

Grodzisk Forest District

The area on the border of western Wielkopolska and the Lubusz Region is covered with forests administered by the Grodzisk Forest District.

The territory between Wolsztyn, Grodzisk Wlkp., Opalenica and Nowy Tomyśl are covered with mainly coniferous pine forests which are a popular destination for local mushroom pickers in autumn. The towns indicate the District's limits.

The Grodzisk Forest District was established in its present shape in 1979. It covers the area of 22322 ha, with 14469 ha of protective forests. Pine is the dominant species and grows in 87% of the District. It grows on poor soils, mainly former arable land which has been afforested. Oak is the second most common species. However, in the area of Porążyn and Wąsowo there are some areas of mixed forest, as well as homogenous beech or oak forests, which look particularly attractive with coloured foliage in autumn.

The District's consistent silviculture is focused on gradual forest renewing and restocking, by increasing the presence of deciduous species throughout the area. The most valuable and the oldest trees of exceptional dimensions and aesthetic value are subject to a special protection. 64 trees are protected as nature monuments in the area. They are mainly oaks, pines and beeches, as well as the increasingly uncommon limes, sycamores, wild cherries (*Prunus avium*) and a tree variety of black cherries (*Prunus serotina*) in the Porążynko Sub-District. Near the nursery in Lasówki there is a red oak alley of 49 trees, which is also protected by law. In the area all species of game, such as roe deer, red deer, fallow deer, moose, wild boar, badger, fox and species of small game can be found. Local foresters also talk about the numerous birds of prey which exist in and around the forest.

The District's seat is in Lasówki, a town situated 5 km from Grodzisk Wlkp. The District comprises 13 Sub-Districts (organized in three localities: Porążyn, Grodzisk, Rakoniewice), a nursery farm with plantations in Lasówki and Porążyn, and the Educational and Leisure Centre in Porążyn. The Centre is located in a magnificent palace with adjacent buildings which date from the end of 19th century, and is surrounded with a 27 ha park. Not only the State Forests' staff who attend training courses here, find it attractive. It is also popular among the locals, and the Centre's premises have been used for conferences, courses and family celebrations. The palace, known as the "Nest of oaks", was built for Franz Heinrich von Beyme, who used to be an owner of the Porążyn property. In 1920 it became the property of general Kazimierz Sosnkowski. He funded the construction of a chapel located nearby, where services are held in summertime. After World War Two the palace was a forestry training facility, and since 1993 it has housed the Educational and Leisure Centre and a hotel.

The didactic trail in the Porążyn park is popular among school children. It shows the natural beauty of the park and highlights the principal aspects of silviculture.

"Biała góra" ("White mountain") is the bridle path arranged for visitors to the forests who can admire its beauty from the saddle. It is located in the northern part of the District, in the area of Wąsowo Sub-District.

The Grodzisk Forest District can be enjoyed in many ways: on a horseback, by car or by bicycle, on foot, while learning, entertaining or resting.

Everybody will find something interesting here, each stroll will bring unforgettable memories or an expected discovery, since only the forest knows all its secrets, and its story has continued through the ages carried on with the wind.