



THE KAMPINOS FOREST – THE WESTERN PART

THE FOREST WAS HERE BEFORE US ...

From among the numerous interesting hikes to the Kampinos Forest (Puszcza Kampinoska) we propose a circular route starting at Kampinos village. On the way there are many environmental attractions: splendid woods, vast marshes and high dunes. A visit to the Educational-Museum Centre (Ośrodek Dydaktyczno-Muzealny) in Granica can help you to become acquainted with the surrounding world. The trail runs through many places of great historical value. You will stand on the embankments of an early medieval town in Zamczysko, see a wooden church of rare beauty in Kampinos, and the fallen Pine of the Partisans will remind you of the battles which took place in 1863.

This large village at the edge of the Łowicz-Blonie Plain (Równina Łowicko-Błońska) in the Middle Ages had town rights for a short time. The history of the settlement is connected with the nearby woods. The Forest constituted a considerable property, so it was many times used as a royal pledge. A long stream of royal creditors terribly devastated the Kampinos goods, as everybody wanted to acquire as many as possible of the trees and animals. The last of the lessees, Ludwik Gutkowski – the Czerwińsk district governor, was a co-founder of the wooden church, which is now the most valuable monument in Kampinos village. From the bus stop the blue trail will lead you to the building.

The Kampinos pines were used as building material of the temple. The wood of these pines is distinguished by dense rings. The baroque church of the Assumption was erected from 1773 to 1782. The interior is divided into three naves by wooden pillars. In the main altar there is a painting "Christ on the Cross" from the end of the 18th century. Its

Length of the route:

22 km (possibility of shortening to 17 km).

Marking:

blue, red, green and yellow trails, consecutively.

Difficulties:

The excursion is relatively long, so you had better set off on the trail in the spring or summer. You have to take something for protection against mosquitoes!

Public transport:

Buses and minibuses from the bus stop at the junction of Górczewska and Łazurowa streets in Wola, a Warsaw suburb; buses from Sochaczew, Błonie, Grodzisko Mazowieckie.

0.0 km

Kampinos

3.4 km

Granica

authorship is assigned to Franciszek Smuglewicz. Near the church stand an 18th century wooden bell tower and a brick building vicarage from the mid- 19th century.

Behind the church the trail turns right and leads through the village towards the Forest. You walk on a field track along the edge of the Łowicz-Błonie Plain (Równina Łowicko-Błońska), and then on an asphalt road northwards. You are now in the Kampinos National Park. The route runs across a broad, boggy basin, called Olszowieckie Marsh (Olszowieckie Błoto). In spring the marshy meadows and sedge fields are covered with blooming carpets of kingcups. Botanists have found here several species of orchids. The northern edge of the wetland is marked by the dark wall of the forest.

The road leads to a car park and a vast resting place. During the season a bar is open here. If you come by car, you can shorten the route a bit and park just here. From the car park follow the blue trail marks, along the asphalt road to the east.

The origins of Granica village is astonishingly closely connected with world history. When in the second half of the 18th century industry began to develop rapidly, the demand for wood increased, too. To meet this demand, the Mazovian forests began to be settled by so called "budnicy". In return for exemption from villein service they cleared the forest, made charcoal, produced potash and ash. They inhabited makeshift cottages, knocked anyhow up – "budy". In 1795 such a settlement gave origin to the village of Granica. During the interwar years a forest district office was established here. The complex of wooden buildings in the then trendy national style is now under the charge of the conservator.

One of these buildings houses the Kampinos Forest Museum (Muzeum Puszczy Kampinoskiej), which belongs to the Educational-Museum Centre (Ośrodek Dydaktyczno-Muzealny) (contact: Granica k. Kampinosu tel./fax (022) 725 01 23, open every day except Mondays 9.00 am to 4.00 pm). Before you enter the museum, pay attention to the surroundings. The sky is obscured by huge oaks. The three trunked Forester's Oak (Dąb Leśniczego) has a girth of 5.5

m. Under a little roof lies an unusual exhibit - the jaw of a whale found in Pomerania. In front of the museum there is a stone with a tablet devoted to Professors Jadwiga and Roman Kobendza, initiators of the Kampinos National Park. Inside the museum, in two exhibitions rooms, the natural environment of the Forest is interestingly presented. You will learn many details about the lie of the land, rare plants and see animals which are not easily observed in their natural environment. A separate room is devoted to historical events which took place in the Kampinos Forest (Puszcza Kampinoska).

An open-air permanent exhibition opposite the museum building shows all the Polish national parks. Nearby you can see a tiny open-air ethnographic museum. The historic village buildings have been transferred here from the forest settlements which gradually become depopulated. Near the ethnographic park runs Third Millennium Avenue (Aleja Trzeciego Tysiąclecia). The oaks growing along it are still very small. In front of each tree there is a plate with its name and the name of the important person who planted it. Among others, the President, the primate and several champions of the world have "their" oaks here.

From the Educational-Museum Centre the trail goes further straight ahead, along the edge of the oldest area of strict protection in the Forest, "Granica", set up in 1936. Here, on over 230 ha, the ancient coniferous forests intermingle with alder woods full of lush undergrowth. Because of the long period of protection, they constitute one of the most splendid stands of trees in the entire national park.

A junction of trails. Keep to the blue trail marks. At first the trail goes along the eastern border of the area of strict protection; then it turns off to the north east. Afterwards it runs along the edge of a peat bog. Walking through young copses and the remnants of the arable fields of Narty village you will reach the asphalt road from Kampinos to Górki. To the east of the road you will see the marshy area of strict protection - "Pożary". Natural communities of hydrophilic flora have been well preserved and many animal species are sheltered here.

4.9 km

The eastern edge of the area of strict protection – "Granica"

7.1 km

The area of strict protection – “Nart”

At the junction of tracks, hidden in the shade of higher trees, stand two hornbeams, the oldest in the Kampinos Forest (Puszcza Kampinowska). They are over three hundred years old. Deep in the forest you can see huge, two hundred years old pines. The area of strict protection – “Nart” allows you to observe the forest as it would have been without human intervention. Many people do not realise that the stands of pines, presently common in the Kampinos National Park, have been planted since the 18th century. Originally the dune areas were dominated by broad-leaved forests, consisting mainly of hornbeams, oaks and lime-trees. The area of strict protection “Nart” was established in 1940 thanks to the efforts of a Polish forest district manager, engineer Stanisław Rychter. Sixty years were enough to recover nature to its original state. The lower layer of trees is formed mainly by broadleaved species. In spring, lilies of valleys bloom beautifully here.

At first the trail goes along the wall of trees then it turns deep into the forest.

10.3 km

Zamczysko

From the tourist signpost a narrow path leads to an early medieval town called “Old Castle” (“Stare Zamczysko”). You can climb the town embankments using ledges and steps. The old town has been located according to the rules of the art of war. There are marshes on both sides of it. The natural defensive features have been fortified by two embankments, separated by two moats. Archaeologists have established that the stronghold was probably set up at the beginning of the 13th century. It was the outpost of a larger defensive layout, including towns in Trojanów, Osiek, Błonie and Kopytów. According to folk tradition, in Zamczysko Queen Bona hid her treasures. Now the town area is covered with rich broadleaved forest. The age of several huge sessile oaks is estimated to be over 250 years.

After visiting the ancient town return to the junction of the trails and go northwards, following the red trail marks. Several hundred metres from the ancient town you will pass by New Castle (Nowe Zamczysko). From the First World War until the set up of the national park, a sawmill worked here – it significantly contributed to the destruc-



tion of the forest trees. Nowadays, in place of the sawmill there is a fire watchtower and a training centre of the Warsaw Main School of Fire Service (Szkoła Głównej Służby Pożarniczej). At first the route goes through a pine wood, then descends to a marshy depression covered with alders. In spring water may squelch under your shoes.

The trail reaches the southern edge of the village. In the place called Three Crosses you will see a roadside shrine, a memorial stone and a huge, fallen trunk of a pine. The Pine of the Partisans of 1863 fell in 1984. Then it was 170 years old and has a girth of 350 cm. Even withered and lying it makes a big impression by a thicket of branches. The legend says that its boughs bent downwards because of the weight of the partisans hanged by the tsarist Cossacks. This murder was committed on the survivors of a troop of Major Walery Remiszewski.

From Górki you begin to return to Granica, following the green trail mark. At first the trail runs along the asphalt Górczyńska Road and then enters the forest. Walk through the pine forest to come back to the borders of the area of “Nart”; then cross the wooded land of the village of the

12.5 km

Górki



19.1 km

The eastern edge of the area of strict protection – “Granica”

same name to return to the edge of the area of “Granica”. On the last stretch of the route the green trail is joined by the blue trail.

The well-known hub of trails in place of the former for-ester’s lodge: If you want to return to the car park in Grani-ca, keep following the green trail marks. In order to reach Kampinos, head southwards following the yellow trail. The path runs along the former arable lands, which were wooded after the Park authorities bought them. Behind the bridge over the Olszowiecki Channel the land may be a bit marshy.

21.4 km

Przystanek autobusowy w Kampinosie

Maybe enough walking for today...

Practical information

Granica, seasonal tourists bar on the car park; the owner organises also britzka/horse cart rides and in winter - sleigh rides. Contact: Robert Gawart, tel. (022) 725 00 48, mobile: 609 034 057.



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