



# Ramsar Sites Information Service

## Annotated List of Wetlands of International Importance

# Croatia

5 Ramsar Site(s) covering 93,590 ha

### Crna Mlaka Fishponds

Site number: 582 | Country: Croatia | Administrative region: Zagreb County  
Area: 756 ha | Coordinates: 45°36'45"N 15°43'58"E | Designation dates: 02-11-1992  
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Situated south of Zagreb, Crna Mlaka is a complex of carp ponds and forest which is very important for the breeding, feeding and staging of numerous waterbird species. The alluvial wetland along the lower part of the Kupa River and its tributaries is surrounded by one of the largest complexes of alluvial oak forests in Europe. The fishponds, with their extensive water surface, marsh vegetation, and rich food resources are important for migratory and breeding waterbirds, such as ferruginous duck (*Aythya nyroca*) which are found in internationally important numbers. Numerous nationally threatened species and species of European concern such as the squacco heron (*Ardeola ralloides*) and the Eurasian curlew (*Numenius arquata*) have also been recorded. The wetland has a strict protection scheme as an ornithological reserve, and hunting is forbidden in the area. The fishponds are used commercially in accordance with nature conservation values. The main threat to the Site is the lack of consistent water inflow, which leads to eutrophication of the water bodies. As of 2020, a management plan was being prepared for the Site.

### Lonjsko Polje Nature Park

Site number: 584 | Country: Croatia | Administrative region: Sisačko-moslavačka & Brodsko-posavska Counties  
Area: 51,218 ha | Coordinates: 45°21'36"N 16°49'01"E | Designation dates: 02-11-1992  
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Lonjsko Polje Nature Park follows a floodplain along the Sava River, which runs south-eastwards towards the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is mainly composed of alluvial forests, but also wet meadows and pastures. This combination of habitats and their regular flooding and high groundwater levels provide the conditions for rich biodiversity. The 250 bird species found in the Park represent more than two-thirds of all those in Croatia. 138 species use the wetland for breeding, such as the white stork *Ciconia ciconia* and the Eurasian spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*. The river ecosystem is also crucial to several fish species, providing refuge and spawning grounds to threatened species including the Danube salmon *Hucho hucho*, the leather carp *Cyprinus carpio* and the European mudminnow *Umbra krameri*. The wetland is of cultural as well as ecological importance, being sustained by traditional farming and other practices. The main threats include drainage and invasive alien species. The management plan is due to be updated for the 2019-2029 period.

## Nature Park Kopacki rit

Site number: 583 | Country: Croatia | Administrative region: Osječko-baranjska  
Area: 23,126.3 ha | Coordinates: 45°38'44"N 18°52'28"E | Designation dates: 02-11-1992  
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Kopacki rit is an inland delta situated at the confluence of the Danube and Drava rivers, adjacent to the border with Serbia. The Site features lakes, marshes, wet grasslands, reed beds, riverine forests, numerous channels, oxbow lakes and fishponds. It is subject to spring flooding, which creates dynamic ecosystems that support a highly diverse flora and fauna. Over 522 vascular plants, 300 birds, 55 mammals, 53 fish, 12 amphibians and 12 reptile species are found in the Site. Of these, several are internationally threatened, such as the eastern imperial eagle, the common pochard, the saker falcon and the leather carp. Kopacki rit is also an important source of food and nursery grounds for the Danube fish stocks, as it is the most significant spawning ground in the central and upper Danube area. The Site is also important for flood control and water purification, as groundwater sources in the area are used for drinking water. Drainage, logging, pollution from surrounding fields, fishing and hunting are some of the main threats.

## Neretva River Delta

Site number: 585 | Country: Croatia | Administrative region: Dubrovnik-Neretva County  
Area: 12,742 ha | Coordinates: 43°01'31"N 17°33'31"E | Designation dates: 02-11-1992  
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

The Neretva is the largest river of the eastern Adriatic watershed, and its final section stretches through Croatian territory, forming an extensive delta with large reedbeds, lakes, wet meadows, lagoons, sandbanks, sandy tidal flats and saltmarshes. The Site is notable in its biogeographic region for its wealth of species: it hosts 618 vascular plants, 53 mammals, 313 birds, 22 reptiles, 11 amphibians, 35 freshwater fish of which 18 are endemic, 29 dragonflies and 234 butterfly species. The Delta is an important migration stopover on the Black Sea/Mediterranean Flyway for waders, terns and gulls such as the Eurasian spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*, the Kentish plover *Charadrius alexandrinus* and the black-winged stilt *Himantopus himantopus*. The Delta plays a very important role in flood control and sediment trapping. Besides the traditional agricultural landscape, there are large complexes of intensively managed farms with tangerine plantations and vegetable greenhouses. The Delta is also rich in cultural heritage and historical sites. Threats relate to issues of water management and agriculture, such as eutrophication, fertilizer pollution, land reclamation and habitat fragmentation.

## Vransko Lake

Site number: 2,109 | Country: Croatia | Administrative region: Zadar & Šibenik-Knin counties  
Area: 5,748 ha | Coordinates: 43°53'45"N 15°34'49"E | Designation dates: 02-02-2013  
[View Site details in RSIS](#)

Vransko Lake is the only brackish natural lake on the coast of Croatia. It is situated in a shallow karst bed and separated from the Adriatic Sea by a narrow karst ridge. Significant seasonal variations in water level and salinity, due to the intrusion of sea water through the permeable karst, have created conditions for the development of very specific habitats. The shallowest north-west part of the Site features reedbeds, flood plain and seasonally flooded arable land; the hills lining the eastern shore are covered with typical Mediterranean scrubland, while the lower western coast is more rocky. Some of these areas are included in the EU Natura 2000 list of protected habitats. The Site is a nesting, wintering and resting area for many threatened waterbirds such as common pochard, spotted crane and Baillon's crane. The Site also provides habitat to the critically endangered European eel. During the rainy season, the marshy areas regulate floods, while the reedbeds purify the waters of fertilizers carried into the lake through melioration canals, threatening its eutrophication. Notable threats to the Site, such as reed burning, illegal fishing and hunting, have been significantly mitigated since the establishment of the protected area, and continue to be addressed through local education and implementation of the management plan.