

Did you know that...

- Slavkovský les' symbol is the prha arnica, an ancient medicinal herb?
- Mnichovské hadce is the largest serpentinite territory in this country?
- only the area of Slavkovský les supports Cerastium alsinifolium (mouse-ear chickweed), an endemic plant that is found nowhere else in the world?
- the territory of Horní Slavkov is amongst the oldest and historically most important medieval mining areas in Europe?
- in the hill of Krásenský vrch there is one of the most unusual viewing towers in this country, inspired, as is believed, by the legendary Tower of Babel?
- the spring of the greatest yield, highest temperature and biggest fame in this country is "Vřídlo" in Carlsbad, springing up to 12 m high and boasting a water temperature of 73.4°C?

Thank you for your considerate conduct towards the natural world and for...

- camping and lighting fires only in places so designated;
- entering a car park only where permitted;
- moving only along marked pathways while in a national nature reserve;
- ullet taking into account the natural sites surrounding you as well as other visitors when cycling;
- leaving the animals and plants alone in their natural habitats;
- \bullet taking your rubbish home as it does not belong in the natural environment.

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The operators of the visitor centre – Slavkovský les House of Nature – are Lesy ČR, s.p., Lesní závod Kladská, K pramenům 217, Lázně Kynžvart, 354 91





Moorland clouded yellow

An island of forest vegetation and serpentinite rocks, mysterious peat land and raised bogs, montane meadows, clear water and healing mineral springs.

A magical landscape of canyon-shaped valleys, with promontories boasting ancient forts and castles to guard the Salt Route, a landscape scarred by mining and troubled human destinies.



National Natural Monument of Svatošské skály

Imperial Forest

Once called "Císařský les" (Imperial Forest), the region of Slavkovský les is not only inhabited by trees, but also mountains reaching an altitude of nearly 1,000 metres. Situated in the west of Bohemia, an area larger than 600 square kilometres, its mountainous land topography is intersected by the river valleys of Eger and Teplá. As the latter of the two wends its way through the canyon of Carlsbad granites, one can encounter a block of rocks rising on its bank. Named Svatošské skály, it resembles a wedding procession. The look of the local landscape is due to geological processes in the Palaeozoic period.

Healing sources of mineral waters

The territory of Slavkovský les creates a natural background for the trio of leading Czech health resorts: Carlsbad, Marienbad and Lázně Kynžvart. Hundreds of hot and cold mineral sources gush in spring areas in the woods, meadows and even peat bogs; some of them bubbling, while others are a little smelly. The healing effects of these are something that even the Roman Emperor and Czech King Charles IV was aware of. Mineral water from the sources is collected in a traditional way using hollow stumps or small barrels.



Mouse-ear chickweed

Treasures of wetland meadows and a picky butterfly

The sites of the greatest value in Slavkovský les include a mosaic of wetland meadows and fens in the Teplá region. The area has never allowed anyone to manage it to any considerable extent, thus has preserved its remarkable communities of plants and invertebrates. The late spring is the time for Siberian iris, broadleaved marsh orchid, common bogbean or globeflower blooming in the meadows. Devil'sbit scabious supports, as the only host plant, caterpillars of the marsh fritillary, a rare butterfly. Devising appropriate ways of management in places where protected species of plants and butterflies occur makes a challenge for any conservationist. While most plants thrive when mowing meadows in high summer, by this time the marsh fritillary's eggs have been laid and its caterpillars have hatched, which would be destroyed by mowing the meadow. For this reason, the meadows containing devil's-bit scabious are mowed in sections in late spring through mosaic-pattern mowing.



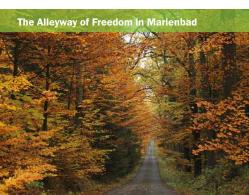




in the Smradoch Nature Reserve

Serpentinite rocks as islands in

the sea of surrounding landscape Slavkovský les is home to Mnichovské hadce, the largest serpentinite area in this country Some may hazard a guess at a snake-related story or even a link to the Bavarian metropolis (Munich) that is called Mnichov in Czech as well. Nothing would be more far from truth. The village of Mnichov is an ancient settlement near Marienbad and its surroundings host serpentinite, a very special rock. A stone of a dark green colour, immense hardness and high magnesium content, it is a poor substrate to support plants, these often being of tiny stature. Some others, however, adapted to this rock so well that they only grow on serpentinite. Of these, Cerastium alsinifolium (mouseear chickweed) is even found only in Slavkovský les. The patchy distribution of the rock in the surround landscape is reminiscent of islands scattered in the sea, and serve as a model to study the development and spreading of plant species. Local people once used the rock to carve stone cups, boxes, bowls and baptismal





Red deer

Heaths and peat bogs

The extensive complexes of waterlogged spruce woodlands, peat bogs and heaths are the main phenomenon of natural systems in Slavkovský les. Small ponds with a dark peaty water as well as waterlogged stands with Pinus rotundata, a rare bog pine, all hidden in the forests, support 18 species of sphagnum moss and a variety of protected plants - bog bilberry, black crowberry, bog-rosemary and, in a few places, even round-leaved sundew, a carnivorous plant. Peat bogs are home to the moorland clouded yellow, a rare butterfly, for which bog bilberry is the only plant to feed on. The most extensive and most valued peat bogs are under protection in the Kladské rašeliny National Nature Reserve. In fact, considering the site a jewel of the Czech natural world is nothing new, but started a long time ago - the local protected area being established as early as 1933. The springs and peat bogs lying in the Slavkovský les region, covering 3,202 hectares, were entered on the List of Wetlands of International Importance in 2012, as they met the criteria of the Ramsar Convention - the first global intergovernmental treaty on the protection and considerate use of natural resources.

The extensive mining history

The "Imperial Forest" was once known as a site for mining silver, copper, gold, and particularly tin. The major portion of tin was extracted in the area of Horní Slavkov, Krásno and Čistá. A unique technical and cultural landmark, the channel of Dlouhá stoka with its system of mining reservoirs and channels is a rare and well preserved historical water management work that once brought water to the mines, while serving for floating wood from large forests. The mines of Jeroným or Vilém, the open-air mining museum Krásno and other mining galleries not only conceal the remains of historical mining operations, but also became wintering grounds for many species of bats. Today, the extensive woodland is home to

noday, the extensive woodland is nome to many rare animals. Nesting birds include the black stork, as well as owl species like the Tengmalm's owl or the pygmy owl. The largest creature to range the local woods is the red deer; making a gradual return is the beautiful carnivore European lynx.