



A fishpond in autumn, full of hungry herons.

Welcome to the landscape of fishponds, far-stretching meadows and alluvial forests, through which the untamed river Odra winds in countless meanders just like a snake. The wide meadows along the river have been preserved in the Poodří region thanks to regular floods, as have the alluvial forests and pools in the river's side arms. Over the millennia, man learned to use the floodplain and to respect the aquatic element. This led to a harmonic landscape where natural river courses are accompanied by many flumes and ditches that used to power watermills and sawmills and supplied water to extensive fishpond systems, many of which still embellish the landscape of Poodří today.



9000 B.C.



6000 B.C.



1200 A.D.

The current history of Poodří dates back to the end of the Ice Age some 11 thousand years ago. At that time the glacier reached up to the main European water divide near Běloutín, the Hranice region. It left moraines, drift deposits and lake beds here, through which the River Odra began to make its way when the glacier had fully receded. During the warmer period the area was inhabited by hunters and gatherers.

Around the year 6000 B.C. the landscape here began to be influenced by farming, often in the form of slash-and-burn cultivation, i.e., farming on burnt forest areas. Later, probably because of an invasion of nomads, development stopped, and from around the year zero until approx. the 11th century human settlement in the area was scarce. Only during the Přemyslid rule did intense Czech colonisation begin. After another

retreat of inhabitants in the 13th century, a second colonisation came, mostly Germanic. The fishpond systems date back to the 14th and 15th centuries, and cover almost 700 hectares today. Most of them are supplied by a man-made flume called Mlýnka, over 20 km in length. This work is first mentioned in the 2nd half of the 15th century, which makes it one of the oldest mentioned works of this type in the country.



The meanders of the River Odra

Just 82 sq. km in area, the Poodří ('The River Odra Region') is one of the smallest Protected Landscape Areas in the Czech Republic. As a wetland of international importance, it is protected under the Ramsar Convention and is also one of the important bird migration corridors in Central Europe. Thanks to its extraordinary natural value and due to the protection of bird species of European importance, namely the kingfisher, marsh harrier, bittern and gadwall, Poodří is part of the Natura 2000 European network of nature protection areas.

The landscape in Poodří is a variegated mosaic of floodplains and meadows, intertwined with green groves reminding of the river courses and the vanished river arms. It also includes fishpond

systems separated by lines of trees at their dams. This diverse environment is the foundation for the rich life in the Odra's floodplains. The exhibition in the House of Nature, located in the wildlife rescue station in Bartošovice, presents the nature and landscape of Poodří in an entertaining way. Children can try to see why meanders are important on a model of a river with flowing water and gaming features. They can settle in a stork nest or discover what the world underwater is like. In the garden visitors can see various shelters for animals, be they nesting boxes, pools or insect hotels. The live animals exhibition, guided only, presents the basic facts of the mission and activities of the rescue station.

## Come Meet the Otter

The Eurasian otter will be your guide through the exhibition. It travels through Poodří, swims in the river, watches and comments on what is happening around. It watches the birds with binoculars and becomes an ornithologist, or takes a spade to plant trees, catches fish and explains what species live here, or just takes a flower in its mouth and basks in a flowering meadow.

The plush otter is one of the souvenirs that you can buy in the reception. The otter is also the symbol of the healthy landscape in Poodří to which it is now returning after many years. Poodří is also home to people who have been changing this region for generations and who, as responsible users, show respect to their environment.



**The Poodří House of Nature ('Dům přírody Poodří')** is a visitor centre which runs a permanent outdoor and indoor exhibition showing the natural, cultural and historical monuments of the floodplain area of the River Odra. Schools and other visitors are welcome to use the specialised programmes both in the House of Nature and outdoors, which can be ordered via [cevbartosovice@csopnj.cz](mailto:cevbartosovice@csopnj.cz) or on +420 723 648 759.

Tickets and souvenirs are sold on the ground floor. The permanent exhibition is divided into three parts: the indoor exhibition with dioramas, touch screens and information boards; the live garden with the Odra river course model and various interactive features; and the live animals part. A multi-purpose hall with 35 seats is available, usually housing a short-term exhibition.

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Female Golden eagle feeding her young



Eurasian otter with its prey



Spring in an alluvial forest

### Did you know that ...

- The River Odra and its tributaries often had several riverbeds? Some of them were later used as fishpond and mill flumes, others were backfilled.
- You can find 70 fishponds in the Poodří PLA in just 82 sq. km?
- The floodplain of the River Odra has an enormous capacity and considerably slows down floodwater? This protects the villages and towns that lie down the river course.
- Forests only occupy some 10% of the Poodří area? On the contrary, almost 30% of the PLA is covered in meadows.
- The wildlife rescue station in Bartošovice receives up to 2000 animals every year? It returns more than half of them back into nature.

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

- camping and lighting fires only in designated places
- driving and parking your car only where permitted
- keeping to marked trails
- riding your bicycle on cycle paths and respecting nature and other visitors
- leaving animals and plants alone in their natural habitats
- not damaging nature and natural monuments
- taking your rubbish home with you



**Tip for a Trip: The Chateau Nature Trail**

This trail is 7 km long, but you will find so many interesting things around Bartošovice that you'll want to spend the whole day here. The trail is a round trip which begins and ends near the chateau and the House of Nature. The terrain is easy and you will walk under mighty oak trees on fishpond banks, through meadows and an apple orchard. You can sit by the well or directly above the water surface of the flume that supplies water to the local mill, a cultural and historical monument. You will see the beauty of the Bartošovický luh nature reserve and see the biggest living plane tree in the Czech Republic in the chateau garden. In the ideal case you can visit the House of Nature on the same trip.



An orchard near Bartošovice

**Tip for a Trip: Kotvice – The Landscape of Changes**

This nature trail will take you through the Kotvice nature reserve, near Studénka. In less than 4 kilometres you will see Poodří as an interesting and diverse landscape, constantly changing under the influence of both nature and man but still preserving its charm and natural wealth. Nine panels between Nová Horka and Pasečný bridge will give you many interesting facts about the history of the place and the animals and plants living on the Odra floodplain. Near the Kotvice fishpond, an important bird nesting site, you will find a bird watching site built above the water surface. You will be accompanied by the otter, the main character in the comic strip that you will find at every station on this trail.



Bird watching site at the Kotvice fishpond

**Tip for a Trip: Rezavka – The Ostrava Part of Poodří**

Would you like to see the beauty of nature around the River Odra? Why not come to the city of Ostrava! A great part of the Poodří PLA is actually located on the town's territory, together with the Rezavka nature reserve. Rezavka consists of an alluvial forest with a dense network of flumes and cut-off lakes, herb-rich meadows and the Nový fishpond with extensive reed growths. On its bank a bird watching site has been built. The trail begins along the River Odra in Ostrava-Zábřeh and has ten panels dedicated to the animals and plants living on the floodplain. The best time to see the reserve: In spring it is covered in a layer of spring blooms, in autumn it is covered with a blanket of golden leaves. However, a walk along the flumes lined with old trees is enchanting at any time of the year.



The Rezavka reserve in autumn

**Tip for a Trip: Travel through the Floodwater Landscape**

This nature trail will take you along the real floodwater landscape – the floodplain between Jeseník and Suchdol. It starts at the Jeseníký fishpond by the left-hand riverbank of the River Odra. It uses non-traditional information panels made from drift wood which looks like it has just been pulled out of the water. The playful comic-like texts will be enjoyed especially by children, but they can appeal to adults as well. Each trail station has interactive features or a practical example: raw minerals from Poodří, wood chewed by a beaver, wooden chimes... You will learn how the landscape was formed, how to properly care for it and who are the wanted as well as unwelcome inhabitants. You won't get bored on the Floodwater Landscape Trail. Just check it is not flooded before you enter.



A tree felled by a beaver at the River Odra

