

## DOS AND DON'TS FOR VISITORS

- You can move about on private land from sunrise to sunset unless you do damage to the landowner. In case the private land is fenced or marked, you will need the landowner's permission.
- Drive your motor vehicle only on the provided roads and park it only in the car park.
- Put up your tent and make a fire only in the prepared and marked places. At the time of wildfire hazard, it is forbidden to make an open fire, even on special grounds! Do not use growing trees and shrubs for a camp fire.
- Use only non-power watercraft on the bodies of water. Amateur fishing is allowed in the landscape protection area, except with entangling nets and bottom longlines.
- You may wash and relieve yourself only on the dry land.
- Keep your dog on the leash while moving about in the nature.
- You can pick berries and mushrooms.
- It is forbidden to pick, dig out and tread on the protected plants!

When you see damage done to the nature or visiting objects, inform the Environmental Inspectorate by phone 1313.



### ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY

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ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD

### ARRANGEMENT OF VISITS

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ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTMENT  
CENTRE

## FORESTS AND WILDLIFE

In the lakes of the protection area some very rare plants, such as the water lobelia and the quillwort, but also dozens of algae occur, which are endangered with extinction and are very sensitive to contamination. The sandwort (*Arenaria procera*), sand pink (*Dianthus arenarius*), small pasque flower (*Pulsatilla pratensis*), and flat-stemmed clubmoss (*Diphasiastrum complanatum*) grow on dry and sandy banks. In the forests there are plenty of orchids, such as the dark-red helleborine (*Epipactis atrorubens*), broad-leaved helleborine (*Epipactis helleborine*), lesser butterfly orchid (*Platanthera bifolia*), twayblade (*Listera ovata*). It is forbidden to pick, dig out and tread on the protected plants! Also some protected species of birds, such as the black woodpecker (*Dryocopus martius*), white-backed woodpecker (*Dendrocopos leucotos*), and red-breasted flycatcher (*Ficedula parva*), can be met. The names of lakes refer to the most common species of fish; there are, for example, lakes called Ahvenjärv (Perch Lake), Särgjärv (Roach Lake) and Haugjärv (Pike Lake) in Kurtna. The European crayfish can also be found.

## RECREATION AREA

The Kurtna Lake District is an important recreation area. For bathing, the lakes with sandy shores, such as Nõmmjärv, Liivjärv and Rääkjärv, are preferred. There is a camping site near Lake Konsu and more well-maintained recreation areas are being planned. Marked forest trails for cycling, jogging, Nordic walking and, in winter, skiing start at Pannjärve. The forests of the area are rich in mushrooms.

## AFFECTORS OF LAKES

The Kurtna Lakes have been most deteriorated by the nearby peat fields, mining of oil shale and the Pannjärve sand quarry. The groundwater of Kurtna is pumped as drinking water to the cities of Ahtme and Jõhvi. The mine water, rich in clay and lime substances, is driven through several lakes, which changes the chemical composition of the lake water. Because of the



Photo: Perca, M. Vallimägi



Photo: Wildfire at Kurtna, private collection

Kurtna is an area with very high level of fire hazard. Nearly every summer wildfires are caused mostly by human negligence.

abundant consumption of water, the water level in several lakes has fallen four metres on average and the quality of water has become worse.

The lakes are also affected by the negligent, contaminating and fire-hazardous activities of holiday-makers, such as littering, treading on the soil and carrying it into water, relieving and washing themselves in the lakes, washing their cars on the lakeshore, etc. That leads to the turbidity of the clean and transparent water and the added minerals foster the excessive growth of water plants.

## CULTURAL HERITAGE

In the 1930s and during World War II, there was a military training camp in the place of the present Kurtna Youth Camp. At Lake Nõmmjärv, the officers' club was located. The remnants of old trenches and rifle pits can be seen in several places in the landscape.

Orchids do not recover easily after being picked and may perish. When being replanted, the mycelium essential for the orchids' life cannot be taken along and the plants die.



Photo: Lesser butterfly orchid (*Platanthera bifolia*), A. Feršel



# KURTNA Landscape Protection Area



Photo: Lake Konsu, L. Michelson

According to a legend, the 136-hectare-large and 10.2-metre-deep Lake Konsu was dug by the Estonian national hero Kalevipoeg; another folk tale says that the lake was created by the gigantic hero's boot heel.

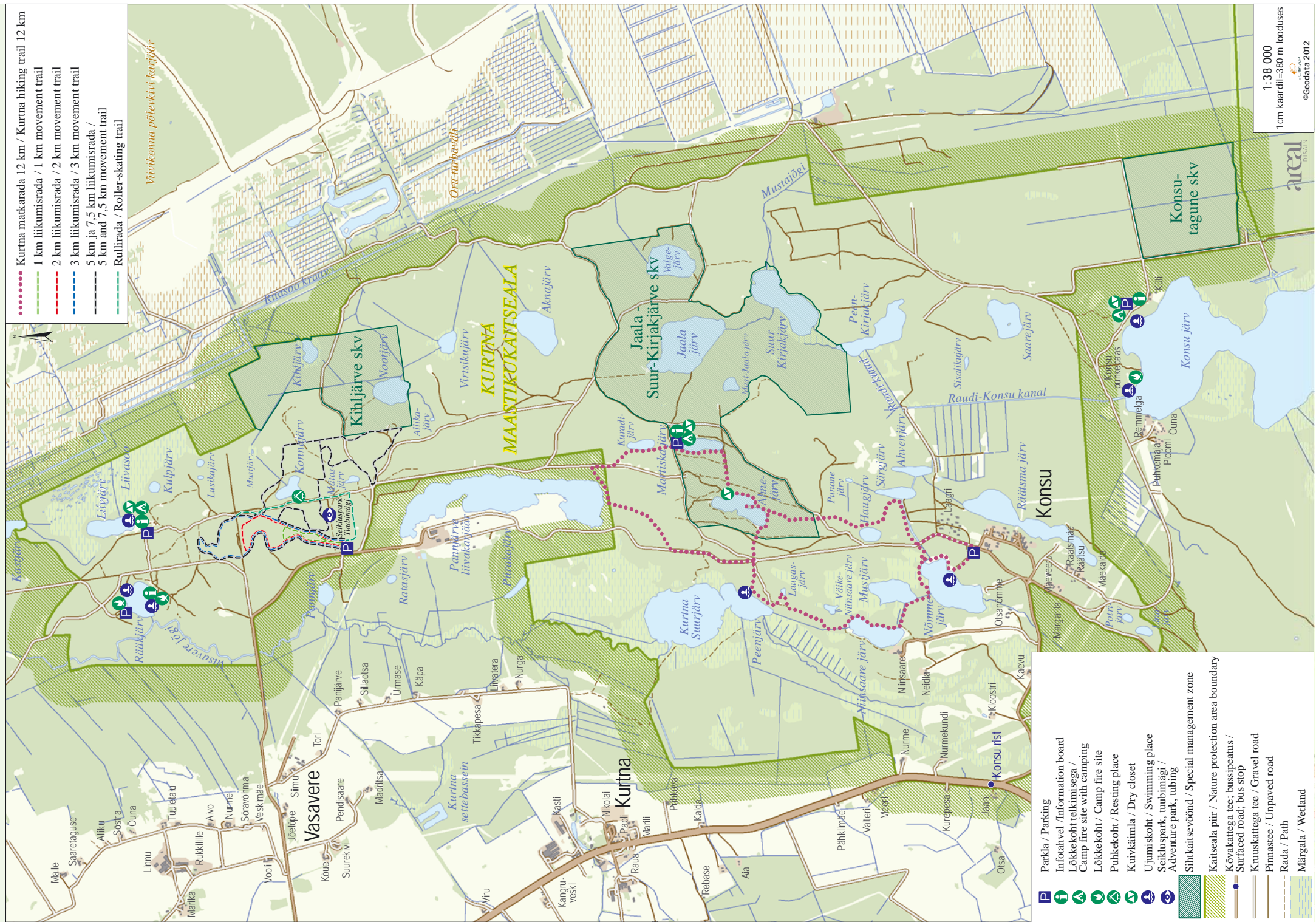
Kurtna is Estonia's lake-richest area with 42 lakes on 30 square kilometres.

### KURTNA LANDSCAPE PROTECTION AREA

The Kurtna Landscape Protection Area was founded in 1987 in order to protect the bumpy landscape, valued lakes, natural habitats, and rare species of flora and fauna at Kurtna. The lakes make up 193 hectares out of the total of 2,805 hectares of the protection area. Here is one of the world's most unique areas of thermokarst lakes. At the end of the latest glacial age 12,000 years ago, huge ice blocks, buried in sand and gravel, melted and lakes arose in the hollows with sand and gravel hills, or kames, between them. The region is characterized by varied relief and diverse vegetation.

### KAMES AND LAKES

The bumped area at Kurtna covers nine kilometres in length and more than three kilometres in width. The kames in the north-southerly direction are 15–20 metres high, reaching up to 71 metres above the sea level. Out of nine main types of lakes common in Estonia, six are represented here. The gems of the protected area are the clean-watered oligotrophic lakes, unique in Estonia and Europe. Estonia's only known ferrotrophic lake is located in Kurtna. Most lakes here are small forest lakes with peaty shores. Some lakes adjacent to kames, however, have sandy shores, for example the lakes of Kurtna Suurjärv, Nõmmjärv, Liivjärv. The largest lake with the surface area of 136 hectares is Lake Konsu, the smallest ones (0.1 hectares) are Lakes Allikajärv (Spring Lake) and Sisalikü (Lizard's Lake), and the deepest (11.5 metres) is Lake Kuradijärv (Devil's Lake).



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