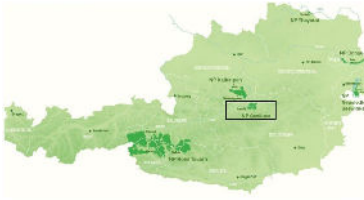


Gesäuse National Park



Wild water – steep cliffs



At the entrance to Gesäuse National Park, where the river Enns squeezes through the Himbeerstein and Haindlmauer mountains, Styria's only national park begins with the thunderous roar of the wild river.

Downstream, the limestone and dolomite rocks of the Hochtorn mountains tower vertically from 600 to almost 2370 meters - a stunning contrast.

Natural peculiarities

The landscape of Gesäuse National Park is characterised by wild water and steep cliffs. Amongst this wild and rewilding forests flourish.

The river Enns creates a home for plants and animals that can no longer survive in more intensively managed rivers. The flagship species is the common sandpiper, and Gesäuse National Park has the largest breeding population in Styria.

But there are also special plants. A rare species of pretty feathered pink grows in the limestone scree of the mountains and is endemic.

Endemics are native plants or animals restricted to a specific place. The Gesäuse National Park has more endemics than anywhere else in Austria - an endemic hotspot. Sandpipers and pretty feathered pink represent the distinctive flora and fauna of the Gesäuse National Park that is less prominent. More conspicuous are chamois, capercaillie or golden eagles, typical mountain dwellers who have a secure livelihood in Gesäuse National Park. The lynx is also finding its way back and has - entering from the nearby Kalkalpen National Park - discovered the paradise of Gesäuse National Park for itself.

Region and history

Gesäuse National Park is located in the western part of the "Eisenwurzen", a region with a treasure trove of natural and cultural heritage. Extensive forests including remains of primeval forest, hard-to-reach valleys and a high density of nature reserves contrast with numerous remains of a thousand year-old mining culture, old farms and Admont Abbey, looming over everything and a significant visitor honeypot with its museums. People here lead a tranquil life, committed to modern life as well as to the unique landscape and cultural features.



Gesäuse National Park's dramatic gateway

What can I do?

The best starting point for a first discovery of the national park is Weidendom Visitor Centre. Here you are at the heart of the national park, surrounded by breathtaking rock faces.

The picturesque village of Gstatterboden or the mountaineering village of Johnsbach at the end of the valley of the same name are starting points for popular hikes. Ever since Alpine sport began, the name Gesäuse has been synonymous with unique outdoor experiences for hikers, climbers, water sports enthusiasts and ski tourers. Gstatterboden is also the starting point for mountain bike trails.

We can strongly recommend guided tours and photography courses in the national park. As well as hiking and mountain guides, you can also book national park rangers individually: "Book your guide" and we make every tour a special experience.

In bad weather, the national park region offers many activities: from museums (world-famous Admont Abbey Library, national park exhibitions, etc.) to exploring caves.

Facilities

The main visitor hub is Weidendom Visitor Centre with its walk-in ecological footprint maze – a world first! The visitor centre is also the starting point for fascinating interpretive trails. Some paths are also accessible to wheelchair-users.

Over 100 km of hiking trails of all levels of difficulty give access into the forests and mountains. Numerous secured routes await mountain climbers and cosy mountain huts invite you to sleep and feast. In the valley bottoms, restaurants and interactive exhibitions complete the offer.

A road, railway line and cycle route, mostly running along the road due to lack of space, run through the middle of the national park.

Visitors who leave their cars at home are welcome - a shared taxi system allows you to get around.

Did you know?
That it's only in a national park that are trees allowed to grow so old that they die and fall over! Our national park is an internationally-recognised category IUCN II protected area and thus one of the few places on earth where nature can still really be nature.



Weidendom Visitor Centre

International recognition

Gesäuse National Park is a category 2 national park, with its status recognized by the IUCN - The International Union for the Conservation of Nature. In a category 2 national park, the most important aim is to protect ecological processes, which means letting nature be, not exploiting mineral resources, forests, etc., and not interfering with natural processes.

Further informationen

Available at www.nationalpark-gesaeuse.at/en/ or on site at the Admont information office (all year round), in the Gstatterboden national park pavilion and in Weidendom Visitor Centre (summer season).



Common sandpiper

Pretty feathered pink