

# Group Days Out in the Donau-Auen National Park

## Donau-Auen National Park Group Tours & Programmes 2017



MIT UNTERSTÜTZUNG VON BUND, LAND UND EUROPÄISCHER UNION



Europäische  
Landwirtschaftspolitik für  
die Entwicklung des  
ländlichen Raumes  
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die ländlichen Gebiete



## **The Danube Wetlands – Precious Nature at Vienna's Doorstep**

A unique wetlands habitat stretches along the Danube from Vienna to Bratislava. This swath of precious land has been protected as a National Park since 1996.

What makes the Donau-Auen National Park so unique? It's the richness and diversity of the natural habitats which are created and sustained by the constant rise and fall of the waters of the free-flowing Danube.

The Danube wetlands boast a huge variety of flora and fauna. Sustaining and promoting the expansion of these diverse species is one essential mission of the National Park.

Our National Park rangers can offer special insights into this biodiversity by accompanying you on tours. Observe first hand, and comprehend, the fascination of nature's cycles.

Discover the beauty of the region, and dive into the wonderful world of the Danube wetlands. The National Park has a lot of nature to offer: be sure to allow sufficient time for your tour, as most last between two and three hours.

Nature can be unpredictable: be prepared for inclement weather, especially when taking outdoor tours.

If for any reason a booked tour cannot take place as scheduled (due to flooding, inclement weather, mosquito plagues etc.) we will make every effort to arrange an interesting alternative programme for you.

### Equipment & Gear:

We highly recommend that you wear sturdy shoes, head covering, weatherproofed and/or rain gear and that you always carry mosquito repellent, sun screen and something to drink.

Please be aware that dogs are not allowed on boat excursions, and are not allowed at the schlossORTH National Park Centre or on the Schlossinsel grounds.

The Donau-Auen National Park and National Park rangers assume no liability for personal injury or property damage.





## **Bookings, Information and Assistance**

schlossORTH National Park Centre

Schloss Orth, 2304 Orth/Danube

21 March to 30 September: daily from 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

1 October to 1 November: daily from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

2 November to 20 March: closed for winter

For telephone inquiries during winter season: Mon-Fri from 9:00 – 1:00 p.m.

Tel. +43(0)2212/3555, Fax +43(0)2212/3450-47

[schlossorth@donauauen.at](mailto:schlossorth@donauauen.at); [www.donauauen.at](http://www.donauauen.at)

National Park Info Point Eckartsau Castle

Schloss Eckartsau, 2305 Eckartsau

1 April to 31 October: daily from 10:00 – 5:00 p.m.

1 November to 31 March: telephone enquiries only, Mon-Fri from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Tel: +43(0)2214/2335

[infostelle.donauauen@bundesforste.at](mailto:infostelle.donauauen@bundesforste.at), [www.bundesforste.at/donauauen](http://www.bundesforste.at/donauauen)

*Rates are valid as of 1 January 2017.*

Please ask about our special rates for tour operators.

Please be sure to book your tour at least 7 days in advance.

Tours may be carried out in English or Slovakian.

Other languages available upon request.

We have tours for any variety of interests. Read on to find the right tour for you:

### **Donau-Auen Starter Tours**

Get to know the Donau-Auen National Park the easy way by starting at the schlossORTH National Park Centre, the gateway to the wetlands. It's just the right amount of wilderness to get you started.

### **Donau-Auen Active Tours**

These tours will help you discover nature in a hands-on way on both water and land. Pick up a paddle or take a walk through the luscious vegetation of the Danube wetlands.

### **Donau-Auen Adventure Tours**

Are you already at home in the great out-of-doors? Then an Adventure Tour is just right for you. Paddle down the free-flowing Danube or discover up close the secrets of the green flooded forest – all with a touch of adventure.

Our programmes have been designed in such a way that you and your entire tour group can spend a full and exciting day in the Danube wetlands. Please allow us to help you select the right tour combinations for your needs.

Imprint:

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## Donau-Auen Starter Tours

Get to know the Donau-Auen National Park the easy way by starting at the schlossORTH National Park Centre, the gateway to the wetlands. It's just the right amount of wilderness to get you started.

### Programmes in and around the schlossORTH National Park Centre

#### Guided tour of the Schlossinsel

Guided by our National Park rangers, a tour of the Schlossinsel wetlands gardens surrounding schlossORTH is a great way to experience the Danube wetlands. Get an up-close look at the European pond turtle, *Emys orbicularis*, or glimpse a colubrid, a native snake which excels at the art of camouflage.

Enter our walk-in underwater pond – without even getting wet! Observe various Danube fish species swimming in an underwater forest of Nuphar and Mare's-tail. Watch the pearl-like bubbles produced by aquatic plants as they "breathe" underwater. Experience the diversity of the Danube wetlands plant kingdom, from the climbing vine Traveller's Joy to tasty hops and the rustling leaves of the White Poplar.

#### Tour Overview:

*Duration: approx. 1.5 hours*

*Persons: minimum of 15 persons*

*Price: € 8.50 per person*





*Combined tours:*

**Combine a guided tour of the National Park Exhibition "DonAuräume" at the schlossORTH National Park Centre, a tour of the Schlossinsel and Nationalpark-Lounge.**

*Duration: approx. 3 hours (including breaks)*

*Persons: minimum of 15 persons*

*Price: € 11,50 per person*

### **Tour of Schlossinsel and Wetlands Walk**

After enjoying a tour of the Schlossinsel, continue on into the wetlands forest on a guided walk along the Faden Creek, a former side arm of the Danube. Learn more about typical wetlands habitats such as side arms, riparian forest and flood protection barriers.

According to season, this tour offers special highlights such as spring bloomers, bird calls, dry grassland vegetation, amphibians, molluscs and – of course – lots of insects! Come visit these fascinating wetlands natives in their element.

*Tour Overview:*

*Duration: approx. 2 hours*

*Persons: minimum of 15 persons*

*Price: € 11.50 per person*



## Excursions on the Danube and in the Wetlands

### **Tschaïke Tour on the Danube and Wetlands Walk in Orth/Danube**

For those who do not want to paddle themselves, going by *tschaïke* – a replica of a historic Danube vessel – is an excellent alternative. Cruise along the Danube and feel the power of the free-flowing river. Glide by steep bluffs and gravel banks. Afterwards, walk through the Danube wetlands and marvel at the richness of nature. Taking a closer look at seemingly small things may open up entirely new perspectives.

#### *Tour Overview:*

*Meeting Point: Orth/Danube, Uferhaus restaurant parking lot*

*Duration: approx. 3 hours*

*Persons: minimum of 15 persons*

*Price: € 26 per person*

Upon request, and for an extra fee, bread and wine may be served during the *tschaïke* tour. Please contact us for more information.





## Donau-Auen Active Tours

Active tours will help you discover nature in a hands-on way, on both water and land. Pick up a paddle or take a walk through the luscious vegetation of the Danube wetlands.

### **Guided Tour of the National Park Exhibition and Nature Research Quiz on the Schlossinsel**

If you prefer active learning over passive listening, then this tour is for you. First, a visit to the exhibition at the schlossORTH National Park Centre helps you learn the basics about the Donau-Auen National Park. Afterwards, the tour splits up into teams to explore the Schlossinsel grounds, where different wetlands species may be observed. Your newly-gained knowledge will be tested in a nature research quiz, a contest which requires not only skill but also team spirit! A rope bridge and a nature path are the most immediate challenges.

Each participant receives his or her own "researcher diploma" as a memento of this special event.

#### *Tour Overview:*

*Duration: approx. 3 hours (incl. breaks)*

*Persons: minimum of 15 persons*

*Price: € 14 per person*





## Rubber Dinghy Tour and Wetlands Walk in Orth/Danube

Together with National Park rangers, take a rubber dinghy from Orth/Danube onto a Danube side arm. First you will receive basic instruction in paddling, and then you will be ready to enter the wetlands forest. See where beavers have gone before you, and learn more about the tracks of nocturnal forest inhabitants. Water conditions permitting, a gravel bank – the nucleus of the wetlands – may emerge. You may even glimpse a heron, a kingfisher, or a beaver!

The tour continues with a walk on land with National Park rangers. No matter the season, this walk is always full of surprises. The flora and fauna of the Danube floodplains are especially rich: learn about deadwood (which is in fact very alive), or the reproductive and survival strategies of plants. High-water marks in the wetlands are true eye-openers, showing just how dynamic this riverine landscape is. Native amphibians and insects may cross your path, and you might even spot rare birds and mammals.

### *Tour Overview:*

*Meeting Point: Orth/Danube, Uferhaus restaurant parking lot*

*Duration: approx. 3 hours*

*Persons: minimum of 15 persons*

*Price: € 24 per person*





## Canoe Tour in Stopfenreuth

Explore a former branch of the Danube in Stopfenreuth in a canoe with National Park rangers. After learning the basics of paddling, you will set out across calm waters, going as far as the mouth of the branch at the Danube.

Stopfenreuth is known as the birthplace of what came to be the National Park. It was here, in December 1984, where protesters were able to put a stop to plans for a Danube power plant at Hainburg by occupying the wetlands.

When water levels are as they should be, the waters are very clear. Fish can be seen swimming among the lush aquatic plants and floating lilies. Depending on the season, highlights of this tour may include sightings of European pond turtles, beavers, kingfishers, wild boars or deer.

Once the opposite Danube bank has been reached, the group disembarks and enjoys the marvellous view to the city of Hainburg. In the summer, take a dip in the river or look for shells, beaver tracks or pretty Danube pebbles. Then it's back in the canoes for the return trip on the same route back to Stopfenreuth.

### *Tour Overview:*

*Meeting Point: Stopfenreuth, Forsthaus restaurant at the  
Hochwasserschutzdamm (flood protection barrier)*

*Duration: approx. 3 hours*

*Persons: minimum of 9/max. 27 persons*

*Price: € 230 per canoe (minimum of 6, max. 9 persons)*



## Short and Long Walks in the Donau-Auen National Park

Taking a wetlands walk with a National Park ranger as your guide will open your eyes to the many hidden wonders of nature. The best seasons for walking tours are spring, fall and winter.

*Select from among the following options:*

### Lobau Nature Discovery Walk

Xeric landscapes – very dry habitats with sparse vegetation – are typical of the Upper Lobau. Yet in the spring, an amazing variety of native orchids bloom here. With its dry grassland, the xeric environment is home to rare insects such as the Praying Mantis.

In the fall, attention turns to the many wild fruits such as the Blackthorn and barberry. For history lovers, this tour may be adapted to include relevant points of interest. The paths walked by visitors and their National Park forestry staff guides range from two to five kilometres long.

*Tour Overview:*

*Guided Tours in the Viennese Section of the National Park*

*Meeting Point: wien-lobAU National Park House*

*Duration: approx. 3 hours*

*Persons: minimum of 6 persons*

*Price: € 10 (€ 5 with valid discount) per person*

Please be sure to book your tour at least one week in advance.

### Booking/registration

wien-lobAU National Park House

City of Vienna Municipal Department 49 (Forestry Office and Urban Agriculture)

Dechantweg 8, 1220 Vienna

Tel. +43(0)1/4000-49495, Fax +43(0)1/4000-49500

nh@ma49.wien.gv.at

www.nph-lobau.wien.at

### Schönau

Near Schönau, and within a relatively short distance, it is possible to experience a huge variety of wetlands habitats: dyke, former river branch, dynamic wetlands, replenished side arm, and naturally the free-flowing Danube itself. You will be amazed at the richness of flora and fauna in these habitats.

*Meeting Point: Snack stand at the Hochwasserschutzdamm (flood protection barrier)*



## **Orth on the Danube**

Two possible routes may be selected: either the dammed-up side of the wetlands which is no longer directly affected by high waters; or the dynamic side, which is flooded regularly. The dividing line between the two is the dyke, which itself has developed over the years into a valuable habitat for numerous plants and animals.

*Route A (wetlands outside the flood area): schlossORTH National Park Centre*  
*Route B (wetlands within the flood area): Uferhaus restaurant on the Danube*

## **Eckartsau**

The traditional imperial hunting grounds of bygone years live on today as spacious meadows offering sanctuary to many plant and animal species. Surrounded by lush wetlands forest, the expansive park surrounding Eckartsau Castle is a marked departure from the wild meadows. The charm in this route lies in the transition from controlled nature in the Schlosspark to the broad meadows and again to the wild wetlands formed by the Danube.

*Meeting Point: National Park Info Point Eckartsau Castle*

## **Stopfenreuth**

A circular tour through the Stopfenreuth Au, the site of the legendary wetlands occupation of 1984, leads along the dyke and then into the flood areas, across former river branches and all the way out to the Danube. A towpath and then the riverside road lead back to the point of departure. Feel the magic of the wetlands while walking, and learn interesting facts about the area from your National Park guides.

*Meeting Point: Stopfenreuth, Forsthaus restaurant at the  
Hochwasserschutzdamm (flood protection barrier)*

## **Hainburg**

Here is where the Danube carves out its bed through the *Porta Hungarica*. First, the tour leads downstream along the foot of the Braunberg, then moves upward toward the Rötelsstein ruins. A scenic path offers panorama views of the newly emerged, revitalised gravel banks in the National Park across from Hainburg as well as interesting perspectives on the medieval city itself.

*Meeting Point: Hainburg, Danube landing parking lot*

## **Maria Ellend – Haslau on the Danube:**

In stark contrast to the north bank, the banks on the south side fall steeply down to National Park territory. This unique aspect is reflected in the very special flora and

fauna to be found here. For nearly 20 years, the mighty Danube has been able to regularly replenish her side arms, leading to the formation of impressive and fascinating landscapes.

*Meeting Point: Maria Ellend railway station*

*Tour Overview:*

***Walk in the Danube Wetlands with Different Points of Departure in Lower Austria***

*Duration: each approx. 3 to 3.5 hours (length ranges from 2-8 kilometres)*

*Price: € 160 flat rate (for up to 20 persons)*

Please book walks in Schönau, Orth/Danube, Eckartsau, Stopfenreuth, Hainburg, Maria Ellend – Haslau at the schlossORTH National Park Centre.

Bookings, Information and Assistance

schlossORTH National Park Centre

Schloss Orth, 2304 Orth/Danube

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[www.bundesforste.at/donauauen](http://www.bundesforste.at/donauauen)





## Donau-Auen Adventure Tours

Are you already at home in the great out-of-doors? Then one of these tours is just right for you. Paddle down the free-flowing Danube or discover up close the secrets of the green flooded forest – all with a touch of adventure.

### **River – Peaks – Wetlands Forest: the Danube-Hainburg Combo-Tour**

Are you ready for an adventure? If so, then meet us in Hainburg at the harbour! After brief introductions the National Park rangers will direct you to take up your paddles. In a rubber dinghy you will paddle downstream, past the Rötelsstein ruins. Learn interesting facts along the way about National Park renaturalisation projects aimed at restoring the Danube and her banks. At the mouth of the March River, with a view of the Devin ruins in Slovakia, the focus shifts to mountain rivers (the Danube) and lowland rivers (the March). The boat journey continues on to the so-called "Jägerhaussiedlung".

The walk back to the starting point in Hainburg leads across the Rötelsstein cliffs and upstream along the Danube banks. Mountain, river and riparian forest: a unique combination found in the Donau-Auen National Park, and one offering many special moments to visitors.

#### *Tour Overview:*

*Duration: approx. 4 hours*

*Persons: minimum of 6, max. 10 persons per boat (participants must be 15 or older)*

*Price: € 250 per boat*

Consider using public transportation to get there: take the S7 railway to the passenger railway station in Hainburg.

### **Danube Adventure: Rubber Dinghy Tour from Schönaue to Orth/Danube**

With National Park rangers as your guides, get into a rubber dinghy and float down the powerful Danube, passing steep bluffs, gravel banks and ships. Become one with nature! Feel the elementary power of the river with every paddle.

Kick back and relax on one of the many gravel banks. Take in the wetlands with all your senses: smell the river, observe the lush flora, and be on the lookout for rare fauna.

Meeting point for this tour is at the Uferhaus restaurant in Orth/Danube. National Park rangers will greet you and then travel with you in your own bus to Schönaue. After group participants have been assigned to their respective dinghies – and after providing basic instructions on how to paddle – your ranger guides will paddle with you to a Danube side arm. Things get really exciting when the boats enter the free-flowing stretch of the Danube and drift downstream on the strong current. The National Park's unique water connectivity project and the way it benefits the animal kingdom are featured in this part of the journey. The tour ends where it began in Orth/Danube – an unforgettable experience for all.

*Tour Overview:*

*Duration: approx. 3 hours*

*Persons: minimum of 6, max. 10 persons per boat (participants must be 15 or older)*

*Price: € 230 per boat*

Participants must make an own bus available for this tour.

**Expedition to the Wild Forest: An Unusual Wetlands Excursion**

This tour is an adventurous scouting expedition through the wetlands. Taking serpentine paths through the wild and watery forest, it is almost like a jungle expedition. A good sense of direction and team spirit are essential, and be ready to come into contact with water, sand, mud and bushes!

Water levels and weather conditions permitting, this expedition offers the most intensive experience of the wetlands phenomenon: unpredictable Mother Nature and exposure to the elements.

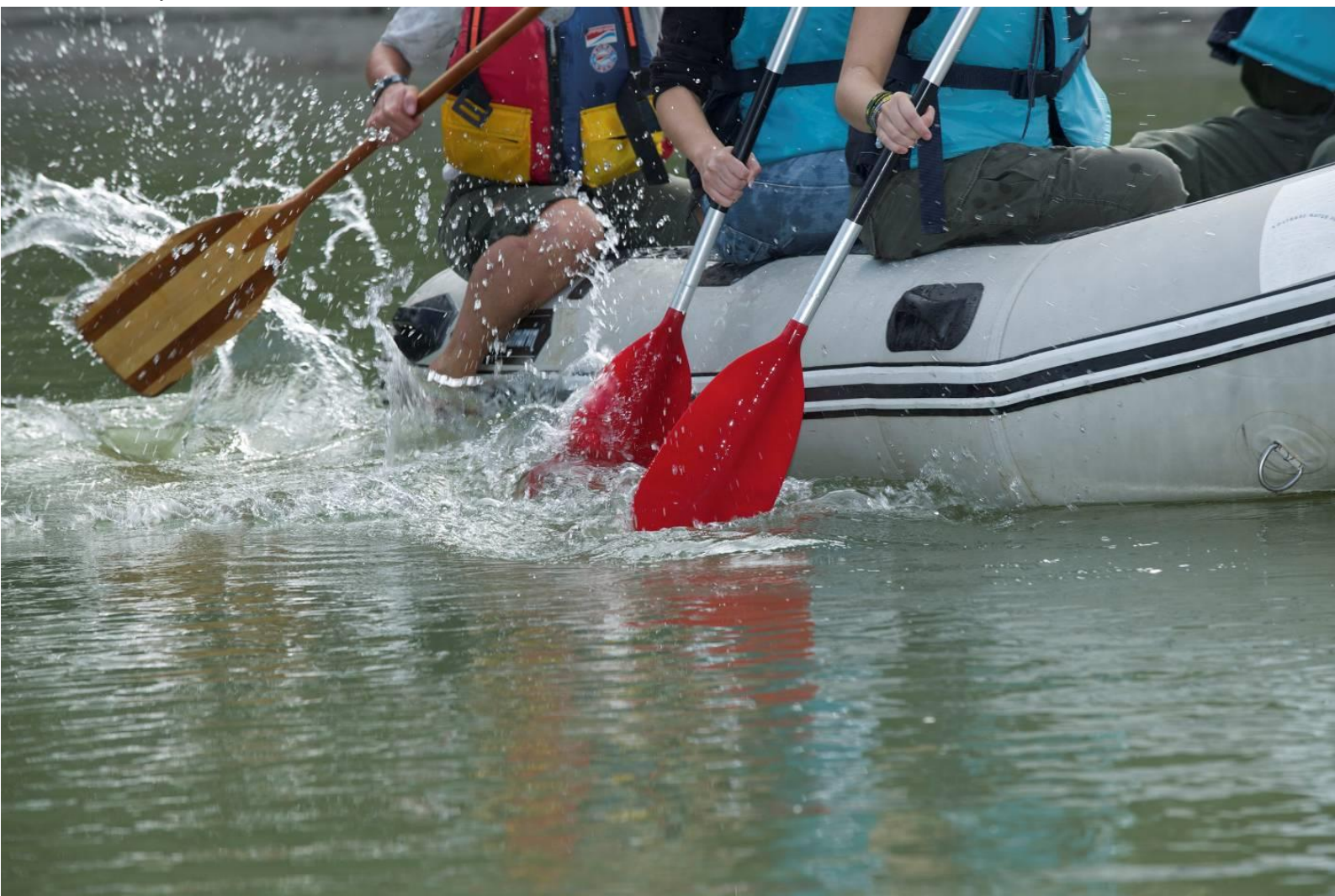
*Tour Overview:*

*Meeting Point: upon request*

*Duration: approx. 3 hours*

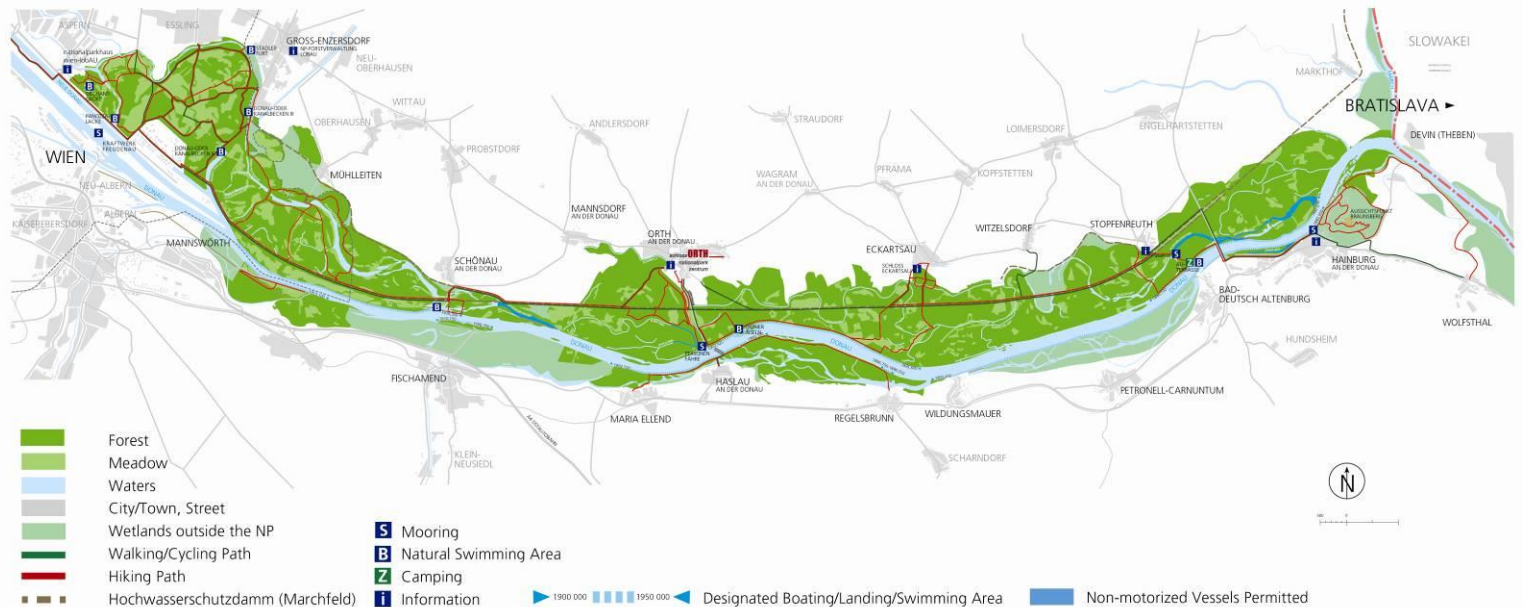
*Price: € 160 flat rate (for up to 20 persons)*

Please note that participants must furnish their own bus in order to get to the meeting point.





# General Map of the Donau-Auen National Park



Design & Grafik: [www.projektblatt.at](http://www.projektblatt.at)/Angela Batik

## The Region as Tourist Destination

The Donau-Auen National Park is embedded in a region boasting many places of cultural and historical interest – not to mention culinary and viticultural delights: Eckartsau Castle, Schloss Hof, the stork city of Marchegg, the medieval city of Hainburg, and the Carnuntum Archaeological Park are in the immediate vicinity. The Marchfeld and Römerland Carnuntum - the ancient Roman lands of Carnuntum - lie directly on the borders of the National Park.

Nothing stands between you and a delightful stay in the region!

## For more information and bookings

Donau Niederösterreich  
Regional Tourism Office Römerland Carnuntum - Marchfeld  
Tel. +43(0)2163/3555-10, Fax +43(0)2163/3555-12  
[carnuntum-marchfeld@donau.com](mailto:carnuntum-marchfeld@donau.com)  
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