

HOW TO OVERCOME PHYSICAL BARRIERS IN NATURE EXPERIENCE

Brochure I03

Description of Nature Trails

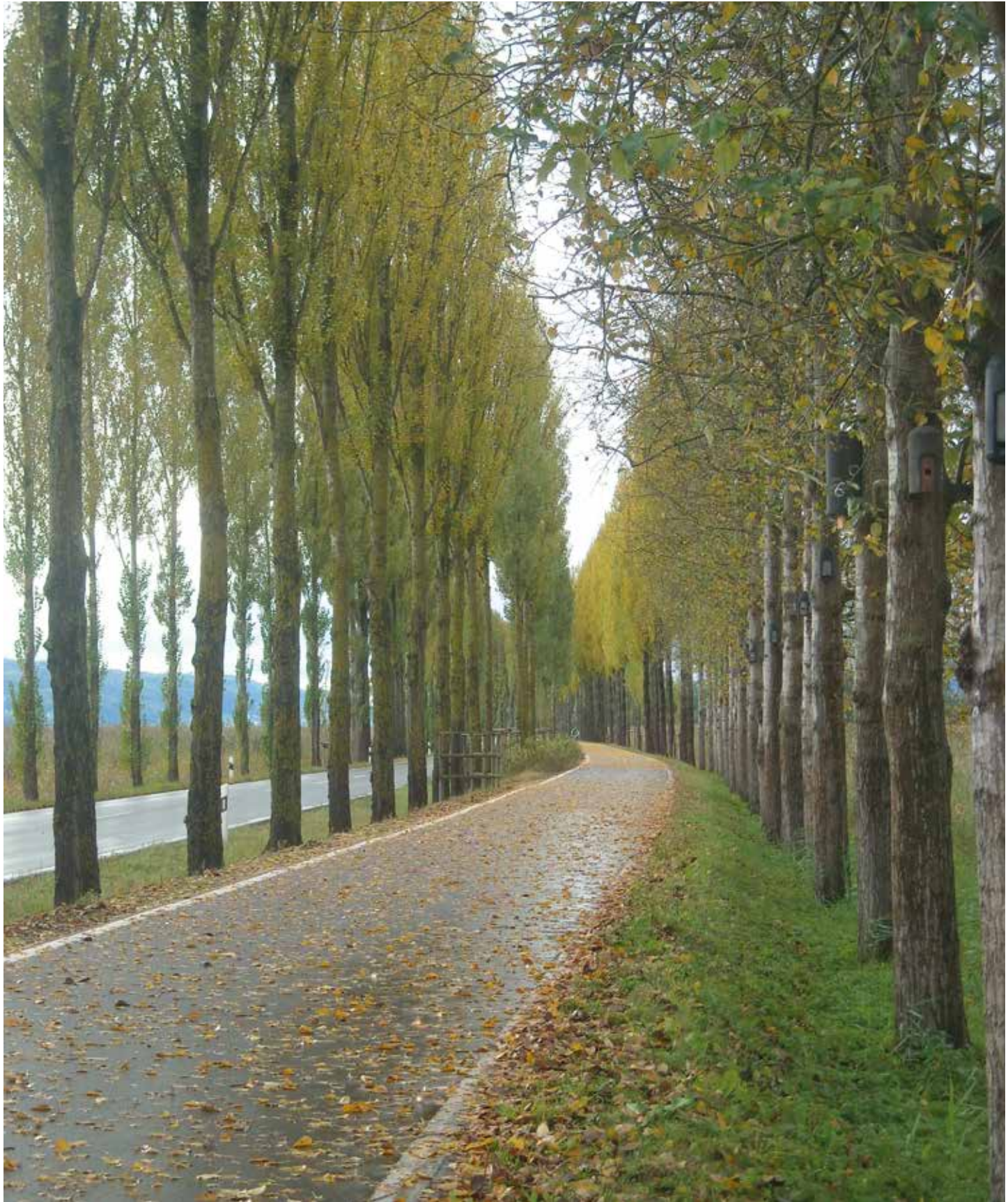


Images:

Cover Image: Etna; p. 4 and 6: GNF; p. 10: Claudia Böhme; p. 12 and 15: Michael Stabentheiner; p. 16 and 18: Etna; p. 20: Balaton Uplands National Park.

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NABU Bodenseezentrum (Germany)

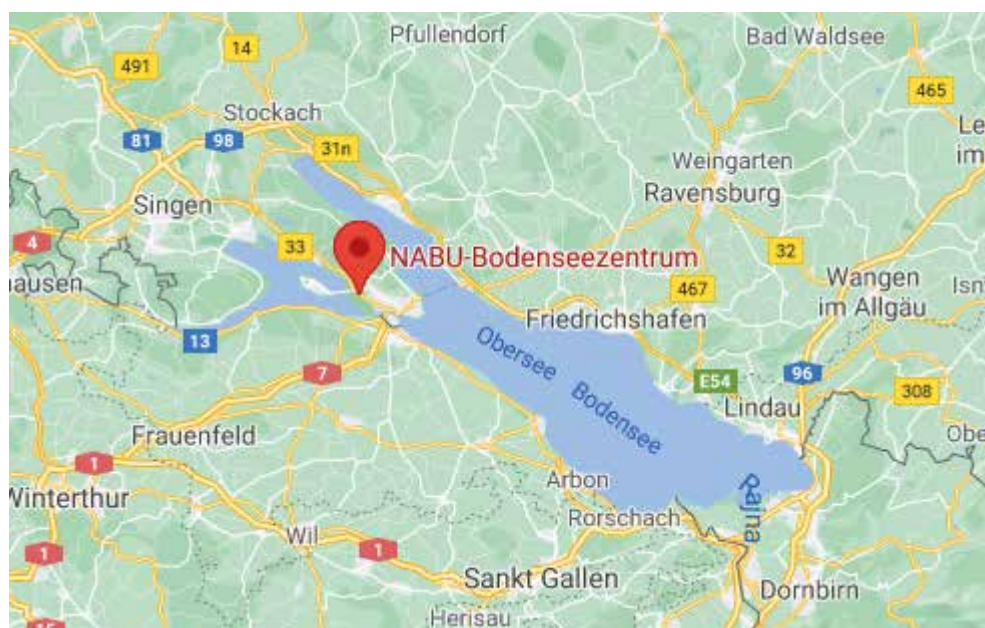
Main Data

Name of the nature trail: Outdoor experience trail at NABU Bodenseezentrum, Germany.

Location: on the edge of the 750-hectare Wollmatinger Ried nature reserve at Lake Constance (German: Bodensee).

Length of the nature trail: 3 trails between 1.5 and 1.7 km one way.

Average time needed to complete the tour: 1 hour per trail.



Main sights and natural values along the trail: Siberian iris, mealy primrose, marsh sedge and other botanical treasures; the lake itself is a valuable wintering area for over 200,000 wading birds and waterfowl.

Difficulty and level differences along the trail: none.

Target groups: potential for all groups (visually impaired, hearing impaired, people with reduced mobility, people with learning disabilities, elders, families with small children / prams, etc.).

Contact information:

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Current Situation & Possible Adjustments

NABU has been working for nature at Lake Constance since 1979. The staff, from the new NABU Lake Constance Centre (NABU Bodenseezentrum) opened in 2019, takes care of 28 valuable protected areas, e.g. the 750-hectare Wollmatinger Ried and the 1,000-hectare habitat network „Westlicher Untersee“. The NABU Lake Constance Centre has a comprehensive annual programme and several offers for experiencing nature in the region. These include three nature experience trails in the immediate vicinity, which were analysed by using the matrix developed within the “Nature without Barriers” project:

- The Gottlieber Weg nature trail.
- The Reichenau-Damm nature trail that includes the viewing platform Burgruine Schopflen (all open to the public).
- The Führungsweg, a guided tour that leads you through the core area of the Wollmatinger Ried (only accessible with a guided tour).

Guided tours take place according to a fixed programme and on request. A new nature experience area is being developed next to the nature conservation centre.

Inclusion is a transversal goal of NABU and is/will also be included in the new NABU Lake Constance Centre. All trails are public and meet general requirements for accessibility and road safety. People with limited mobility can also use them. The boards on the nature trails were installed years ago in such a way that small people and wheelchair users can read them. The information is not provided in simple language, but is offered in an easily understandable way and with different levels of information.

Arrival & Departure

The NABU Lake Constance Centre is easy to reach by public transport. A regional train station is located directly in front of the main entrance. A public car park in front of the centre has parking spaces for disabled and buses. The staff will pick up visitors from the station and car park on request. Furthermore, the trails can be accessed by public transport.

Infrastructure

The new centre building meets the requirements for publicly accessible buildings. The entrance to the centre is sufficiently wide and the windows are clearly marked. A modern barrier-free toilet is available in the centre. Emergency exits are not equipped with light and sound signals, which is acceptable for the size of the building.

Information and Communication

Information about the centre and its services is available on the centre website. The staff knows the area and can give information about the condition and suitability for people with different disabilities. The NABU centre appears on a Braille flyer for experiencing nature at Lake Constance. During opening hours, there is always someone personally available for information. The staff of the NABU Lake Constance Centre is not specifically trained in accessibility, but is informed and sensitised.

Condition of the nature trail

People with mobility impairments can use the two publicly accessible trails. There are enough resting places. On the other hand, the guided trail through the Wollmatinger Ried is very rough and cannot be modified for users with mobility impairments. Nevertheless, there is much to experience for people with visual and hearing impairments, and the trail can be prepared for them accordingly.

The viewing platform of the Schopflen ruins is located on a busy road that has to be crossed. The upper floor, of a height of 10 m, can only be reached by using a wooden staircase with a metal railing. The nearest car parking is about 700 m away. People with mobility impairments can hardly reach Schopflen. People with visual impairments need an accompaniment. Because of the busy road, Schopflen is only an interesting auditory experience in the early morning and in the evening. For everyone else, including people with hearing impairments, this viewing platform is very interesting at almost all times of the day.

Development opportunities & future plans

The dedicated team wants to establish a new nature experience area next to the centre. This will include holistic approach, touching all senses, and will thus be for the usage of all.

Nature experience Lake Erlensee (Germany)

Main Data

Location: town of Kirchhain in Hess, Germany

Length of the nature trail: about 1.9 km.

Average time needed to complete the tour: depending on the use of the information boards and the health condition of a person.



Main sights and natural values along the trail: acoustic stations offer experiences on various topics. Scientific equipment is available for water analysis, which can be booked for groups. An observation platform offers bird sculptures for blind and visually impaired people. The platform provides shelter against severe weather and allow you to observe the bird life on the lake at any time. The nature trail leads through a part of the „Brießelserlen“ nature reserve, a former gravel mining area. Lake Erlensee’s water body provides a safe resting place for migratory birds in winter and breeding habitats for a large number of species in the adjacent forest structures in summer. Lake Erlensee is located in the Amöneburg Basin, which is a resting point on the main migration route for numerous migratory bird species. An old tree population features impressive specimens that are described as part of the „Tree of the Year“ nature trail (the trail route coincides in parts with that of the „Nature Experience Erlensee“). An avenue of birch trees along the watercourse of the little river Wohra flood basin enchants the visitors with its beauty.

Difficulty and level differences along the trail: there are no slopes on the route.

Target groups: the nature experience offers information on six different topics (water bodies, birds, trees and shrubs, nature conflict / culture, tourism / traffic and insects) according to the season. The texts for blind people are available in Braille and accessible via QR-Code. The nature trail is suitable for people with reduced mobility and families with vehicles of all kinds. There are benches at short intervals. A guidance system helps blind and visually impaired people. All



groups of people can book guided tours, which are designed to meet the special needs of the participants. On request, there are also offers for individuals and groups with special needs.

Contact information:

Magistrat der Stadt Kirchhain
Frau Ebert
Stabstelle Öffentlichkeitsarbeit (public relations office)
Phone: 06422 808-0
Mail: k.ebert@kirchhain.de
Website: www.kirchhain.de

Current Situation & Possible Adjustments

Arrival & Departure

You can reach the nature trail by car via the B2, Kirchhain west exit, and by bicycle via the R2 long-distance cycle route. Also, within walking distance of the train station (approx. 1.5 km), public transport is an option.

A transfer service is available on-site on request.

Parking is available directly on site. The nature trail begins at the parking lot.

A tactile map is available for use of all visitors.

Infrastructure

The acoustic station and the observation platform at the lake are accessible without barriers.

Visitor can ask the staff for assistance in the field only during guided tours.

During the season, when guided tours are offered, a barrier-free WC is available. The mobile WC facility is not barrier-free.

There is no other infrastructure services available e.g. there is no café, restaurant, gift shop. The city centre is in about 20 minutes walking distance.

Condition of the nature trail

The nature trail is about 3 m wide. The ground has a water-bound surface.

The nature trail is equipped with a ground-level guidance system made of steel tubes for blind and visually impaired people.

There are five benches along the trail, where visitors can rest. Tables are not available.

The trail is accessible all year round. In the southern area, the trail can be somewhat soggy on long rainy days. However, it is still stable overall. If it is raining, the observation platform is suitable to be used as a shelter. No other shelter options are provided due to the length of the trail.

Other services

Guided tours on various topics are offered once a month from May to October. The tours are promoted locally, in the press and on digital media.

Educational programs and workshops are also offered as part of these tours.

Adventure Trail Weissensee Westufer (Austria)



Adventure Trail Weissensee Westufer (Austria)

Main Data

Location: Weissensee Westufer, start at Weissensee Haus (tourist information point), Techendorf 78.



Length of the nature trail: about 6 km.

Average time needed to complete the tour: about 2 hours.

Main sights and natural values along the trail: the lakeshore, wet meadows (orchids, flour primrose), butterflies, various bird species and a lookout point.

Difficulty and level differences along the trail: there are no large differences in altitude, so there are no slopes to overcome, max. approx. 2.5m.

Target groups: generally, the trail is suitable for all groups. During the construction, less attention was given for people with learning disabilities. However, ranger tours can be booked for everyone and offer a great experience, and are a good option for people with learning disabilities.

Contact information:

Verein Naturpark Weissensee

Techendorf 90

9762 Weissensee

petra.kranabether@ktn.gv.at

Tel: 0043 (0)664 9636 186

Weissensee Information

Techendorf 78, 9762 Techendorf

0043 (0) 4713 2220

info@weissensee.com

Current Situation & Possible Adjustments

Arrival & Departure

You can either come either by car, bicycle or on foot. It is also possible to use the public transport. There is a barrier-free bus of the nature park available. Parking is available near the Weissensee information point, at the beginning of the tour. In addition, parking can be found at Pradlitz.

Infrastructure

The building is barrier-free and you can ask for information at the Weissensee information point. There are barrier-free toilets in the Weissensee information point as well as in front of the Weissensee building. You can stop at the Restaurant Schuler for food and drinks.

Condition of the nature trail

The width of the nature trail is about 2 m. The gravelled trail guides you through the whole trail, so it is easy to find your way. You will also find information boards for your orientation. Barrier-free resting facilities on the trail are being installed. When it rains, beware of swampy sections or puddles of water on the trail. The bridge over the Lake Weissensee could also be a hazard, as there is a slight incline and a sidewalk about 1 m wide. In case of emergency, please call the mountain rescue service.

Other services

There are guided hiking tours on given days. The tours start at the Weissensee information point in Techendorf-Süd and it end at the Parking area-Pradlitz. The tour has a length of about 3 km and takes about 3 hours (9.30 – 12.30 h). The price of the tour is € 14 for adults and € 8 for children (from 7 to 14 years). There are barrier-free toilets on site at the start and at the end.

During the tour, the participants will encounter a huge variety of rare orchids at the shore surrounded by wet meadows. Along the way, you can taste and smell awesome wild plants. After a short hike (approx. 1 km) to the viewing platform with great views of the surrounding mountains, the participants can relax and listen to the atmospheric calls and songs of the birds. The ranger will share fascinating stories about the characteristics and lifestyles of the individual bird species, their plumage, their flying skills and much more.

Right here, at the observation platform on the pier, the first water contact will happen. The visitors, with the help of a microscope, will examine the variety of animals in the lake from dragonfly larvae to fish. Afterwards, the shore path leads them to the mysterious Moorsteg, where the tour will finish with a view of the beautiful Weissensee.

The following barrier-free services are available:

- Audio guide in preparation.
- Rental equipment (binoculars, microscope).
- Emerald eye of the Alps (ceramic eye) in turquoise blue.
- Guided tour in the following languages: German and English.
- Nature park bus (barrier-free).
- Swiss track - wheelchair hoist for hire.

Development opportunities & future plans

There are two trails on the Weissensee - the barrier-free west bank path and the lake educational path on the east bank path. The path on the east bank will contain new multi-sensory boards. In the west bank path, there was no possibility to include those boards in the first implementation phase, but they will be added in the future.

An audio guide will be implemented for both paths. There will be an evaluation on the usability of the audio guides for people with disabilities. Afterwards, there will be discussions on further improvements.

The topic of accessibility is an ongoing process and will be continuously updated.





“Black Water” Park in Wrocław (Poland)

Main Data

Location: Miłoszycka Street, Psie Pole, Wrocław (GPS: 51.115226, 17.125192)



Length of the nature trail: about 1 km.

Average time needed for the tour: 1 hour, including sightseeing, breaks and taking pictures.

Main points of interest and natural values along the trail: 2 viewing platforms over the water reservoir, information boards (2 rotating and 2 informative, placed low above the ground), ducks-feeder, nesting boxes, big old oaks, trees cut by beavers, protected bird species: common moorhen, woodpeckers, great tit, etc.

Difficulty and ground level differences along the trail: the park is situated in a lowland area. It surrounds the oxbow lake of the Odra River. There are several inclined parts, but the slopes do not exceed 4%. The trail is not finished. The next sections are under construction. The trail consists of two trails that do not connect into a loop. At the end of each of them, visitors have to turn back.

Target groups: the park is suitable for the blind, the deaf, seniors and people with walking disabilities, as well as for people with prams and small children. Most of the trails and one of the viewing platforms are also suitable for wheelchair users. The second viewing platform and one of the revolving educational panels are not barrier-free accessible as a narrow, rocky trail leads to them.

Contact information:

Website: <https://www.facebook.com/parkczarnawoda/>



Current Situation & Possible Adjustments

Arrival & Departure

The park is located within the city borders and is well connected. You can reach it on foot, by bike, car or public transport (bus lines 115, 118, 715, 941). The distance between the nearest bus stops and the entrance of the trail is 260 m and 300 m respectively. You can reserve a taxi that will take you from the bus stop to the parking area next to the park, but the fee for this type of service is quite high. There are public parking areas, at a distance of several hundred meters from the entrance to the trail. There is no dedicated parking area or parking spots for disabled people.

Infrastructure

There is no infrastructure related to the trail.

Condition of the nature trail

The width of the trails varies between 1 m to 3 m. The surface consists of gravel, wooden boards or asphalt. The boards do not become slippery when it rains, puddles are unlikely to form on the asphalt, and the gravel sections do not become muddy. There is no typical guidance system in the Park, but along the trails there are handrails or barriers on at least one side; some parts of the trails have concrete, steel or wooden rim. There are 6 wooden benches and 2 wooden deck chairs in the park. Some benches have enough space to park the wheelchair next to them. At the current stage, there are no stairs in the park and no slopes exceed 4%.

There are narrowings of the trail (up to 90 cm) that can make it difficult to pass. The lack of a railing on one side of the 110 cm wide wooden pavement, which is several cm above the ground, can be a hazard - you can fall off the trail. This section of the trail can be challenging for wheelchair users, but it is not impossible to manage and can be skipped when visiting the park. The lack of a railing at a bend above the water can also be dangerous. There is no roofed shelter in the case of rainfall.

In the case of an emergency that threatens your life, health or safety, call the emergency number 112.

Development opportunities & future plans

A wooden pavement with a width of 90 to 110 cm is an uncomfortable part of the trail and can be dangerous. In order to improve the quality of the experience on the track, passing loops can be installed every few meters. To ensure the safety of all visitors, it would be a good solution to have a wooden pavement a few centimetres above the ground, surrounded by a barrier on both sides.

An additional element of infrastructure that should be considered in the future is a covered space that protects against rain e.g. in the form of an openwork pavilion.

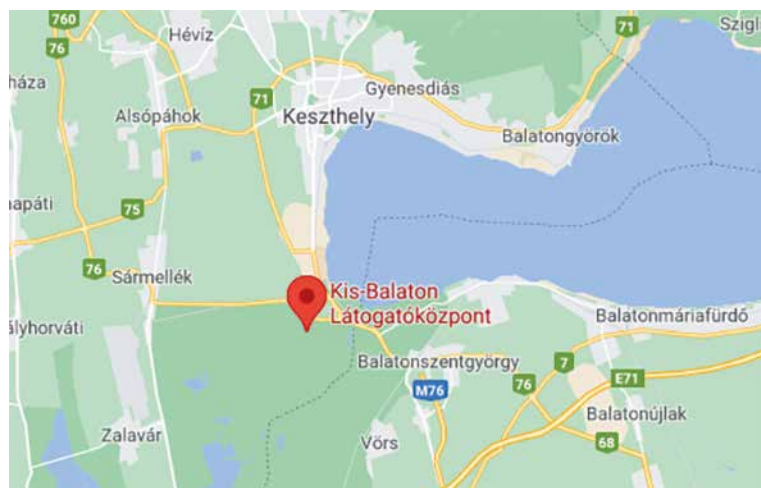


Kis-Balaton Visitor Centre

and guided tour to the Diás Island on land and water (Hungary)

Main Data

Location: Keszthely/Fenékpuszt (GPS: 46.700197, 17.238187).



Length of the nature trail: on the green roof of the Visitor Centre there is a 100 m long nature trail presenting the flora and fauna and the natural values of the area. There is also an educational trail to the Diás Island nearby, which leads to the István Fekete Memorial.

Average time needed to complete the tour: you should plan at least 4 hours for the visit of the Visitor Centre and the nature trail to the Diás Island. It takes about 30 minutes to visit the Visitor Centre and another 30 minutes to watch the information film. The nature trail on the fascinating green roof of the Visitor Centre takes about 30 minutes. Children can play at the playground for an additional 20-40 minutes. Depending on the physical capacities and health condition of the visitors, they need about 1.5-2 hours to complete the tour on land to Dias Island and about 3 hours to complete the tour on water by canoe. Overall, it is a half-day programme, including the tour, meals and resting time.

Main sights and natural values along the trail:

the almost 1,000-m² visitor centre opened in September 2020. It presents the natural values of the highly protected Kis-Balaton area and raises visitors' awareness of nature protection. The main attractions and services are the visitor centre, with the educational trail on its roof, and the guided tours organized on land and water (by canoe) to visit the István Fekete Memorial Room on the Diás Island. The island can be visited only in the framework of guided tours. Electric golf carts are also offered, which provide a great help for people with reduced mobility to complete the tour.

Difficulty and ground level differences along the trail: there are no significant level differences along the trail (flat surface), but completing the tour on water can be dangerous for people with certain impairments e.g. blind and visually impaired people and people with reduced mobility.



Target groups: the visitor centre and the nature trail on land are accessible for almost everyone: for example for people with disabilities (especially people with reduced mobility), elderly people and families with small children (using prams).

Opening hours:

- Visitor centre: it is open all year round. It is usually open from Tuesday to Sunday from 9.00-16.00 (closed on Mondays), but in high season (in July – August) it is open from 9.00-19.00.
- Guided tours to Diás Island: by electric cart and canoe from Tuesday to Sunday from 10.00-13.00.

Entrance fee:

- Visitor Centre:
Adults: 2,000 HUF/person, Discounted fee: 1,700 HUF/person, Children (between 3-14 years old): 1,500 HUF/person.
Family ticket (2 adults and 2 children (3-14 years old): 5,900 HUF/family.
Fee for additional children with family ticket: 1,000 HUF/child.
Children under 3 years old: free of charge.
- Diás Island:
By car: 1,500/1,200/1,000 HUF for adults/reduced /children.
By electric cart: +500. HUF/person.
By canoe 3,000/2,700/2,000 HUF for adults/reduced /children.

Contact information:

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E-mail: kisbalatonlatogatokozpont@bfnp.hu

Internet: <https://www.bfnp.hu/>

Current Situation & Possible Adjustments

Arrival & Departure

You can reach the visitor centre and nature trail to the Diás Island by both, car and bicycle. Due to the bad connection, it is recommended to avoid using public transport services, until the service improves.

If visitors come by car, they should turn towards the main road no. 76 at Fenékpusztá. A brown tourist sign indicates the way to the visitor centre. There are also road signs located at the main junctions in Keszthely and in the surrounding area showing the way to the visitor centre.

The car park is paved. There are two parking spaces for disabled people and one parking space for families.

Infrastructure

The design of the Visitor Centre and the Memorial Room at Diás Island is barrier free. The exhibition is accessible for people in wheelchair. An electric golf cart is available for people with reduced mobility to participate at the guided tour to the Diás Island. There are ramps for disabled people in the István Fekete Memorial Room.

There is also a barrier-free toilet in the visitor centre. The additional services, including the cine-

ma, playground, restaurant and gift shop, are also accessible for impaired people. At the reception desk, visitors can ask for help and information.

Condition of the nature trail

The visitor centre is designed to be barrier-free, however the nature trail on the roof of the centre, is not recommended for people with limited mobility and the visually impaired. The slopes and the uneven surface might be dangerous for them. However, the trail is accessible for hearing impaired people and people with learning difficulties. There are interactive stations along the trail introducing the habitats of the area.

Sign language interpreter, induction loop, rental of walking and hearing aids are not available. There is no personal assistant service. However, the electric golf cart can transport people with reduced mobility to the Diás Island (also to transport wheelchairs). The memorial site is accessible for impaired people, but there is a 200 m long road to the building, on which it might be difficult to walk because of the bumpy surface.

You can visit the Diás Island can also from water by using 3-person canoes. However, because of safety reasons, this is not recommended for impaired people.

Other services

Environmental workshops and programmes are offered by professional animators; disabled people can participate too.

Development opportunities & future plans

- To include information on accessibility and barrier-free parking on the website and on social media platforms.
- To provide accessible information for orientation on site e.g. written information in easy language, signs and pictograms, audio-information and/or tactile maps.
- To establish guidance system in the building for better orientation.
- Regarding accessibility, to dedicate more focus to other target groups as well e.g. for blind and visually impaired people, deaf and hearing impaired people and people with learning disabilities. Accordingly, to provide more tactile experiences, information in easy language and audio information as well.
- To exploit better the benefits of technical devices e.g. smart phone applications, induction loop, etc.
- To improve accessibility of the nature trail to make it more barrier-free for blind and visually impaired people and people with learning disabilities as well e.g. establishing a guiding system (edges of the trail), installing tactile information boards and tactile animal models to touch them.
- To eliminate possible hazards and to make the nature trail more safe and secure.

www.nature-without-barriers.eu



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