

Natural landscape values

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The area of Puławy is a beauty spot of the Lublin region, situated on the border of three geographical regions ; Mazovia Lowland, Małopolska Gap of the Vistula and Lublin Upland. It is the neighbourhood uniquely diversified in terms of natural topography ; hills and slopes adjoin vast fields and loess gorges. Flora and fauna characteristic of the so-called "Puławy triangle,, (Puławy-Kazimierz Dolny-Nałęczów) is a factor attracting masses of tourists, amateurs of the natural world, as well as scientists. The picturesque valley of the central Vistula region, vast forests and meadows rich in interesting plants favour family walks, bicycle tours and sightseeing trips.

The most diversified area may be observed in the precincts of Kazimierz Dolny and Nałęczów. This area was isolated in 1979 and given the name of the Kazimierz Landscape Park. The park is traversed by a network of gorges and ravines, overgrown with forest complexes, bushes and rare species of steppe and stenothermal plants. Gorges constitute the densest accumulation of this topography form in Poland ; sometimes over 10 km of gorges fall to 1 sq.km (in the neighbourhood of the village Parchatka).

In the past this terrain was dominated by oakwood and oak-hornbeam forests. Agriculture development led to an almost complete restructuring of the forest system of Puławy and the surroundings of Nałęczów and Kazimierz Dolny. Natural reserve “Łęg on Kępa,, (Kępa Riverine Forest) ; fragment of birch-poplar and elm-ash forest is the remnant of the vast riverine forests overgrowing the Vistula terrace in the past. The timber stand consists of native species, typical of riverine forests (white and black poplar, aspen, white willow, crack willow, ash, elm), as well as numerous foreign species (e.g. pin oak ; the only specimen in Puławy, red oak, Lombardy poplar tree, Canadian poplar, white pine tree, black pine).

In the park reconstructed by duchess Izabela Czartoryska’s gardeners and architects a natural English garden was formed reflecting the wildness of nature. Dating from those times the following species of trees were kept: sessile oak tree, tulip tree, Douglas-fir, Canadian hemlock, catalpa, yellow buckeye, black walnut and Eastern red cedar tree. These specimens constitute very precious natural monuments (presently there are 23 monument trees in the precincts of the town ;



these include 18 common oak trees, 1 sessile oak tree, 1 European larch, 1 ginkgo biloba tree and 2 black walnuts).

The Northern outskirts of the town are overgrown with a large complex of pine forests. Forests and trees constitute as much as 36% of the town's surface. Forest complexes which make Puławy one of the greenest towns of the Lublin region are composed of among others black alders which may be observed and admired during the walks on the track leading through Włostowice in the direction to Parchatka, as well as poplars, willows, common ash trees, shrubs and bushes such as: blackthorn, hazel, elm, dogwood, privet and common in the forest undergrowth bilberry.

Gap of the Vistula is the favourite site of different birds species which nest close by the river current. The most common birds of the Vistula terrains are: gulls, seagulls, mallards and common moorhens. On the other hand, one of the rarest species in Poland in this area is oystercatcher ; wading bird of medium size. City forests are also the habitat of common kestrels, common buzzards and middle spotted woodpecker. There are also several species of bats (big-eared bats for example) which found shelter in the caves constructed by Izabela, the duchess. It is worth to notice the protected grass snake and penduline tit ; a bird nesting on willow twigs. This area is also the prey area of the rare black stork and hoopoe.

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