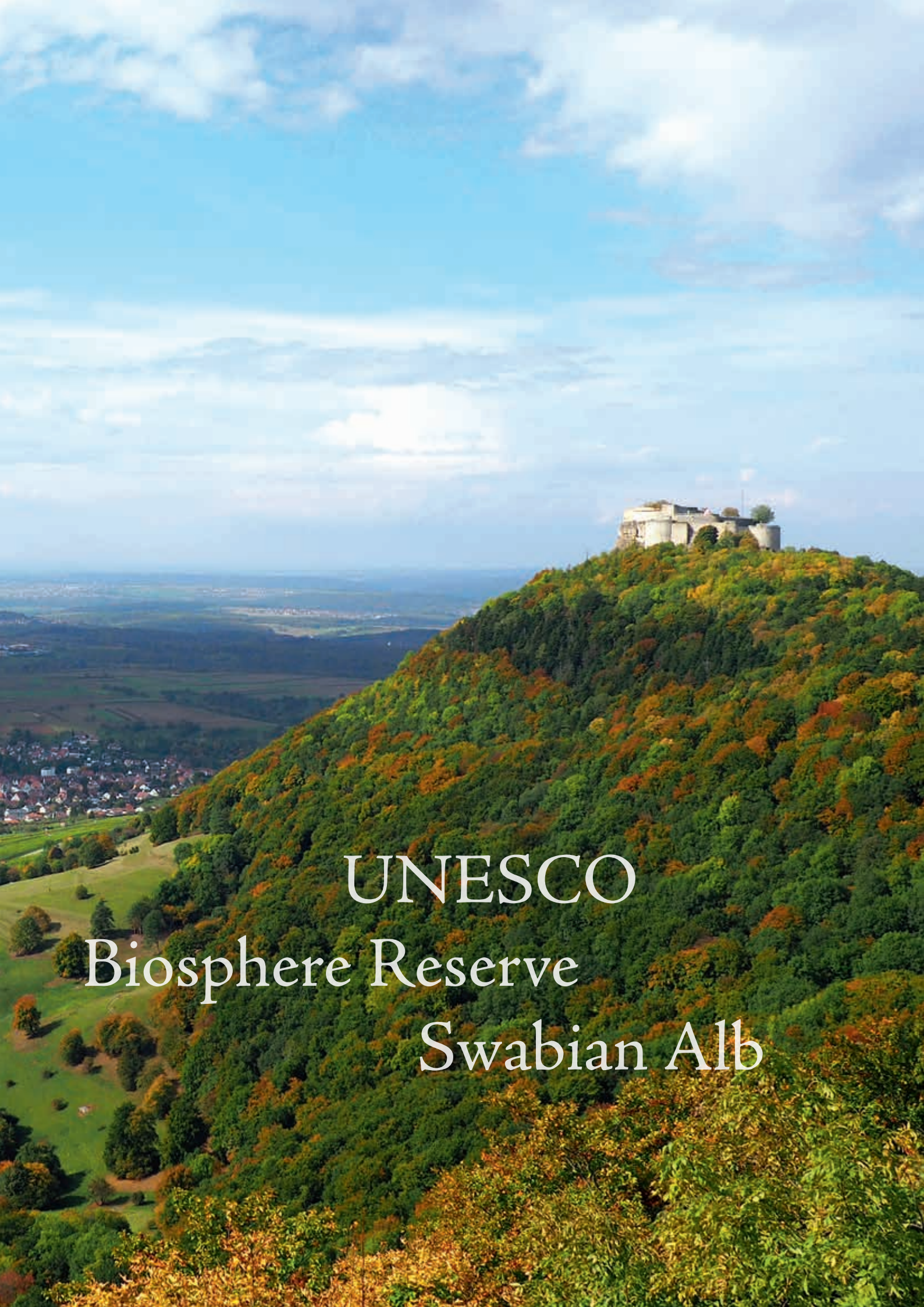
By car: take the A 6 or the A 8, exit for St. Ingbert-Mitte, Limbach, Blieskastel or Homburg-Einöd.

Young little owls need an intact cultural landscape



**Biosphärenreservat
Bliesgau**





UNESCO
Biosphere Reserve
Swabian Alb



Cultural landscape with history

A landscape made for hiking, cycling and relaxing – the steeply sloping Albtrauf alternate with gentle hilltops, dry valleys and wide plateaus. Old orchards and hanging ravine forests, flower meadows and juniper heaths invite you to linger. Collared flycatcher, wryneck, red kite, black woodpecker, eagle owl and other rare birds feel just as much at home in the Swabian Alb Biosphere Reserve as do numerous bat species, such as Bechstein's bat and the mouse-eared bat.

Swabian Alb Biosphere Reserve is located about 50 kilometres south-east of Stuttgart. The contrasts between the countryside and the metropolitan region of Stuttgart create the charm and opportunities of the biosphere reserve.

In 2009, Swabian Alb Biosphere Reserve received UNESCO recognition. The state of Baden-Württemberg and its residents have opted for the term “biosphere region” instead of the “biosphere reserve”.

No other biosphere reserve in Germany has such great scenic diversity as here with its alternating forest and open land. On the plateau a special feature is the juniper heaths with their species richness, a result of the work of nomadic shepherds. At the foot of Albtrauf there are great contiguous meadow orchards, forming a sea of flowers in spring.



This diversity is also apparent in the environmental and nature conservation-oriented regional development of the Swabian Alb. High-quality products from the region are produced under the ALBGEMACHT product brand, with the aim of preserving and promoting the biodiversity of the unique natural and cultural landscape of the Swabian Alb Biosphere Region. A further example is the “Albrecht Leisa” marketing project; lentils are grown by around 70 organic farmers and it is a real regional success. Innovative ecological products such as Alb mozzarella, juniper products, spelt pasta and emmer pasta or Alb snails have been established on the market and put on the menu of the “biosphere hosts” – a grouping of quality gastronomic establishments.

Left: Hohenneuffen castle ruins on the Albtrauf give a wonderful view.

Right: Children enjoying cherries in the orchards



In the spring a sea of flowers – the meadow orchards

Alb buffalo, Alb cheese, and breath-taking adventures

A visit to the Swabian Alb Biosphere Centre in Münsingen is a good way of getting a first impression of the Biosphere Reserve. The Biosphere Reserve is laid out at your feet in the form of a huge aerial image and you can learn about the people of the region. Afterwards you can take a walk to the abandoned village of Gruorn on the former military training area in Münsingen; at weekends you can get a hearty meal there. If you want to learn more about the military history and the former life here you should definitely book a tour of the "albgut" (old Military camp). Alternatives include a trip to the charming Lautertal or, for horse lovers, a visit to the State Stud in Marbach. A great end to the day is delicious roast Alb lamb with spelt noodles.

History, something for horse-lovers, and plenty to enjoy

Monday: visit the Swabian Alb Biosphere Centre, guided bicycle trip through the former military training area at Münsingen, and then stop at a Biosphere partner.

Tuesday: visit Schertelshöhle (cave) in Westerheim, walk along Randecker Maar – a former volcanic pipe – then drive to Schopfloch Alb Nature Conservation Centre.

Wednesday: visit Zwiefalten monastery with its Baroque minster and Peterstor Biosphere Information Centre. Then hike to Wimsen, where the boat takes you to the Wimsen cave.

Thursday: Hike on one of the certified premium hiking trails of the "hochgehberge" through impressive and valuable nature, past castles and fortresses, afternoon shopping tour in Metzingen outlet city, evening visit to the Metzingen vinotheque to enjoy the ALBGEMACHT wines with live music.

Friday: "AlbhofTour Tour" by bike from farm to farm, face to face with Alb buffalo, hearty meals with Alb cheese and delicious sausages at one of the farms.

Saturday: visit Beuren open-air museum, then a guided walk on the Gustav-Ströhmfeld-way to Hohenneuffen castle with its panoramic views, and then drive to Neidlingen to see the ball mill.

Sunday: from Münsinger Station (Centre for Nature, Environment, and Tourism) ride on a Schwäbischen Albbahn steam train to Gomadingen. Return hike via the State Stud in Marbach to Münsingen.

General information

Swabian Alb Biosphere Centre provides information with an interactive exhibition and is the starting point for hikes and bike tours through Münsingen former military training area.

Facts and figures

Location: 50 kilometres south-east of Stuttgart in the Swabian Alb (Baden-Württemberg)

Size: 853 square kilometres

Elevation: 329 to 872 metres

History: established in 2008, 10th anniversary of UNESCO recognition in 2019.

Landscape types: cultural landscape with beech forests, juniper heaths, meadow orchards, limestone meadows and grasslands, fields, meadows, and settlements.

Biosphere Reserve information

Geschäftsstelle Biosphärengebiet Schwäbische Alb
Biosphärenallee 2–4
72525 Münsingen
Phone: +49 7381 932938-0, fax -15
biosphaerengebiet@rpt.bwl.de
www.biosphaerengebiet-alb.de

Accommodation

Schwäbische Alb Tourismusverband e. V.
Bismarckstraße 21
72574 Bad Urach
Phone: +49 7125 93930-0
info@schwaebischealb.de
www.schwaebischealb.de

Books and maps

Naturerbe Biosphärengebiet Schwäbische Alb
ISBN 978-3-87407-790-3

Mit Kindern unterwegs – Biosphärengebiet Schwäbische Alb
ISBN 978-3-87407-874-0

Rad- und Wanderkarte Biosphärengebiet Schwäbische Alb
ISBN 978-3-7473-0342-9

Freizeitkarte Bad Urach
ISBN 978-3-89021-617-1



Direction

By train and bus: from Stuttgart via Metzingen and Bad Urach to Münsingen. From Ulm via Schelklingen to Münsingen. In Münsingen by bus to the Swabian Alb Biosphere Centre.

By car: on the A 8 Merklingen or Kirchheim/Teck to Münsingen. From Tübingen/Reutlingen on the B 27 to Münsingen.





Biosphere Reserve
Karst Landscape
South Harz



Diversity in the South Harz

Extensive beech forests are a characteristic feature of the southern Harz landscape. In the transition area to the Goldene Aue (golden lowland), sink-holes, shafts, rock falls, and springs shape the landscape in a unique way. Karst forms from permeable and water-soluble rock, such as limestone and gypsum, which are leached by surface and ground water. A karst landscape formed from gypsum extends over 100 kilometres along the southern fringe of the Harz, linking Saxony-Anhalt, Thuringia, and Lower Saxony. As this landscape has been subjected to extensive rather than intensive use, large parts of it are still in a semi-natural condition. Extensive limestone beech forests occur here, and thermophilic oak woods and dry meadows are found on the south-facing slopes. The warm climate ensures that plants more typical of the Mediterranean region also thrive here, such as lady orchid and several other types of orchids.

Karst Landscape South Harz Biosphere Reserve is a habitat for numerous species of animals such as stag beetles, swallowtail butterflies, bats, dormice,



and the wildcat. The undisturbed, semi-natural rivers and streams provide habitats for fish that have disappeared from other areas many years ago, such as brook lamprey, European bullhead, and stone loach. Even so, humans have had an impact, for the southern Harz is an old cultural landscape. The earliest evidence of human activity dates back to the Neolithic Period, and medieval castles bear witness to the historical importance of the region. 800 years of mining have also left its mark. Fortunately, the karst landscape was poorly suited to land consolidation. Today's visitors encounter many small-scale cultivated areas with extensive orchards and grazing areas, deciduous forests and – again and again – old cities and villages with their own distinctive characteristics.

Left: In the karst
landscape

Right: Gypsum boulder
on Questenberg



The half-timbered town of Stolberg

Half-timbered town and beautiful orchards

Visit Heimkehle show cave near Uftrungen and follow the Karst Hiking Trail in Alter Stolberg Nature Conservation Area. Sights worth seeing include the old deciduous forests and the historical border markers made of stone.

Proceed to the old, historical half-timbered city of Stolberg, take a tour of the castle and visit the exhibition *Buchen musst Du suchen* (Beech you must seek). Then walk to Große Auerberg with St. Joseph's Cross on top. From there you have an uninterrupted view of the Biosphere Reserve and – if visibility is good – the entire Harz region.

Right in the centre of the karst landscape is Questenberg, a small town located in a water gap (valley) in a picturesque setting. It has a number of attractions to offer such as the colourful wooden figure of the knight Roland and a ruined castle. Travel from there to Hainrode, on foot, by bicycle, or car. A hike along the old road between Questenberg and Hainrode is highly recommended, especially in spring when the fruit trees bloom.

Disappearing streams, show mine and St. Joseph's cross

Monday: Take a trip to Hainrode to visit the old smithy and the workshops of the broom-maker and the watchmaker. Hiking on the Karst Hiking Trail past Dinsterbachschwinde (where the Dinsterbach disappears into the depths of the earth) and extensive orchards to Questenberg.

Tuesday: Visit the half-timbered town of Stolberg, tour the castle and the Old Mint, followed by a hike along the upper or the lower Bandweg with views of the village.

Wednesday: Visit Röhrigschacht show mine in Wettelrode, then drive to Sangerhausen to visit the Europa-Rosarium and Spengler Museum. End the day in the old town of Sangerhausen.

Thursday: Visit the Kyffhäuser Monument, Panorama Museum, and Barbarossa Cave. Alternatively, hike in the area around Helme Reservoir near Kelbra to observe the rich birdlife.

Friday: Visit the church of St. Cyriakus and Nicolai in Schwenda, affectionately called the "little sister of the Frauenkirche". Then hike to St. Joseph's cross on Große Auerberg.

Saturday: Hike from Grillenberg to Pölsfeld, visit Grillenburg ruins, and enjoy the view from the Gedankenbank (bench for reflection) on the Karst Hiking Trail.

Sunday: Hike to Bauerngraben, a large sinkhole with an impressive rock face. Then visit Heimkehle show cave near Uftrungen.

General information

Facts and figures

Location: southern Harz region between Stolberg in the north-west and Sangerhausen in the south-east; district of Mansfeld Südharz

Area: 300 square kilometres

Elevation: 145 to 579 metres above sea level

History: Protected by general decree according to the Nature Conservation Act of the State of Saxony-Anhalt in 2009; recognition by UNESCO is still pending.

Geographic features: central uplands (southern Harz declivity), Zechstein mountain range (gypsum karst) with strike valley: over 2,000 karst formations, such as depressions, dolines, cliffs, sinkholes, and springs; expansive, semi-natural deciduous forests, small-structured open landscapes in Zechstein, orchards.

Historical cultural landscape: Remnants and monuments of over 800 years of mining history, Stolberg City of Europe, communities with typically regional character, castle ruins.

Biosphere Reserve information

*Verwaltung Biosphärenreservat
Karstlandschaft Südharz*
Hallesche Straße 68a, 06536 Südharz OT Roßla
Phone: +49 34651 29889-0
poststelle@suedharz.mule.sachsen-anhalt.de
www.bioreskarstsuedharz.de

Permanent exhibition in the Administration
Mon. – Fri. from 08:00 am – 4:00 pm,
Sat., Sun. or other times by arrangement
Exhibition “Buchen must du suchen”
at Stolberg Castle
06536 Südharz OT Stolberg

Information points

Bergbaumuseum Röhrigschacht
06526 Sangerhausen OT Wettelrode

Books and maps

*Hiking and Cycling: Wandern und Radfahren im
Biosphärenreservat Karstlandschaft Südharz*
Scale 1:25,000, ISBN 978-3-86973-130-8

Hiking Trail: Karstwanderweg Südharz
Scale 1:33,000, ISBN 978-3-86973-111-7



*Travel Guide: Unterwegs im Biosphärenreservat
Karstlandschaft Südharz – Zwischen Stolberg
und Pölsfeld*
ISBN 978-3-86037-448-1

*Cycling and hiking map:
Rad- und Wanderkarte Südharz/Kyffhäuser*
Scale 1:50,000, ISBN 978-3-89920-318-9

Accommodation

Touristinformation
Am Rosengarten 2a
06526 Sangerhausen
Europa-Rosarium (Haupteingang)
Phone: +49 3464 19433
info@sangerhausen-tourist.de
www.sangerhausen-tourist.de

Touristinformation Stolberg (Harz)
Niedergasse 17
06536 Südharz OT Stolberg
Phone: +49 3465 4454 or 3465 419433
ti@rossla.de
www.tourismus-suedharz.de

Directions

By train via Halle, Sangerhausen, Nordhausen,
in Berga/Kelbra or Roßla – stop/stations

By car: on the A 38, exit Roßla or Berga.





UNESCO
Biosphere Reserve
Black Forest



Forests, pastures, far-reaching views

Semi-natural mixed mountain forests, colourful wildflower meadows and pastures, landscapes shaped by the ice age, regional specialities and living traditions characterise the Black Forest Biosphere Reserve. The region offers many contrasts and experiences. It is located in the extreme southwest of Germany, near the borders with Switzerland and France. It extends from 310 to 1,420 metres above sea level – ranging from a mild climate, suitable for fruit growing, to a snowy mountain climate. During the last ice age, glaciers reached all the way into the valleys, and their legacy can still be seen today in the shape of moraines and u-shaped valleys. No fewer than six glaciers merged in the “Präger Gletscherkessel” – unique in the world.

The wooded heights, the grasslands, and the valleys cutting deeply into gneiss and granite make up the picture-book Black Forest landscape, which also includes traditional Black Forest farms with their long hipped roofs extending down to ground floor level. Mountains such as Schauinsland, Belchen, and Herzogenhorn offer panoramic views as far as the snow-covered Alps and across the Rhine to the Vosges. During milder times of the year, the distinctive landscape can be explored on numerous high-quality hiking trails. During winter, visitors are attracted to wonderful cross-country ski trails and snowshoe tours, without another person in sight.

Left: Itinerant shepherd on Belchen

Right: mountain arnica (wolf's bane) with six-spot burnet in the Präger Gletscherkessel



Above all, the species-rich communal mountain pastures characterise the cultural landscape of the Black Forest biosphere region. For centuries, the farmers have been driving their cattle herds to and from these high pastures. The resulting “grassland-rich forest landscape”, which has been recognized by UNESCO, includes imposing “pasture beech trees”, whose growth is shaped by browsing animals. Endangered cattle breeds, such as Hinterwald, continue to contribute to the preservation of the landscape. One of the aims of the Biosphere Reserve is to secure the continued existence of these ancient breeds, for example through new marketing strategies for meat.

In this densely forested region, the people of the Black Forest have acquired a great deal of knowledge about the use of timber as a sustainable raw material, ranging from timber construction techniques to woodworking and carving. For the purpose of climate protection, it is important that this technical knowledge originating in the biosphere region is made use of elsewhere. Various traditions typical of the Black Forest continue to be practiced by the inhabitants of the remote valleys. Almost every village has its own traditional dress, customs and festivals. The highlight of the year is the Alemannic carnival, including processions and rituals. The Alemannic dialect, still maintained with enthusiasm, contributes to the high level of identification of the people with their region. Interesting museums such as the Resenhof Museum of Local History in Bernau, Hebel Museum in Hausen, or the Textile Museum in Zell vividly bring traditions and customs to life.



Snowshoe hiker on
Schauinsland

Schauinsland: vistas, nature, history

Take the Schauinsland cable car from Freiburg to one of the highest peaks of the Black Forest biosphere region. Enjoy the view all the way to the Alps from the observation tower (1,284 m). Explore the historical silver mine. Hike through open mountain forests and wildflower meadows to the over 400-year old "Schniederlihof". Experience the history of the Black Forest in the museum. Continue the walk to Hofsggrund and from there to Oberried by bus. Make a final stop at the inn "Zum Goldenen Adler". Back to Freiburg by bus and train.

From the origins of winter sports to the magical summit

Monday: Take the Höllentalbahn to Hinterzarten. Visit the Black Forest Ski Museum. Hike along the Hochmoor Rundweg or to the Ospelehof, which produces its own natural cosmetics.

Tuesday: Drive to St. Blasien and visit the cathedral, one of the largest domed churches in Europe. Menzenschwand: relax in the Radon Revital Baths or visit "Le Petit Salon" museum for information on Europe's court painters, F. X. and H. Winterhalter.

Wednesday: Take the train to Zell im Wiesental. Visit Wiesental Textile Museum. Hike to Häg-Ehrsberg. Take the bus back to the starting point.

Thursday: Bicycle tour around Schluchsee (18 km), stopping for a swim in summer. Have a drink at Unterkrummenhof on the south side of the lake. Afterwards, take a trip on the lake with MS Schluchsee, starting at the lido.

Friday: Visit Bernau and the Hans Thoma Museum of Art or Resenhof Museum of Local History for information on the tradition of timber processing; hike on Hochtalsteig.

Saturday: Hike the 14-km leg of the Hebel Trail from Zell im Wiesental to Steinen, following the Alemannic verses of Johann Peter Hebel through the biosphere region.

Sunday: Excursion to Belchen, take the cable car to Höhengasthaus. The "magic summit" offers distant views of the Swiss Alps, the French Jura, and the Vosges mountains.

General information

Wooden Roland figure
and Queste

Facts and figures

Location: Southern Black Forest in the south-west of Baden-Württemberg, the border triangle between Germany, France and Switzerland.

Area: 632 square kilometres

Elevation: 310 to 1,420 metres above sea level

History: Established in 2016, recognized by UNESCO in 2017.

Geographic features: Mixed mountain forests, communal pastures, stone runs, and raised bogs

Biosphere Reserve information

Biosphärengebiet Schwarzwald
Brand 24
79677 Schönau/Schwarzwald
Phone: +49 7673 889402-4370
biosphaerengebiet-schwarzwald@rpf.bwl.de
www.biosphaerengebiet-schwarzwald.de

Accommodation

Schwarzwald Tourismus GmbH
Heinrich-von-Stephan-Straße 8b
79100 Freiburg
Phone: +49 761 89646-0, fax: -70
mail@schwarzwald-tourismus.info
www.schwarzwald-tourismus.info

Books and maps

Konold, Werner and Bernd-Jürgen Seitz:
*Biosphärengebiet Schwarzwald – Mensch und Natur
im Einklang*,
Silberburg-Verlag 2018.



Directions

By train: from Freiburg by Höllentalbahn to Kirchzarten or to Schluchsee, from there by bus to the biosphere region. From Kirchzarten by bus to Todtnau. From Basel (Badischer Bahnhof) by Wiesentalbahn to Zell im Wiesental

By car: A 5 to Freiburg, B 31 to Kirchzarten, L 126 to Wiesental via Notschreipass; A 81 to Geisingen, B 31 to Titisee-Neustadt, B 500 to Todtnau via Feldberg



Biosphere Reserve Drömling





Land of a thousand ditches

Drömling is located in the northwest of Saxony-Anhalt on the border with Lower Saxony, in the Altmark district of Salzwedel and the district of Börde.

For more than 200 years, Drömling has been a landscape shaped by humans. When the morning mist rises and the sun appears, it reveals a charming semi-natural cultural landscape, where the characteristic ditches alternate with fields, meadows and countless rows of trees and hedges. Because of the 2,000 km of watercourses in the area, Drömling is also called the “land of a thousand ditches”.

While only remnants of the original alder carr woodland exist today, meadows and fields continue to dominate the landscape. A species-rich fauna and flora has been preserved, particularly in the meadows and wooded areas. The Mittelland Canal is a valuable habitat and migration route for many species of animals. The shallow water



zone in Piplockenburg is structurally diverse, different zones being established within the body of the water and forming a diverse range of habitats. Together with the unique landscape of Drömling, the shallow water zone in Piplockenburg has great potential for developing tourism in a way that is compatible with nature.

The planned 132-kilometre Drömling hiking circuit will connect all the regions of Drömling and their most beautiful places. The circular route will consist of five separate circuits in Saxony-Anhalt and Lower Saxony. No matter whether you cycle, walk, ride a horse, or take a charabanc, if you are looking for peace and quiet or want to leave your normal life behind, Drömling is the right place for you.

Left: Rimpau's
Moordammkultur is only
found in Drömling

Right: Alder carr
woodland in
Breitenroder-Oebisfelder
Drömling



Shallow water zone at Mannhausen

Carriage rides and birdwatching

Some visitors to Drömling are hoping for a peaceful nature experience; others wish to improve their knowledge by taking part in one of the guided walks. Cyclists can discover Drömling via a network of signposted tracks. Carriage rides are also enjoying increasing popularity with visitors. Small guesthouses, farms, and hotels offer accommodation for every taste and budget.

A visit to the information centre in Kämkerhorst will give you an idea of all the available options. Originally built as a ditch master's workshop, the building now houses an exhibition of native animals and their habitats. The outdoor area includes a small-scale model of Drömling.

Hike along the Ohre, Sachau Dam, and the shallow water zone in Piplockenburg to observe various water birds, discover traces of otters and beavers and, with a little luck, catch a glimpse of a white-tailed eagle. In late autumn and early spring, the shallow water zone is a sleeping and resting place for thousands of Nordic geese, ducks, and cranes. To see this spectacle, a visit to the bird hides right on the edge of the shallow water zone is worthwhile.

Moordammkultur (digging ditches and sanding bogs) and half-timbered construction

Monday: A walk in the northern Drömling in the midst of the former Moordammkultur, with its countless ditches is well worth the effort. Meadow and water birds live here, as do numerous species of insects and amphibians.

The landscape shaped by bog soil-cover cultivation gives Drömling a selling point that is unique among UNESCO Biosphere Reserves worldwide. Restoring and maintaining this rare small-scale form of land use for the long term is a major challenge.

Tuesday: Drömling offers its visitors some memorable sights, especially in the villages. These include Kunrau Castle, built in the style of the Italian Renaissance, with its observation tower and park, and the half-timbered churches in Dannefeld, Jeggau, Miesterhorst, Peckfitz, Röwitz, Trippigleben, Wenze, and Wernitz. The church in Dannefeld is of particular interest, with its winged altar dating from the 16th century and a churchyard portal from 1735.

Wednesday: A charabanc ride in Drömling is always a great way to experience nature. From high on the charabanc you can see Drömling in all its uniqueness, variety, and beauty. Certified nature and landscape guides will be happy to accompany you.

Thursday: The family-run stud farm "Kleine Gestüt Drömling" in Krügerhorst near Mieste gives you "Himmel auf (Pf)Erden" (heaven on horseback). Horseback trekkers are just as welcome here as families with their children or organised groups of children.

Friday: Seasonal creative courses using natural materials, exclusive beer brewing courses, nature hikes, special cultural events – the programme at Kreativhof in Kunrau is varied.

Saturday: In many villages you can still find old farmsteads built in the half-timbered or red brick style typical for the region, dating from when Drömling was cultivated. The idyllic location of the villages can be enjoyed with a piece of homemade cake and a cup of coffee in Wiesencafé in Breiteiche.

The ditch and channel systems for Moordammkultur in Drömling give many insights into cultural and historical usage, for example Friedrichskanal and Wilhelmskanal.

Sunday: Oebisfelde Castle is one of the historical architectural monuments of the town and is considered to be the oldest preserved marsh castle in Europe. It was built to protect the land and its inhabitants on this side of Drömling from enemies, while at the same time securing passage along an important trade route.

Oebisfelde Local History Association has created an attractive castle and local history museum in the rooms of the former servants' house. The history of the town and its residents is shown in permanent and changing exhibitions. Every year, "Open Monument Day" is celebrated with a variety of activities, such as tours of the town and castle led by guides in historical costume.

Nicolai Church in Oebisfelde is neo-romantic but also includes neo-gothic parts. This historically valuable building has been renovated and now serves as a venue for events, concerts and exhibitions.

General information

Guided nature walk
with a ranger

Facts and figures

Location: On the south-western edge of Altmark, along the Mittelland Canal and the Ohre, in the northwest of Saxony-Anhalt on the border with Lower Saxony

Area: 340 square kilometres

Elevation: 55 metres above sea level

History: Founded in 1990 as a Nature Park, it was recognized as Drömling Saxony-Anhalt Biosphere Reserve on 23 June 2019. An application for UNESCO recognition as a Biosphere Reserve spanning the states Saxony-Anhalt and Lower Saxony is currently being made. The cross-border Drömling Biosphere Reserve will cover an area of 385 square kilometres.

Geographic features: Watercourses, grassland areas, deciduous forests, and bogs

Biosphere Reserve information

*Biosphärenreservatsverwaltung Drömling
Sachsen-Anhalt
Bahnhofstr. 32
39646 Oebisfelde
www.biosphaerenreservat-droemling.de
poststelle@droemling.mule.sachsen-anhalt.de
Phone: +49 39002-8500*

Accommodation

*Accommodation, restaurants, and other partners can be found on our homepage
www.biosphaerenreservat-droemling.de*

Information material is available from the Biosphere Reserve administration.



Directions

By train: stations on the Magdeburg-Wolfsburg line: Wegenstedt, Rätzlingen, Bösdorf or Oebisfelde. stations on the Stendal-Wolfsburg route: Mieste, Miesterhorst, Oebisfelde

By car: Please contact the Biosphere Reserve administration for more information.





Wasserkuppe in Rhön
Biosphere Reserve

Jewels of nature – National Natural Landscapes

The 16 National Parks, 18 Biosphere Reserves and over 100 Nature Parks and 1 Wilderness Area offer breath-taking views, spectacular experiences, as well as peace and relaxation. They are also for the preservation of biological diversity and the protection of native flora and fauna.

United under the umbrella of National Natural Landscapes, they offer visitors spectacular scenes of nature – from the Wadden Sea to the central German river landscapes to the Alps.

A common voice – National Natural Landscapes

The umbrella organization Nationale Naturlandschaften e.V. gives a common voice the German national parks, biosphere reserves, nature parks, and wilderness areas.

Since 1991 the non-profit organization Nationale Naturlandschaften e.V. (formerly EUROPARC Deutschland e.V.) has supported the further development of protected areas and stands for the partnership of these areas.

In numerous projects, the exchange of experience and information is promoted among members. Nationwide programmes are initiated and coordinated in the areas of environmental education, voluntary work or quality management. In addition, new strategies for the preservation and further development of National Natural Landscapes are designed together.

National Parks

National Parks are landscapes in which nature is allowed to remain natural. They protect natural landscapes, while preserving the inherent laws of nature and provide refuges for wild plants and animals. In doing so the national parks create unique spaces to experience nature and provide great places for environmental education and research. Therefore, they are indispensable for the biodiversity and species richness of our planet. At the same time, National Parks increase the attractiveness of their region and contribute to its economic development.

Biosphere Reserves

Biosphere Reserves are model regions to show how the co-existence of man and nature can be developed and tested. They protect cultural landscapes from destructive interference and preserve and develop valuable habitats for both people and nature. They ensure a balance of human use and natural cycles, thus helping to create regional value. Biosphere Reserves enable exemplary discoveries for science and for research on the interaction of natural and social processes.

Nature Parks

Nature Parks are regions where people and nature can recuperate. They preserve and develop both the landscape and nature, as well as supporting environmentally friendly tourism. They promote sustainable regional development and present opportunities for environmental education and public relations. Thus, they help to support the needs of people in their lives and work in harmony with the requirements of landscape and nature conservation.

Wilderness Areas

Wilderness Areas are places in which the dynamic forces of nature can act unaffected. They protect large areas that develop freely and naturally, that is, not towards a human-intended goal. They thus offer habitats for wild animals and plants that rely on natural processes and large, undisturbed areas. Wilderness Areas enable us to experience and discover an unrestricted nature in which people are not the focus. In addition, they are important places of learning for the study of natural processes and development.





Nature accessible and enjoyable for everyone – National Natural Landscapes

Creating synergies between nature and society – this is the challenge takes on by the umbrella organization Nationale Naturlandschaften e. V. Through a unique network, the umbrella organization offers the opportunity to become involved in nature in the following programmes and experience nature with all your senses:



Junior Rangers form a "living map of Germany". This nationwide programme currently involves over 40 National Natural Landscapes.

Junior Rangers

Enjoying nature and active exploration of their country, that is what a Junior Ranger does. In more than 40 National Natural Landscapes, children from the age of seven join experienced rangers in fields and meadows. They learn about their own environment in a creative and fun way, and they are excited about committed action for nature. From Watzmann to the Wadden Sea, about 1,500 children nationwide have been active every year since 2008.

Anyone can become a junior ranger, from activities in their region, on a discovery tour on holiday, in the classroom, or as a junior ranger on the web.

Further information: www.junior-ranger.de

Market place for nature – benefits for people and nature

"Market Place for Nature" is an internet platform which presents a wide range of conservation projects in National Natural Landscapes. National Parks, Biosphere Reserves, and Nature Parks have the opportunity to promote their project ideas from the fields of education, biodiversity and species protection, climate protection, tourism, or sustainable land use, as well as many other areas. The platform provides interested people with background information on the projects and can help them to make their commitment. By making a donation or an active commitment, they can make a difference to the most valuable natural landscapes in Germany. A commitment to nature is worth it!

Further information: www.marktplatz-natur.de

Pride in Nature – Volunteers in Parks

Join in! Over 40 National Natural Landscapes nationwide offer hands-on projects, from habitat protection to environmental education. In the "Pride in Nature – Volunteers in Parks" programme everyone is welcome, irrespective of age or skill, no matter how much time you have.

Nature conservation is a point of pride and a great opportunity to actively experience National Natural Landscapes, to expand knowledge and to meet like-minded people. You too can be a "Volunteer in Parks", like around 3,000 others do every year. Qualified volunteer coordinators on site are happy to advise you.

Further information: www.ehrensache-natur.de



Top: Ernstlhof National Park Partner, Bavarian Forest

Bottom: Siesta in the hay – taking a break from mowing an arnica meadow, Ore Mountains/Vogtland Nature Park



A special nature-experience: holiday with our Partners

Spend a holiday in the most spectacular scenes of nature and experience it with all your senses – that is what National Natural Landscapes Partners offer.

Partner businesses see themselves as ambassadors of their protected areas. They are committed to the protection of nature and climate, and they are competent contact people for their home regions.

Together, they aim to make their products high quality as well as nature – and environmentally friendly, to give you a unique nature experience. Enjoy with all your senses the most valuable natural and cultural landscapes in Germany – National Natural Landscapes.

Further information: www.nationale-naturlandschaften.de/partner

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Pfalzburger Straße 43/44, 10717 Berlin
Tel. +49 30 2887882-0
Fax +49 30 2887882-16
info@nationale-naturlandschaften.de
www.nationale-naturlandschaften.de

Nationale
Naturlandschaften 

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