



Hiking and Educational Trail Paths of Orchids



About Strahinjčica



Strahinjčica is a mountain in the northwest part of Hrvatsko Zagorje which has a vastly diverse vegetation cover across a small area of 60 km². Over 1,000 plant species and subspecies have been recorded on Strahinjčica, therefore its immediate area was chosen as one of the 94 botanically important areas in Croatia. Strahinjčica is a large orchid garden as 32 species of orchids have been recorded in the area.

The mountain is mostly covered in mixed deciduous forests. On the hills of Krapinsko Humlje and Radobojsko Humlje, there are dry hillside grasslands (important orchid habitats) which are a result of deforestation. Wet meadows in the valleys of streams are not as common. Apart from forests and meadows, communities of firsures have also been recorded. Owing to human impact, habitats like pastures, meadows, vineyards, plow fields, gardens, and orchards have been preserved.



Hiking and Educational Trail Paths of Orchids



The hiking and educational trail *Paths of Orchids*, located in the municipality of Radoboj, is intended for nature lovers of all ages and interests, with the aim of education, recreation, and raising environmental awareness. The trail is circular, approximately 15.8 km long, and consists of three sections:

Strahinjčica Trail (10 km – 250 min)

Overlaps with the hiking trail that leads to the Strahinjčica mountain lodge and passes along the mountain ridge at the highest peak.

Dedek and Babica Trail (1.1 km – 60 min)

Near the village of Gornji Kamenečki, the trail leads to the Dedek and Babica rocks at an altitude of 580 meters.

Orchid Trail (4.7 km – 110 min)

The trail leads to the hunting lodge on Mala Gora and passes along the slopes of the Plat ridge. It is known for its richness of species and abundance of orchids.



18 educational panels have been installed along the trail, providing information about plant cover, orchids, wildlife, fossil and mineral richness, as well as other interesting facts about the broader Strahinjčica area, in order to emphasize the value and importance of this region.



List of educational panels

S1 Strahinjčica Trail

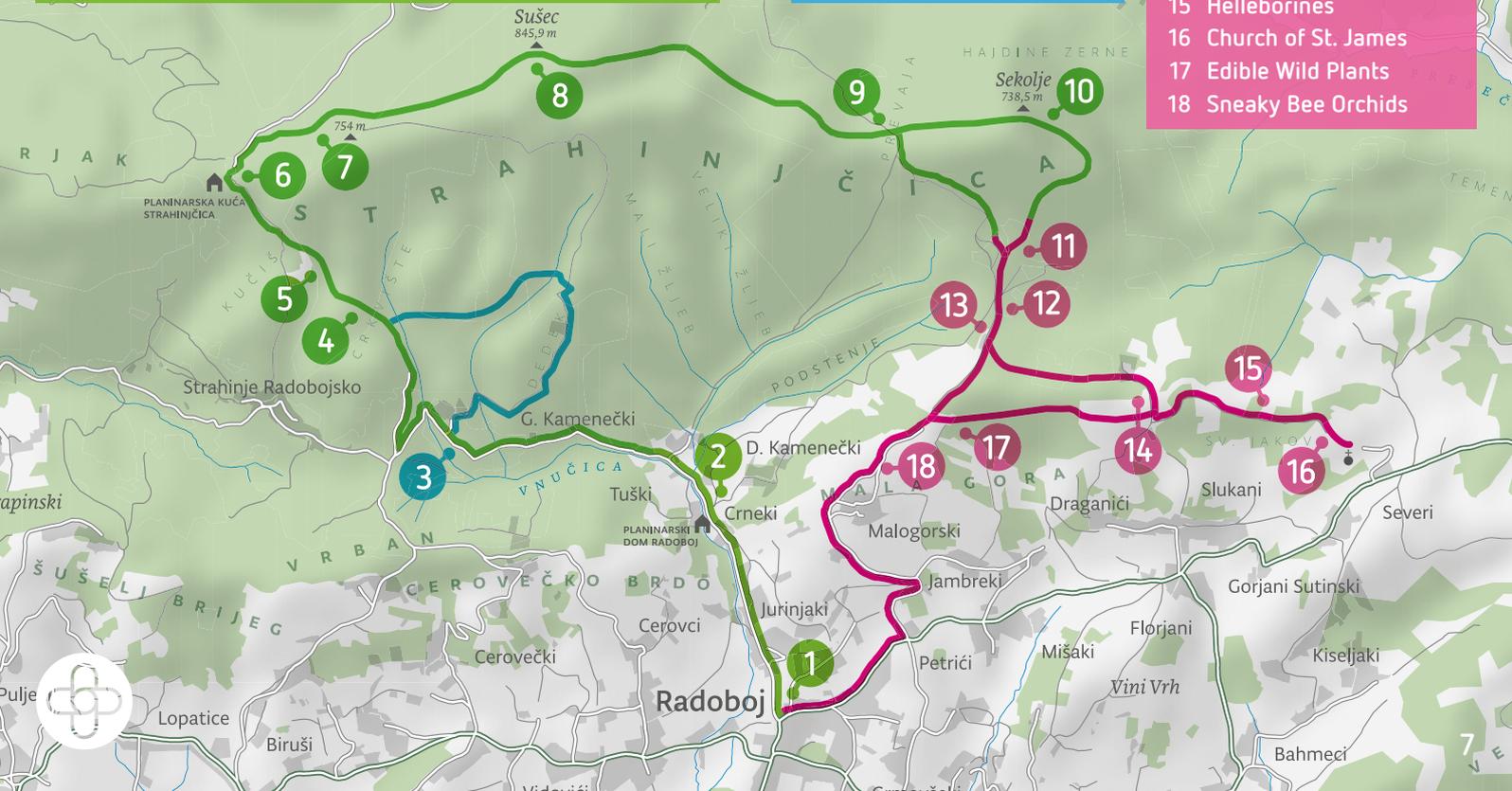
- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1 About Strahinjčica | 6 Forests of Strahinjčica |
| 2 In the Distant Past and the Ores of Radoboj | 7 Viewpoint |
| 4 Unusual Orchids | 8 Saproxyllic Beetles |
| 5 Nocturnal Animals | 9 Chasmophytes |
| | 10 Hajdine Zerne |

S2 Dedek and Babica Trail

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|------------------------------|
| 3 Legend of Dedek and Babica |
|------------------------------|

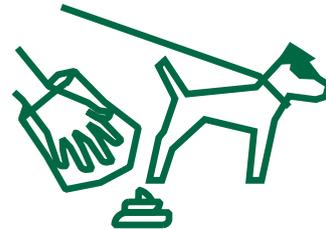
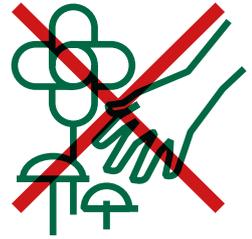
S3 Orchid Trail

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|--------------------------------------|
| 11 Poljane Meadows and Pisane Pečine |
| 12 Mushrooms |
| 13 Tumuli in Podstenje |
| 14 Adriatic Lizard Orchid |
| 15 Helleborines |
| 16 Church of St. James |
| 17 Edible Wild Plants |
| 18 Sneaky Bee Orchids |





Love, respect and appreciate nature.
We cannot live without nature.



Ecological Network

Natura 2000



The ecological network *Natura 2000* represents a European web of areas important for the preservation of endangered plant and animal species as well as habitat types. Strahinjčica, as a part of the ecological network *Natura 2000*, is relevant for the conservation of the following endangered species and habitats:

The Balkan goldenring

The eastern eggar

The European stag beetle

The *Rosalia longicorn*

The Adriatic lizard orchid

The yellow-bellied toad

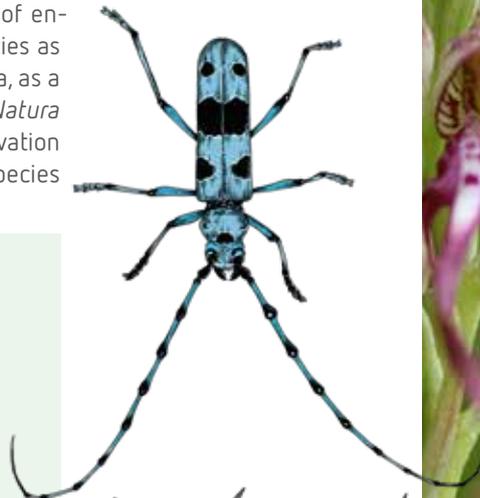
Open xerothermophilic pioneer communities on carbonate stony soil

Dry continental grasslands
(*important orchid sites)

Carbonate rocks with chasmophytic vegetation

Illyrian oak-hornbeam forests

Matgrass grassland rich in species



Orchid Garden on Strahinjčica



Orchids are plants unique for the beauty of their flowers and the special mechanism of attracting pollinators. Despite being one of the largest plant families, they are rarely found in natural habitats.

For an orchid to develop, a symbiosis (coexistence) with fungi in the soil is required. Orchid seeds are the smallest and the lightest of all seeds in the plant world. 32 species of orchids have been recorded in the Strahinjčica area. They grow in diverse habitats, from wet meadows in lowland areas to forests and thickets, with most species being found in dry hillside grasslands. All orchids are strictly protected, and picking, destroying, or digging them up is prohibited.



Moths

Moths are hidden from our view during the day, so we often perceive them as small and unremarkable. However, the truth is quite the opposite. A large number of species are characterized by bright and interesting colors, differing in the shape of their bodies, wings, and antennae. Moths include the smallest and the largest butterflies in Europe. They feed on floral nectar, play an irreplaceable role in the pollination of plants, and serve as a food source for numerous groups of animals. Over 760 different species of moths have been recorded on Strahinjčica alone.



Dry Hillside Grasslands

Dry hillside grasslands are important habitats for numerous rare and endangered plant and animal species. The grasslands of Mala Gora, Plat, and Poljane are true orchid gardens, with over 20 species of orchids recorded. A large number of species of butterflies and other insects, reptiles, birds, and mammals inhabit the grasslands and depend on the continuation of traditional land management, which includes mowing and grazing. Many hillside grasslands are disappearing because they are no longer mowed or maintained. Due to the gradual overgrowth with woody and shrubby species from the surrounding forests, they are among the most endangered ecosystems in Croatia. Mowing is essential for the preservation of the most valuable grasslands of Strahinjčica.





Legend of Dedek and Babica

This region is known for its folk legends, and one of them originating from the Radoboj area is directly related to Strahinjčica. Inspired by this tale, pupils of the Sida Košutić Elementary School created a beautiful picture book. If you wish to learn about the legend which the rocks on the southern side of Strahinjčica were named after, hike to the educational panel number 3.



Fossil and Mineral Richness

Radoboj is known for its rich fossil flora and fauna, such as grapevine, magnolia, true cinnamon, camphor tree, fig tree, laurel, palms, fish, marine crustaceans, mollusks, insects, along with its significant sulfur deposits. Approximately 10,000 pieces of fossil remains and 300 different plant species have been discovered in Radoboj. They bear witness to climate alternations in the distant past of the area, ranging from tropical, subtropical to moderate climate. To a large extent, history of Radoboj is marked by the exploitation of two mineral resources – native sulfur and coal.





Tumuli in Podstenje

Tumuli are prehistoric graves under mounds of earth dating from the Early Iron Age (800 – 450 BCE), formed by backfilling dirt found in the immediate area of the cremation site. They were discovered in 1850 by local inhabitants during constructions on the forest path in the Podstenje forest. Excavation of the tumuli unearthed burned bones of the deceased, ashes, fragments of earthenware, iron objects, grindstones, along with glass and amber beads. All of the objects found in the necropolis in Podstenje are held in the Radboa Museum, which also exhibits the reconstructed display of the cremation site under the tumulus.



Additional information
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Krapinsko-zagorska
županija



Zagorje

