



Green wilderness beside the river

The History of the National Park

4000 BC	First human settlements along the River Danube
1st century AD	Roman fortifications on the south bank of the Danube
17th century	Imperial hunting grounds of Emperor Leopold I
1809	Battlefield wetlands: Napoleon is defeated by the Austrians near Aspern
1830	Catastrophe of icebound Danube and floods caused by thawing influence the decision to regulate the Danube in the vicinity of Vienna
1862	
1863	Last beaver is killed near Fischamend
from 1875	Marchfeld dam is erected
1919	More than 400 hectares of imperial hunting grounds are converted into farm land by the City of Vienna
1938	The Danube riparian wetlands are declared as Third Reich nature reserve (= Reich hunting grounds)
1976	Beavers are re-introduced to the region between Orth and Eckartsau
1978	UNESCO recognizes the Lobau region as a biosphere reserve
1979	Danube riparian wetlands declared nature reserve
1983	Danube riparian wetlands protected by the Ramsar Convention (<i>international wetlands treaty</i>)
1984	Occupation of wetlands near Stopfenreuth/Hainburg: prevents the approved hydro-electric power station from being built
1996	Founding of the National Park Donau-Auen: international treaty between Federal Government and the Provinces of Vienna and Lower Austria



Occupation of the wetlands in December 1984:
Thousands pitch their tents in Stopfenreuth
in order to protect the wetlands.



The National Park Donau-Auen can take you on a special adventure during a hike or bike tour. Guided tours are doubtless the most informative way to do so. But it is also worth exploring the wetlands on one's own. An informative system of well-signposted and marked paths and trails as well as explanatory maps give valuable assistance. They show interesting bike and hiking routes as well as good viewing points, and thus enable visitors to "do their own thing". For reasons of safety it may be necessary to close or deviate from individual trails in the case of flooding.

Take time to observe, listen, look and smell, but please conduct yourself so that your adventure does not harm the environment!

We welcome visitors who ...



... enjoy the environment by keeping to the marked trails and not making any unnecessary noise



... keep their dogs on the lead to protect wild animals and other visitors



... ride their bikes only on the trails marked green



... paddle only along the specified boat routes and land only on the appropriately marked stretches of riverbank



... try to keep the National Park clean and take their rubbish home with them



... do not pick any protected flowers



... know that camp fires and tents do not belong in the riparian wetlands

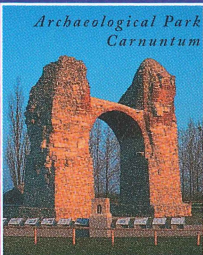
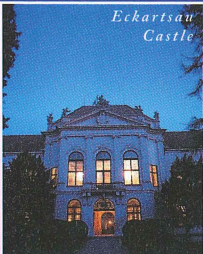
Up-to-date information as well as maps of trails and paths are available at the information centres Eckartsau (Tel. +43/2214/2335-18) and Lobau (Tel. +43/2249/2353).



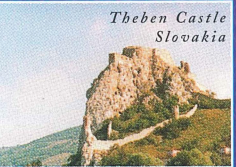
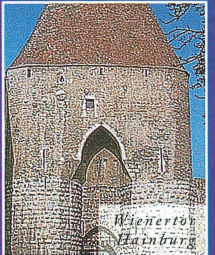
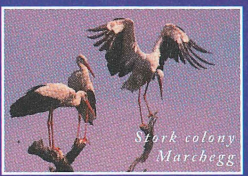
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The region of the National Park invites you



The National Park Donau-Auen is in the middle of a civilized region with great historical traditions. Get to know the tourist attractions with an Auland-tour.



Nationalpark Donau-Auen GmbH,
2304 Orth/Donau, Tel. +43/2212/3450
e-mail: nationalpark@donauauen.at
Internet: www.donauauen.at

Unique environment for generations

Since the establishment of the National Park no commercial interests have been pursued - the area is no longer used for cultivation. The conservation of this unique environment is thus guaranteed for future generations.



However, it is not always enough just to leave nature to itself - the National Park needs to be managed. One of the chief aims is to create a water network of the

River Danube and former tributaries because the wetlands need regular flooding. The National Park water network projects are pioneering and find international recognition.

Rare flora and fauna are encouraged in the National Park. Mudminnows, European marsh turtles, white-tailed eagles or kingfishers as well as botanical rarities such as different orchids, black poplars and wild vines are at home here.



Visitors welcome!

We have a large variety of interesting offers for visitors to the National Park Donau-Auen: You can hear about the fascinating world of the Danube riparian wetlands with a trained National Park guide during a hike, in a boat or during a horse-drawn carriage trip. There are also events on special themes, workshops using microscopes, programmes for schools and clubs as well as project days for schools.

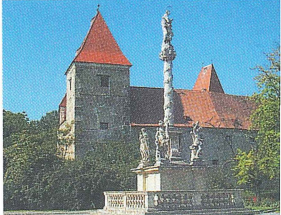
Our programmes are suitable for children and adults, individuals and families, school classes and groups. You only need one important thing: time. Take enough time to make your visit to the National Park a personal exploration of nature!



Hiking
Boat trips
Bike tours
Horse-drawn carriages
School projects
Adventure weeks

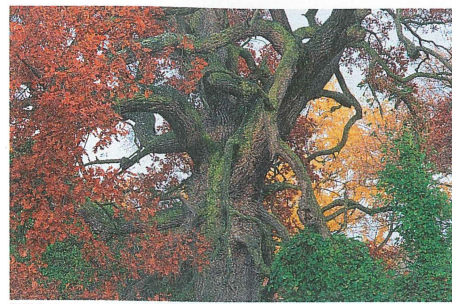


A visitors' centre is planned in Castle Orth





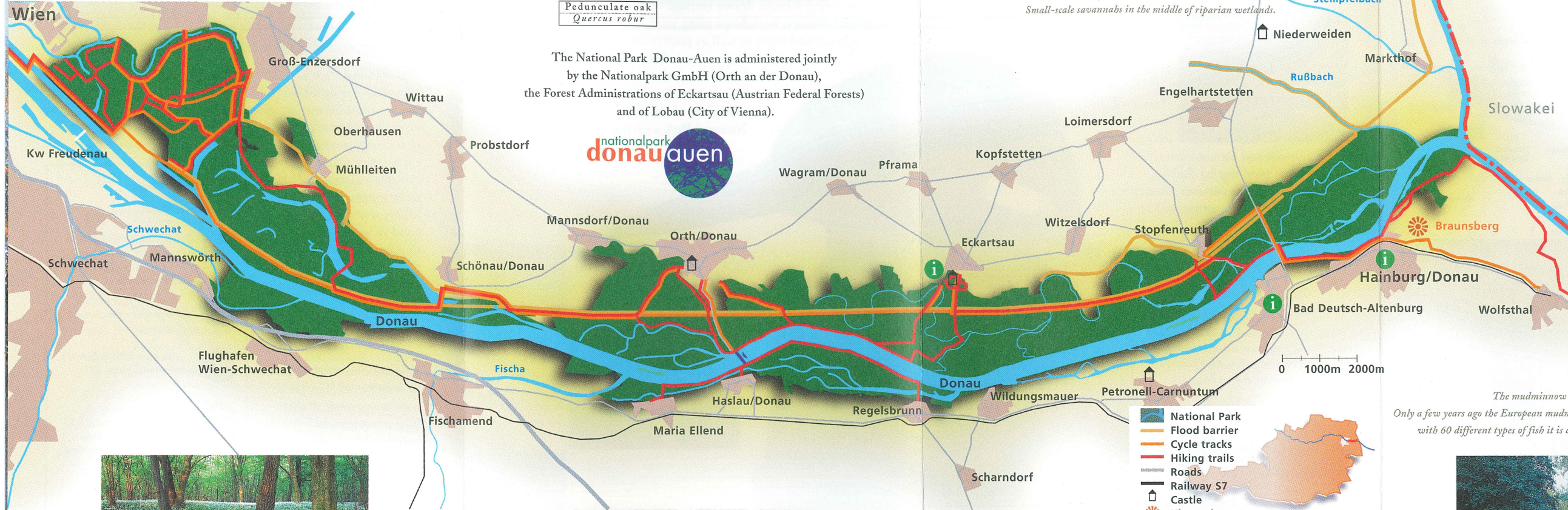
The Danube wetlands leave a lasting impression even in winter.



Pedunculate oak
Quercus robur



The wetlands are dry in some places. No drop of groundwater reaches the raised "beaps" of gravel. Orchids, dry mosses and buckthorn thrive here. Small-scale savannahs in the middle of riparian wetlands.



The National Park Donau-Auen is administered jointly by the Nationalpark GmbH (Orth an der Donau), the Forest Administrations of Eckartsau (Austrian Federal Forests) and of Lobau (City of Vienna).



National Park Information Centres

Eckartsau Castle
Information and Exhibition:
"From Imperial Hunting Grounds to National Park"
Tel. +43/2214/2335-18
e-mail: infostelle.donauauen@oebf.at

Bad Deutsch-Altenburg
Tourist Office
Erhardgasse 2
Tel. +43/2165/62459

Lobau
Info huts at entrances to the National Park
NP-Forstverwaltung Lobau
Tel. +43/2249/2353
e-mail: pe-don@m49.magwien.gu.at

Hainburg
Town Information
Ungarstraße 5
Tel. +43/2165/62111-23

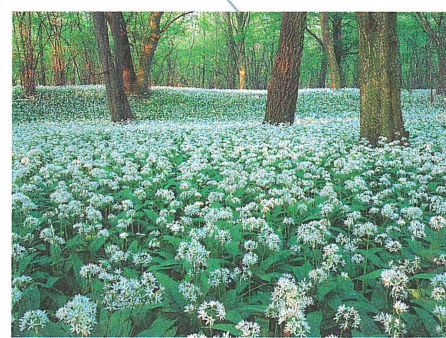
Haslau
Information at entrance to National Park

www.donauauen.at



Mudminnow
Umbra krameri

The mudminnow was thought to be extinct in Austria. Only a few years ago the European mudminnow was found again in the Danube riparian wetlands - with 60 different types of fish it is an area with some of the most varied species in Europe.



Ramsons
Allium ursinum

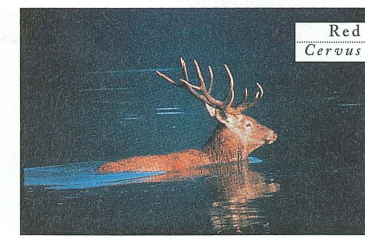
Snowdrops and ramsons make use of the first rays of spring sunshine before the leaves of the riparian forest shade the ground.



Since being re-introduced to the area the beaver has changed the shapes of riverbanks in former tributaries of the Danube. In the last few decades the beaver has become established in vast areas of the wetlands.



Tree frog
Hyla arborea

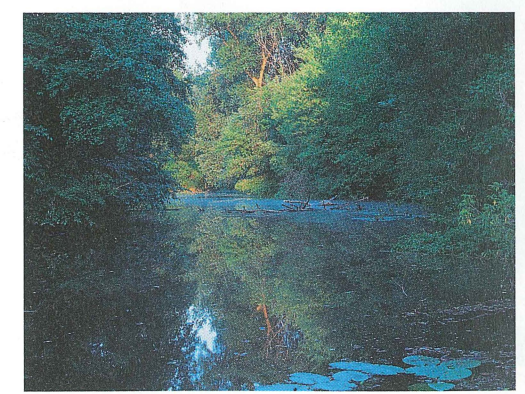


Red deer
Cervus elaphus

No wonder the red deer is known as "King of the Wetlands": the strongest red deer in Austria carry a weight of about 12 kilos on their heads, with 16 to 22 antlers.



Bug orchid
Orchis coriophora



High humidity. Lianas. Swarms of gnats. In summer the wetlands seem like tropical forests.

„The Lower Austrian Danube wetlands are in a world of their own. Those who only know the forests and mountains as well as the plains of this country have no idea that in the immediate vicinity of the metropolis a lonely and unique wilderness exists on its own.“

CROWN PRINCE
RUDOLF OF AUSTRIA
1888

... a world of its own

Today the National Park Donau-Auen protects one of the last large untouched riparian wetlands in Europe. The dynamic force of the flowing river can still be felt here. The highs and lows of water levels determine the rhythm of life in the wetlands.

The river with its flooding has formed the landscape and even today nourishes a large variety of flora and fauna. Nature can develop free from commercial restraints in the National Park.