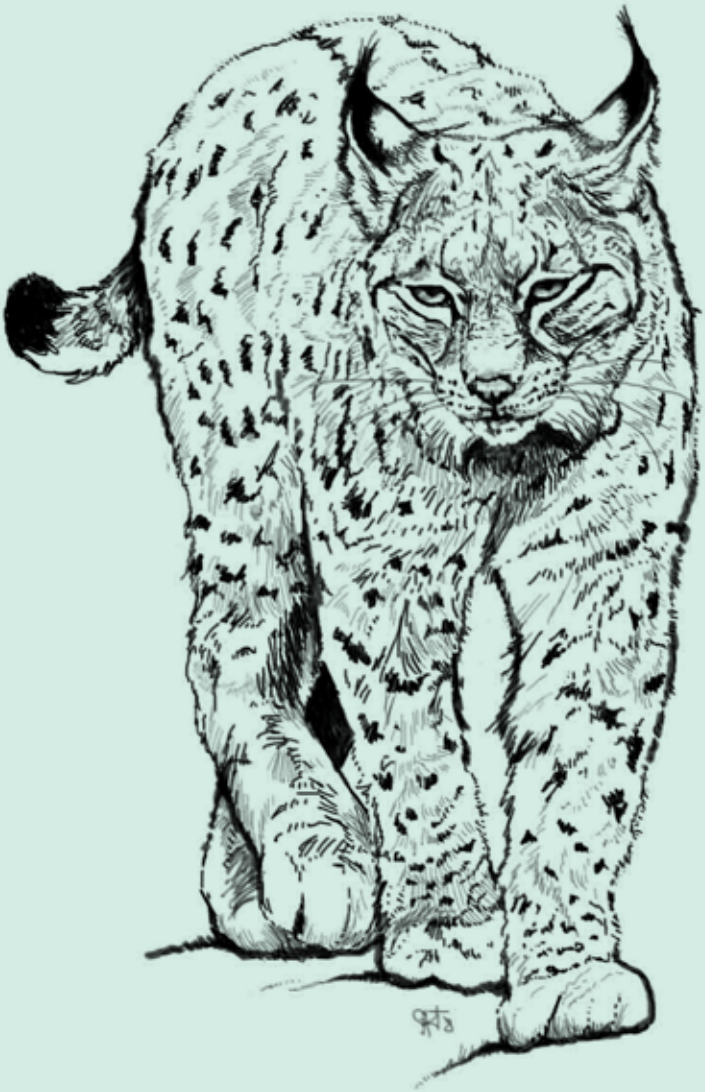
LYNX WALK GUIDE

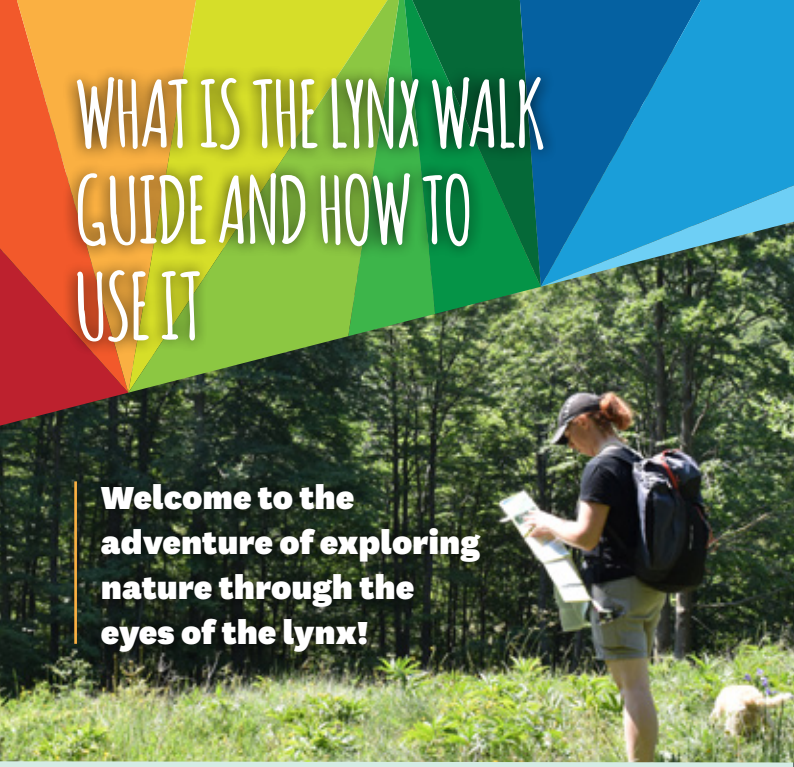


A walk in nature walks
the soul back home

— Mary Davis

CONTENTS

WHAT IS THE LYNX WALK GUIDE AND HOW TO USE IT



Welcome to the adventure of exploring nature through the eyes of the lynx!

The idea behind this guide is to take you to places and experience them from a different perspective - a lynx perspective.

The guide is focused on the fact that the Dinarides are home to the endangered and strictly protected population of the Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*). LIFE Lynx project team is still fighting to ensure its sustainability in this area as human impact has been nearly fatal for it, despite nature's best efforts.

The content of the guide is not related to one specific trail, but you can find an example of the hiking trail we recommend on page 30—31. It will help you to recognise and find places across the range of lynx distribution in Croatia and Slovenia that may be used by the lynx and other large carnivores, such as the grey wolf (*Canis lupus*) and brown bear (*Ursus arctos*). It should help you to recognise typical signs of its presence, and tell you the story of lynx life and our on-going research in the Dinarides. To help you understand how this guide should be used, we have highlighted a few points.

The Lynx Walk Guide:

- ✗ will not give you all advice necessary to prepare for several days hike
- ✗ will not give you information about how to meet the lynx or other large carnivores
- ✗ will not ensure any kind of infrastructure on the recommended tour
- ✓ will give you information about lynx ecology and behaviour
- ✓ will help you recognise locations in the Dinarides suitable for use by lynx
- ✓ will teach you about other interesting plant and animal species
- ✓ will help you in creating your own Lynx Walk

We have also prepared a **"Lynx Walk Treasure Hunt"** for you! Look for this sign and you will find a task. Let us know your results!

If you decide to try the recommended tour, do not forget to ask for the **Lynx Walk stamp** at the facilities mentioned on page 30—31.

If you see any lynx signs or tracks while visiting the wildlife area (shown on page 5), please feel free to contact us via email:

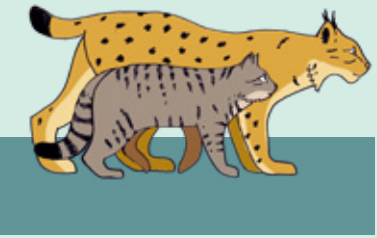
life.lynx.eu@gmail.com,
lifelynx.hr@gmail.com.

LARGE CARNIVORES IN THE DINARIDES

On the next two pages you can find basic information about all three large carnivore species present in Croatia and Slovenia. As top predators, these species have a very important role critical to ecosystem function, as they exert control over smaller predators, prey, and the plant world. Their existence is also evidence of the healthy ecosystem and beauty hidden within the Dinarides, as well as inspiration for many wildlife-human coexistence stories known locally and beyond.

Other Felids In Europe

The Eurasian lynx is not the only lynx species in Europe! There is also the Iberian lynx (*Lynx pardinus*), which lives in Spain and Portugal and is very endangered. The Iberian lynx is smaller than the Eurasian lynx, and rabbit is its main prey.



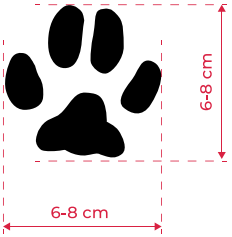
The Dinarides are also home to another felid species! The European wildcat (*Felis silvestris*) is also present, but with a wider range. The wildcat is much smaller than the lynx and feeds on smaller prey such as rodents and birds. It is also a strictly protected species.

Eurasian Lynx (lat. *Lynx lynx*)

Status: Strictly protected

Distribution in Croatia and Slovenia:

Tracks:



Lifespan: in the wild, they have been recorded up to 18, and up to 25 years in captivity

Body mass (Weight): females 18 – 21 kg, males 21 – 24 kg

Habitat: predominantly deciduous, coniferous and mixed forests

Diet: roe deer, edible dormouse, red deer, chamois

Specifics: ear tops, spotted fur, short tail, the largest wild cat in Europe. Was extinct in the Dinaric area from 1903 until 1973 when it was reintroduced

Behaviour: solitary and territorial

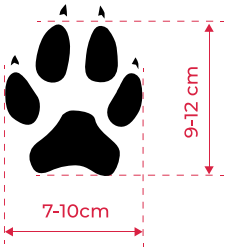
Gray Wolf

(lat. *Canis lupus*)

Status: Strictly protected

Distribution in Croatia and Slovenia:

Tracks:



Lifespan: in the wild up to 13 and up to 16 years in captivity

Body mass (Weight): Males 39-46 kg, females 34-42 kg

Habitat: forests, shrubland, grassland, wetlands and rocky areas

Diet: roe deer, deer, wild boars but also carcasses and some plants and domestic animals

Specifics: grey-dark grey fur, body built for long runs and endurance, direct ancestor of dog, black stripe on forearm

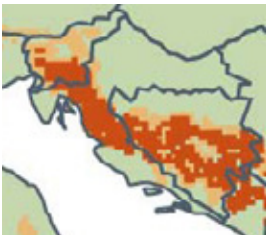
Behaviour: lives and hunts in packs with established (high) hierarchy, but there are also solitary individuals

Brown bear

(lat. *Ursus arctos*)

Status: Least concern and Strictly protected and game species

Distribution in Croatia and Slovenia:



Tracks:

Lifespan: in the wild 20 to 30 years of age, and in captivity around 40

Body mass (Weight): males up to 300 kg, sometimes even more, females up to 180 kg

Habitat: various forest types including deciduous stands and forest clearing

Diet: mostly plant matter, but for protein, insects and their larvae and pupae, other invertebrates, rodents and animals carcasses

Specifics: strong body, and a massive head and neck, fur colour varies from yellow tone to black. In some countries (also Croatia) it is a game species with a yearly harvest management plan.

Behaviour: active mostly at night; can walk many kilometers per day, usually sleeps during the winter period, marks its territory by clawing and biting tree trunks

HOW TO BEHAVE WHEN LARGE CARNIVORES ARE PRESENT

There are some codes of behaviour we must keep in mind when in nature. The main rule is to respect nature and yourself. Respecting nature means not disturbing animals, collecting plants in moderation, and leaving no trace. Respecting yourself means ensuring your own safety. This means taking enough food and water, and wearing appropriate clothes and footwear to make you visible to animals and hunters, and protect against ankle and other injuries, insect bites and poisonous snakes. When taking a route very close to national borders, inform the local border police station about your plans. Be aware there are still some minefields in Croatia. Check the information at the Croatian Mine Action Centre website and follow the rules and signs on trails. Taking a well organised route, using trails, and having a fully charged phone battery are very important. In addition to nature and yourself, there are other people, properties and local communities to be respected too.

As the Dinarides are habitats for large carnivores, we have created some guidelines on how to behave. **Something to be aware of is that they are instinctively afraid of humans and will avoid you whenever they can.**

- Make yourself noticeable with colours or sound.
- Do not leave any food/organic waste near human infrastructure, to prevent animals associating humans with food.
- Do not enter their dens.
- Keep your dog on a leash.

If you encounter a bear, lynx or wolf, stay calm, make yourself noticeable so it can see you, and slowly go back in the direction you came from. Some more guidelines:

- Let it know you are not a threat.
- Do not run or climb a tree; they are faster!
- Do not throw any objects towards them.
- Stay away from cubs, because the mother is probably nearby.

If you see an injured individual, do not approach as it may bite or scratch you. Instead, call the emergency number so they can instruct you who to inform.

! IMPORTANT: Emergency number (Slovenia and Croatia): **112**

THE HISTORY OF LYNX IN THE DINARIDES

A few hundred years ago, just like in other parts of Europe, lynx were present throughout the whole Dinarides. At the beginning of the 19th century, the pressure on nature by human development was increasing due to changes in agriculture and hunting practices, building of road networks and creation of big settlements. Large carnivores were also persecuted as they were seen to be a danger to livestock, and so the European population started to decrease. From being a widespread species, it came to be that only a few separated populations of lynx managed to survive in largely inaccessible mountain areas (such as Carpathian, north Scandinavian and Balkan). Slovenia and Croatia unfortunately also lost their lynx populations in the early 1900s. In 1973, Slovenian hunters decided to repopulate lynx in these areas by bringing 6 individuals from Slovakia and releasing them in the Slovenian part of Dinarides. These 6 animals started the new Dinaric lynx population that is still present today. Unfortunately, due to the genetic isolation and a small number of reintroduced individuals, genetic analysis showed that today the Dinaric population is struggling with low genetic diversity. **Lynx are strictly protected in both Slovenia and Croatia and hunting or disturbing them in any way is forbidden**.

About the LIFE Lynx Project

The main objective of the LIFE Lynx project is to prevent the extinction of the Dinaric-SE Alpine lynx population through reinforcement and long-term conservation. Over 7 years, 11 partners from 5 countries (Slovenia, Croatia, Italy, Romania, Slovakia) are planning to bring 14 lynx from the Carpathian to the Dinarides and SE Alps. This will build a stepping stone population in the Alps that will allow natural gene flow, and ensure genetic diversity of the population in the future. The project is co-financed by the LIFE programme, Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning of the Republic of Slovenia, Environmental Protection and Energy Efficiency Fund (Croatia), Office for Cooperation with NGOs, Government of the Republic of Croatia and EuroNatur Foundation.

More information can be found at **www.lifelynx.eu**.

After the reintroduction in 1973. and till 1998. in Croatia it was allowed to hunt lynx.

On the photo: First lynx hunted after the reintroduction. Author: Alojzije Frković

SEVEN LYNX PLACES TO SEARCH FOR

We recommend you find and visit seven places while exploring the wildlife sites of the Dinarides. They have been chosen to introduce you to the life and behaviour of the lynx. As the lynx is present in large parts of our forests, these places can be easily found. You just need to know how to recognise them and imagine a lynx presence. We hope you will find joy in challenging yourself by looking at them from a lynx perspective.

a.	Hunting area
b.	Place to hide prey
c.	Resting sites
d.	Marking place
e.	Being social
f.	A den
g.	The forest as a place to grow and play

Hunting area

An example of what a lynx hunting area looks like.

To recognise the typical hunting area of the lynx, it is important to know its prey and understand its hunting strategy.

Lynx are specialised in hunting small ungulates, especially roe deer. They also hunt other ungulates (chamois, red deer, mouflon), wild boar and small prey (rodents, hare, fox, birds) to a lesser degree. The Dinaric lynx population is somewhat specific in the relatively frequent use of fat dormouse, making up about 16% of their diet. It is particularly important for females and young lynx.

While hunting, an ambush is the main strategy, relying on their most developed senses - hearing and vision. They quietly move closer to their prey and jump on it. Their claws are hidden most of the time, allowing them to stalk quietly - this is also the reason claws are not visible in tracks. Lynx hunt on the ground and will only climb trees to escape danger. They will often stalk prey by setting an ambush in proximity to ungulate trails, because areas where prey gather and stay still are good places to perform the hunt, especially when this place gives the opportunity to ambush prey from above and hide while moving closer. Small patches of meadows surrounded by large dense forests where ungulates come to feed are perfect lynx hunting areas.

Do you know how to recognise the signs of roe deer? Try to find at least two places with their tracks.

Place to hide prey

Typical lynx prey – roe deer.

After hunting down its prey, the lynx will feed. They primarily feed on muscle- on average, they need around 2 kilos of meat per day. They bury their prey with surrounding leaves or snow after feeding and can return to feed on it for several days.

They hide their prey to protect the remains from different scavengers, including brown bears, wild boar, foxes, ravens, crows, owls and eagles. The location is usually several hundred meters away from the hunting place and hidden in bushes where there is a deep layer of leaves or snow.

Research in Slovenia and Croatia has shown that brown bears find 32% of lynx prey remains, and 15% of all large prey killed by lynx is lost due to bears scavenging (kleptoparasitism). The frequency of bear scavenging is strongly dependent on bear activity patterns, and is highest during the lynx pregnancy and lactation period, when up to half of lynx kills are taken by bears. Consequently, bears are capable of influencing the hunting frequency and diet of lynx.

Most of the information about where and when lynx hide their prey comes from telemetry data received by the collars worn by lynx. This kind of research has been conducted in Slovenia and Croatia a number of times

Bear family feeding on the lynx prey.

during the last 15 years. When a lynx is recorded returning to the same place several times in a short period of time, it usually means it is returning to its prey. Researchers check these locations and equip them with automatic cameras to see what is coming to feed.

On the recommended Lynx Walk trail, by analysing telemetry data from collared lynxes, researchers recorded lynx prey more than 5 times during the last 15 years! The last time was when a lynx named Doru, who was the first lynx translocated from Romania to Croatia within the LIFE Lynx project, caught their first prey in this area just 100 meters from the trail!

! IMPORTANT: If you see animal remains you think could be leftovers of lynx prey, let us know by sending the information and any photos to us at:

life.lynx.eu@gmail.com,
lifelynx.hr@gmail.com.

To find out how lynx prey looks, check "A Fieldguide for Investigating Damages Caused by Carnivores"

Resting sites

While lynx spend night-time hunting, feeding and moving through their territory, day-time is mostly used for resting.

While resting, lynx like to spend time grooming to keep clean, and scratching on hard surfaces, like logs and trees, to keep their claws sharp.

Just like other wildlife species, lynx prefer to rest at peaceful sites. When looking for a resting site, they show a strong selection for heterogeneous landscapes and covert micro locations, which provide shelter, protection from people, a good view of their surroundings and means for territorial marking. Usually, lynx resting sites are located far from locations with high human activity, such as human settlements, hiking trails and roads. The Karstic area in Slovenia and Croatia is known for its heterogeneous landforms with plenty of rocks, ridges and caves so finding a good place to rest should not be a problem for a lynx!

Studies in Slovenia showed that lynx also select resting sites with denser vegetation cover. This offers lynx a better hideout from potential disturbance, especially from people and other large predators like bears and wolves.

Look for the inaccessible rocks or ridges, surrounded by dense vegetation with steep terrain. Can you imagine a lynx resting there?

Lynx in captivity spend most of the day-time resting on perching platforms at or near the top of their enclosure. These platforms provide a place from which they can hide, peer out, and offer a good view of the horizon.

Marking place

While walking in nature, you will probably notice more than one type of carnivore faeces, like those from foxes, martens and grey wolves. Even though it often looks like it was accidentally left behind, it is likely that the place and position was very well planned to send a clear message to other individuals of the same species. Like many other carnivore species, lynx use scent marking to mark their territory.

Each male defends his territory against other males, and each female defends her territory against other females. Males have bigger territories that overlap with those of females, and territory size varies from 50 km^2 to 450 km^2.

Scent marking in lynx serves to mark territory and advertise for mates. Typical scent marking by males and females begins with sniffing, followed by cheek, chin, head and neck rubbing, and finishes with urine spraying. Male lynx are more frequent visitors to scent marking sites, and also scent mark more frequently than fe-

Look for the signs of marking sites. You might feel the intense smell of wild carnivore urine, or find animal hair.

males. Research in Slovenia showed that lynx will select marking objects that are expected to better retain smell, like juvenile conifers, and will avoid sloping rocks, as these are more exposed to precipitation. They also select objects of similar size to themselves and objects on straight road sections, mostly marking sides parallel to their travel routes and vertical rocks covered with moss. The intensity of marking increases as the mating season approaches in early spring, and marking locations are concentrated on the borders of neighbouring territories.

Human infrastructure such as forest roads, abandoned barns, shelters or similar objects are also very often used as marking sites. Traces of scratching can be seen - these are also used as a message.

Interesting

We have prepared a special Guidline for collecting faeces, urine or hair samples for genetic analysis.

Being social

The lynx is a solitary animal. With the exception of mothers and their offspring, lynx only socialise during the breeding season, when male and females meet for a short period of time.

Male territory often overlaps partly with that of females. During the breeding season, extra-territorial excursions of males have been recorded, sometimes with successful mating within the neighbour's territory. Aggressive lynx interactions are rare and usually occur between males during breeding season.

The lynx breeding season usually takes part during late winter. As breeding season approaches, visits to marking sites become more frequent and increases the chances of meeting a mate. During this time, lynx will use vocalisation so they can locate each other. Meows, chuffs and growls are some of the most frequently used calls.

Not much is known about the breeding behaviour of lynx in the wild, but interesting insights have been obtained by research conducted on captive

Record at least one sound of mammal vocalisation. Can you determine what species it is? Don't forget smaller species such as bats!

individuals. During the breeding season, a significant increase in diurnal activity was noticed where both sexes showed play behaviour. Observed reproductive behaviour included head tossing, where one of the individuals initiates hitting/tossing the head of the other partner frontally, which later can continue as rubbing or licking the forehead of the partner. Marking behaviour, mating calls and copulation was also recorded. Copulation was usually preceded by play behaviour or the male following the female.

The place where lynx socialise is not known - it is assumed that the whole area of their territories are good places to meet and socialise.

Interesting

PLAY VIDEO

An interesting example of lynx social behaviour was recorded in Slovenia in 2019/20. One of the translocated lynxes, Goru, met a female lynx called Teja. As they both had collars, researchers were able to record their meetings between June-July 2019, which is outside the usual mating season period in February - March as Goru was released in Slovenia in May. They met 3 times, each time spending a few days close to each other, even sharing prey. Soon, Teja was recorded with a kitten named Mala, who was confirmed with DNA analysis to be an offspring of Goru. As well as being extremely interesting data about social and reproductive behaviour, it was a big win for the LIFE Lynx team, as it confirmed the first reproduction of translocated lynx.

A den

Like other large carnivores, lynx have just a few offspring and even less survive the first year - often just one or two. The quality of den sites may be one of the first important factors affecting survival, so a female has to choose carefully where to give birth. Kittens are born with their eyes closed, nearly deaf, immobile, and unable to regulate their own body temperature yet. This makes them dependent on their mother for warmth and food.
In captivity, it has been observed that the female will not come out of the den to feed until a couple of days after birth. She nurses her young for three to five months, but they begin to eat solid food at one month of age. At six weeks old, the cubs begin to follow the mother on short trips.

The females move the kittens from one den to another regularly, keeping to short distances within 500m. Frequent changing of dens may reduce the risk of being detected by potential predators, such as martens, foxes, avian predators and wild cats, or disturbed by humans. Other reasons for changing dens include flooding, changes in temperature, food remains, ectoparasites, or lack of prey.

Dens must shelter kittens from the weather, getting wet or direct sun. Most dens are closed structures, and they very often have a terrace which serves as a resting place and lookout. Dens used after birth have many additional hiding spots around them that help kittens to hide quickly.

They are typically located at steep slopes among rocks or in caves with a surface of approximately 1m^2 and wooden surroundings. When kittens are born, they are a drab sand colour with almost no black spots. After nine weeks, their fur changes to a reddish colour which is more or less spotted. The pattern enables them to camouflage and move around without being noticed.

The forest as a place to grow and play

After spending their first month mostly in dens, kittens start to explore the environment and play outside of the den. Some time between the first and second month, their mother decides it is time for them to see the world and starts the mobile phase of their growth.

In this phase, they are mostly moving, feeding and looking for prey. Wandering large distances throughout their mother's home range might make the kittens familiar with the concepts of refuge places, water resources, and prey distribution. Teaching hunting skills and coming into contact with prey is an important part of their development, so mothers hunt with their young to teach them proper techniques. Kittens learn this through observation and practice. They are very active, curious, and skilled at climbing trees, using their sharp claws.

Research in the Jura Mountains showed that after four months, kittens sometimes become aggressive to each other at the kill site. Consequently, they did not feed together anymore, instead coming to the kill site one by one. After this, they didn't fight or become more aggressive to each other, but order of feeding was very well known. From January onwards it was mostly the mother who ate first.

When the new mating season starts, the family mostly breaks up. After the cubs leave their mother, siblings may travel and hunt together for several months. When hunting together, one animal chases the prey into the direction of the other. After that period together, the siblings separate. Male lynxes travel longer distances than females, who generally stay close to their mother.

Interesting:

PLAY VIDEO

In 2007, researchers in Slovenia put a collar on a young female called Dina, whose territory was around Snežnik mountain. That year she had 2 cubs and was recorded at camera traps with both of them – Puhi and Burja. In 2019, Croatian and Slovenian researchers realized that a female named Miška with a territory in Gorski kotar, Croatia, 50km away from Dina's territory in Slovenia was actually one of her offspring – Burja!

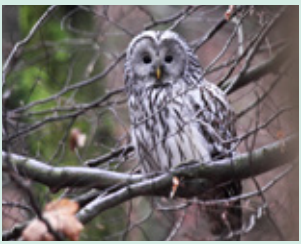
Forests can be a great playground for many species, even us! What makes it more fun are many fallen trunks where offspring can practice their balance and hide. Find a place that could be a joyful playground for a lynx kitten.

SPECIES NOT TO MISS

1.
Alpine salamander, lat. *Salamandra atra* – an amphibian that does not need water because the young are born fully developed.

2.
European adder, lat. *Vipera berus* – a snake that likes cool weather and in the Dinaric Alps lives at high elevations only.

3.
Horvath's rock lizard, lat. *Iberolacerta horvathi* – specialized rock climber which closely resembles the much more widespread Common Wall Lizard.



4.
Ural owl, lat. *Strix uralensis* – a boreal species that lives in Southern European mountains. Be aware not to approach a young Ural owl because the parents might attack you, aiming for your head!

5.
White-backed woodpecker, lat. *Dendrocopos leucotos* – Southern Europe subspecies (ssp. lilfordii) that has marbled back, not white.

6.
Common firecrest, lat. *Regulus ignicapilla* – one of the two smallest birds in Europe, being 6 times lighter than a sparrow.

7.
Ring ouzel, lat. *Turdus torquatus* – mountainous cousin of a Common Blackbird.

8.
Rosalia longicorn, lat. *Rosalia alpina* – the larvae develops in old beech trees at higher elevations.

9.
Edible dormouse, lat. *Glis glis* – in terms of biomass, the most abundant mammal in the Dinaric forests, especially during peak years. There is an ancient local tradition of trapping them in autumn.

10.
Chamois, lat. *Rupicapra rupicapra* – not closely related to the domestic goat but also an excellent rock climber that enjoys safety of almost vertical cliffs.

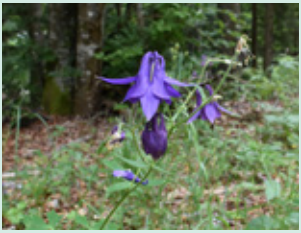
1.
Bilberry, lat. *Vaccinium myrtillus* – wild relative of blueberries and important food for forest animals from small birds to brown bear.

2.
Mountain pine, lat. *Pinus mugo* – pine species that naturally grows on timber line and is more bushy in appearance.

3.
Deadly nightshade, lat. *Atropa belladona* – poisonous plant which was used as make-up to expand pupils, hence the name belladonna (meaning "nice lady").

4.
Carniolan lily, lat. *Lilium carniolicum* – not as large as garden lillies but equally beautiful.

5.
Orchid species – famous and beautiful flowers, smaller than their tropical cousins so you have to look at them closer.



6.
Columbine, lat. *Aquilegia species* - a lot of species form this genus are present in flower gardens and their wild counterparts are equally beautiful. Long talons hide large amounts of nectar.

7.
Wild garlic, lat. *Alium ursinum* – forest relative of garden garlic that develops early in the spring and disappears soon after the beech trees develop leaves to wait as a bulb till the next spring.

8.
Raspberry, lat. *Rubus idaeus* – delicious and worth looking for as the wild plant has better tasting fruit than the domestic.

9.
Hart's tongue, lat. *Phylitis scolopendrium* – unlike most of the other species this fern has simple tongue-shaped leaves. The underside hides sori which are a simple sign that it is a fern.

10.
Lungwort, lat. *Lobaria pulmonaria* – large lichen that depends on old, mostly not managed forests, indicator of clean air.

LYNX WALK RECOMMENDED TRAIL

PRINT VERSION

Lynx Walk (94,45 km)

Border

Risnjak National park

Notranjski Snežnik Nature Reserve

- A HUNTING AREA - an example of what a lynx hunting area might look like
- B PLACE TO HIDE A PREY - an example of the place where lynx would hide its prey
- C RESTING SIDE - a view on the rocky edge where lynx could be resting
- D MARKING SITE - an example of a place that lynx use for marking
- E PLACE WHERE DORU HAD ITS FIRST CROATIAN MEAL
- F A DEN - example of a location where lynx den could be placed
- G THE FOREST AS A PLACE TO GROW AND PLAY - area where forest is not exploited by humans so full of fallen tree trunks and interesting places to be used as a playground

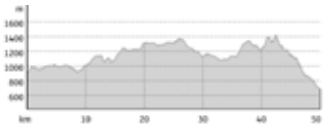
- 1 Mašun Forest House Information and educational centre
- 2 Mountain lodge Sviščaki
- 3 Mountain Lodge Draga Karolina, Snežnik
- 4 Leskovna Dolina Village
- 5 Babno Polje Village - border crossing
- 6 Prezid Village - border crossing
- 7 Hunting lodge Milanov vrh
- 8 Forester Lodge
- 9 Mountain lodges Platak
- 10 Mountain lodge Schlosser house
- 11 The Risnjak National Park guest-house

- 1 Županov laz - Monument to unknown partisan heroes and doctors
- 2 Slovenian pilot Josip Križaj monument
- 3 Worl War II. bunker

LYNX WALK CROATIA

Distance: 50.1 km • Duration: 15:49 h

Elevation profile:



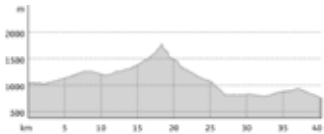
Scan QR code, save this route offline, share with friends and more...

Website:
https://out.ac/mH9Oa

LYNX WALK SLOVENIA

Distance: 40.3 km • Duration: 12:49 h

Elevation profile:



Scan QR code, save this route offline, share with friends and more...

Website:
https://out.ac/mHJnp

YOUR LYNX WALK

Ready to go for a Lynx Walk? To help you prepare yourself for this hike, we recommend:

- **Choose a trail with a length and difficulty that fits your hiking fitness. To see great locations and experience nature, it is not always necessary to go far. Short but good planned hikes can sometimes be just as fulfilling. Many hiking portals provide great information about interesting hikes such as:**
  - *via-dinarica.org*
  - *viaadriatica.org*
  - *Hrvatski planinarski savez*
  - *Planinarenje.hr*
  - *Eupoti.com*
  - *Planinska zveza Slovenije*
  - *Hribi.net*
  - *Kočevsko*
  - *Loška dolina*
  - *Zeleni Kras*
  - *Notranjski park*
- **A mosaic of habitats such as different types of forest, meadows and rocky terrain will give you the opportunity to witness the diversity of species. Be aware that nature changes with the seasons.**
- **Inform yourself about seasonal changes such as time of flowering, migration of species etc., to align your expectation.**
- **Check national/international portals with species and habitat distribution such as lynx online database *lynx.vef.hr*, *bioportal.hr*, *portal.mbase.org***
- **Do not forget to visit local communities to try some local specialities and speak to the residents. They will be happy to share locally known natural attractions with you.**
- **When hiking, don't hurry! Give yourself time to notice details and pay attention to small things such as tracks in mud and bird songs. Take photos (remember to use a measure when taking photos of animal signs and tracks) but do not forget to experience nature with your own eyes!**

Lynx Walk in Your Area

Living or working in the area of lynx distribution in the Dinarides and thinking of establishing a Lynx Walk trail? Great! Here are a few of our tips on how to begin:

- Look for an already established trail or forest road around your area where more habitat types can be found (such as forest, meadows, rocky slopes)
- If possible, make it a circular trail of low to medium difficulty lasting around 6 hours - it could be a whole-day walk with lunch for slow walkers and a half-day walk for faster ones
- Check lynx presence in the area in an online public database such as http://lynx.vef.hr/public/ or https://portal.mbase.org. Contact experts for additional information.
- Hike it on your own in every season and take as many photos as possible.
- Use your phone to record the trail and interesting locations. Put it online or make it public by using mobile apps.
- Use this Guide and Treasure Hunt list to find interesting lynx places.

- **Contact local nature lovers or experts to help you recognise the species you record or use online resources such mobile apps (*Map of Life*, *iNaturalist* or similar) and Facebook groups for recognising species (insects, orchids, reptiles and amphibians, birds etc.)**
- **There is no need to put additional infrastructure if the trail is walkable - create good information sources online or in printed versions.**
- **Contact local hunting associations and let them know about your idea. They will have good tips and information about how and when to use the trail.**
- **Muddy places can be a great source of information about which animals passed by. Look for one at the beginning of the trail, so the track can motivate visitors. Also, it will give you the possibility to realign the muddy surface every now and then, so fresh tracks can be seen.**

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Online version of the Lynx Walk Guide:
www.lifelynx.eu/lynx-walk-guide/

Map of the recommended trail:
www.lifelynx.eu/map-of-the-recommended-trail/

Details about the recommended trail:
Slovenia:
www.outdooractive.com/en/route/hikes/slovenia/lynx-walk-slovenia/152005485/
Croatia:
www.outdooractive.com/en/route/hikes/croatia/lynx-walk-croatia/151996170/

KML of the recommended trail:
www.lifelynx.eu/kml-of-the-recommended-trail

LIFE Lynx web:
www.lifelynx.eu

LIFE Lynx Facebook:
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