

Starry-Sky Park in the Bieszczady Mountains

DESCRIPTION AND GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Location:

The Starry-Sky Park Bieszczady is located in south-east corner of Poland within the International Biosphere Reserve 'Eastern Carpathians' placed on the UNESCO World Cultural and Heritage List. It covers the Bieszczadzki National Park, the San Valley Landscape Park and Ci nia sko-Wetli ski Landscape Park. It is the second largest protected area of the night sky in Europe (has 113,846.5 ha total surface). The central point of the Starry-Sky Park Bieszczady is the village Lutowiska (49°15'05.0"N 22°41'42.6"E).



Description:

The Starry-Sky Park Bieszczady is probably located the most pristine part of the region. Forests cover about 80% of the area. The woods are mainly natural. Animal life is abundant with several endangered species. Among them there are bears, wolves, wildcats, wild boars, beavers and lynxes. We also have European bisons – about 100 live in the area. Another thing is that the whole Bieszczady are sparsely populated. It is connected with Operation Vistula (Polish: Akcja 'Wis a') that took place in the 1947 when 200,000 civilians residing around Bieszczady where forced to move elsewhere. Therefore most of the people residing the area are newcomers. The whole area is studded with remains of old villages and remaining buildings of orthodox churches.

Protection category:

DSAG class 1

ACCESSIBILITY

1. Accessibility of the resource (universal):

The Starry-Sky Park Bieszczady, just as the Bieszczady National Park and landscape Parks, is accessible by car. Observation decks are located beside the roads and have parking lots. All the agrotourism places that are equipped with astronomic devices are accessible by car just as observation decks. Some of the agrotourism places may not be prepared for guest with reduced mobility. Most of guesthouses are prepared for such a guests. When it comes to trails in the mountains most of them are accessible for fit tourists, but several are suit also for elderly people. There may be some problems during the winter – when some parts of the road are only passable with snow chains or by 4WD.

2. Resource Signaling:

Outside.- All the observation decks are marked along the road.

3. Level of accessibility:

Outside (To reach the resource): The Bieszczady Mountains are accessible by car. The busses also go there but due to the fact that the area is sparsely populated the public services are rare and not very comfortable. Busses from Lutowiska (main village of the Bieszczady administrative area) go to Rzeszów (the main city of the region, and the only city of the region with international airport) three times a day during July and August and only once a day all year round.

Inside the resource: The buildings in which workshops are held are accessible for people with reduced mobility. Most of agrotourism places are not prepared for guests with reduced mobility, although there are some guesthouses in the Park that are accessible for everyone.

MARKETING

1. Marketing profile:

The offer is presented mainly online. The workshops in the Starry-Sky Park Bieszczady are organized by Gmina Lutowiska (Lutowiska district) together with astronomers. The offer is sold individually. The offer of astrotourism friendly accommodation facilities is marketed mainly online, sold individually. Besides from workshops the Starry-Sky Park Bieszczady is open for everyone all the time and some facilities (such as observation decks are available for everyone all the time).

2. Information available of the resource:

Online:

The Starry-Sky Park Bieszczady:

<http://www.gwiedznebieszczady.pl>; <https://www.facebook.com/gwiedznebieszczady?fref=ts>

Astrotourism friendly accommodation facilities: agrotourism 'U Lestka'

www.ulestka.pl

Agrotourism 'U Pani Basi' www.dwernik.bieszczady.pl

Agrotourism 'Dolistowie' www.dolistowie.pl

Guesthouse 'U Eskulapa' www.ueskulapa.bieszczady.net.pl

Agrotourism 'Chata Magoda' www.chatamagoda.pl

Agrotourism 'emkowo' www.lemkowo.com

Guesthouse 'Siedlisko Carpathia' www.muczne.com.pl

Agrotourism 'Pod Lipami' www.procisne1.republika.pl

agrotourism 'Wilcza Jama' www.wilczajama.pl

Agrotourism 'Zajazd Bieszczadzka Baszta', www.bieszczadzskabaszta.pl

Guesthouse 'Zajazd pod Cary sk' www.carynska.pl.

Brochures:

The Starry-Sky Park Bieszczady – promotes their offer with brochures

Astrotourism friendly accommodation facilities – some of them promote their offer with brochures

VISITS

1. Capacity of the establishment:

Astroworkshops: 20 participants / workshop;

Astrotourism friendly accommodation facilities: agrotourism 'U Lestka' – 20 guests/night, agrotourism 'U Pani Basi' – 20 guests/night, agrotourism 'Dolistowie' – 20 guests/night, guesthouse 'U Eskulapa' 16 guests/night, agrotourism 'Chata Magoda' – 12 guests/night, agrotourism 'emkowo' – 20 guests/night, guesthouse 'Siedlisko Carpathia' – 30 guests/night, agrotourism 'Pod Lipami' – 12 guests/night, agrotourism 'Wilcza Jama' 42 guests/night, agrotourism 'Zajazd Bieszczadzka Baszta' – 12 guests/night, guesthouse 'Zajazd pod Cary sk' – 50 guests/night.

2. Schedule and Availability for visitors:

Astroworkshops: organized regularly during the summer months (July, August), winter brake (February) and for some occasions; they are also organized on request

Astrotourism friendly accommodation facilities: open all year round, activities organized for some occasions, during planned events and on earlier request

3. Admission:

Astroworkshops: PLN25/1 participant; occasionally organized for free

Astrotourism friendly accommodation facilities: agrotourism 'U Lestka' – PLN40/night/1 guest, agrotourism 'U Pani Basi' – PLN50/night/1 guest, agrotourism 'Dolistowie' – PLN50/night/1 guest, guesthouse 'U Eskulapa' – PLN40/night/1 guest, agrotourism 'Chata Magoda' – PLN100/night/1 guest, agrotourism 'emkowo' – PLN50/night/1 guest, guesthouse 'Siedlisko Carpathia' – PLN70/night/1 guest, agrotourism 'Pod Lipami' – PLN40/night/1 guest, agrotourism 'Wilcza Jama' PLN100/night/1 guest, agrotourism 'Zajazd Bieszczadzka Baszta' – PLN40/night/1 guest, guesthouse 'Zajazd pod Cary sk' – PLN60/night/1 guest.

4. Limitations:

Possible problems:

- some accommodation facilities are not prepared for disabled people
- unstable weather – during cloudy days/nights possibility to organize astroworkshops is limited
- during heavy winter some villages located within the Starry-Sky Park Bieszczady are only accessible with snow chains or by 4WD
- astroworkshops need to be planned/ordered earlier due to the fact that astronomer is not available on the spot

Possible improvements that can be performed:

- improved accessibility for disabled people
- additional attractive offer available immediately when astroworkshops cannot take place due to the weather conditions
- astronomer should be employed in the Starry-Sky Park Bieszczady permanently or at least for the whole high season

5. Visit the resource:

It is the easiest to visit the Starry-Sky Park Bieszczady on self-guided tour but guided tour is also possible.

TOURIST RATING OF THE RESORT

1. Hierarchical level of resource:

Level 2: Attractive with exceptional features in a country, able to motivate a stream of foreign or domestic visitors (current or potential), either alone or together with other adjacent resources.

2. Tourism demand:

- user profile: so called 'Discoverers' – people who prefer active tourism, keen on sightseeing, choose off the beaten track places
- nationality of the visitors – Polish, Slovakian, German, Ukrainian
- seasonality – highest demand: June, July, August; some demand: May, September and February (winter break)

The resource is very attractive. For Polish tourists it is one of a kind attraction and for foreign tourists it is still something new and fresh. The tourists may organize some of the activities by themselves (observation decks, sundials, etc. are available all the time), what gives them independence. Due to the fact that observation decks and astroworkshops are held within the borders of the National Park the attraction has very genuine feel. The resource is accessible and of good quality in general.

Some problems that tourists may meet are weather conditions and the fact that some of the attractions connected to astrotourism have to be ordered earlier.