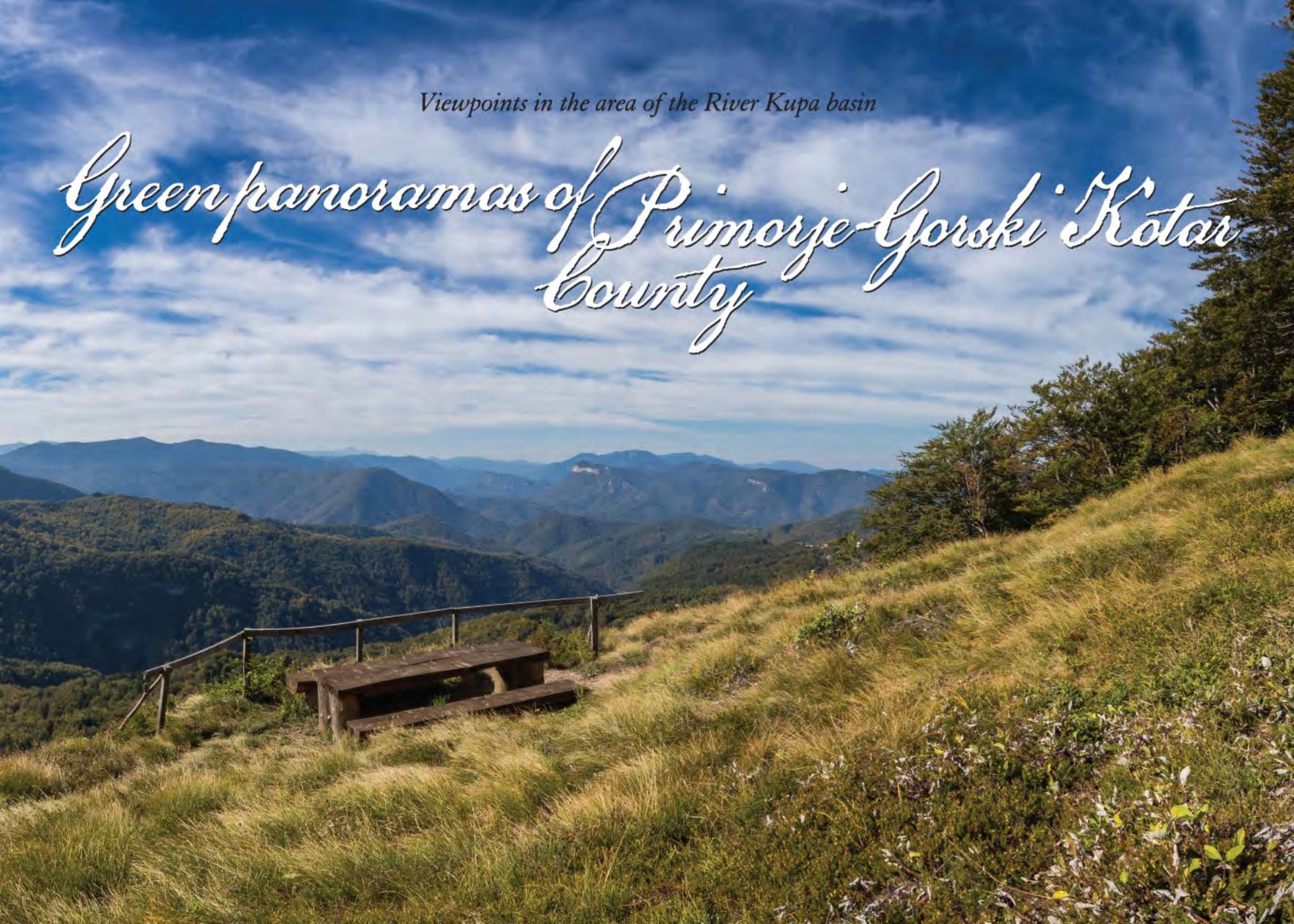


*Viewpoints in the area of the River Kupa basin*

# *Green panoramas of Primorje-Gorski Kotar County*



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*Impresum:*

*Publisher:* Priroda Public Institution; *On behalf of the publisher:* Sonja Šišić, MSc; *Texts by:* Ivana Rogić, Marko Randić, MSc, Emil Crnković, MSc; *Photographs by:* Marko Matešić, Ivana Rogić, Patrik Krstinić, Marko Randić, MSc; *Expert consultant for the area of Risnjak National Park:* Dragan Turk, MSc; *Design and layout:* Mladen Stipanović; *Print:* Printera grupa; *Print run:* 400 copies; Rijeka 2017.

CIP zapis je dostupan u računalnome katalogu Nacionalne i sveučilišne knjižnice u Zagrebu pod brojem 000948696.

ISBN 978-953-8117-05-3

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## Rules of behaviour when visiting viewpoints

Some viewpoints are easily accessible, and some are harder to reach. Therefore, it is very important for every visitor to assess their own capabilities and capacities. It is also important to show responsibility and caution with regard to nature. Please observe the following guidelines:

- do not go alone;
- take appropriate clothing, shoes and equipment (e.g. GPS device and map);
- ask the area's tourist board, hiking club or local people for information;
- be careful when taking photographs of yourself, other people and nature, since you are out in the wild (or in a steep and insecure place);
- reptiles like to sunbathe on the edges of viewpoints, so be careful, as encounters with snakes are not uncommon;
- do not dispose of garbage in nature;
- do not walk along hiking and forest trails

if you are not familiar with them and if you don't have the necessary knowledge about orientation and trail marking;

- nature is home to wild animals, so pay attention to signs that indicate their presence; speak loudly and clearly while you walk to warn them of your presence, and thus reduce the possibility of an encounter;
- 'protective fences' at some less frequently visited viewpoints are there just for visual effect and are not safety barriers - do not lean on them!

*Viewpoints*

# Introduction

Gorski Kotar, the northern part of the Croatian highlands, is a green oasis of Primorje-Gorski Kotar County. With its diversity of landscapes and unspoilt areas, it hides numerous preserved natural phenomena. The partly inaccessible relief overgrown with dense forest vegetation is the reason why Gorski Kotar remained rather inaccessible in the past. It is therefore no wonder that on some ancient maps it was called *Hortus diabolicus*, which means 'the Devil's Garden'. This inaccessibility favoured the survival of numerous plant and animal species, which in Gorski Kotar found one of their rare, if not last refuges in the wider area. The importance of Gorski Kotar has been recognised at both national and regional levels, as it was included in the Natura 2000 network of nature protection areas as a Special Protection Area for birds and a Special Area of Conservation for other wild animals and habitats. Almost at its centre, around the prominent Mount Risnjak, there is the only national park in Primorje-Gorski Kotar County. Attractive viewpoints in the



*Border stone between the cadastral municipalities of Belo and Završje from 1820. The stone is located along the path that leads from the viewpoint of Kauranca towards Medveja Sjena. (Photo: Ivana Rogić)*

surrounding area offer magnificent views of Mount Risnjak.

In Gorski Kotar, there are a dozen other important natural areas and phenomena protected by Croatian law. Most of them are open to visitors. In addition, Gorski Kotar is home to many other locations that are particularly interesting in terms of their nature or landscape, such as attractive viewpoints that serve as places of rest for hikers, nature lo-

vers and travellers, who can enjoy the view of this green area, which is both wild and tame at the same time. Like worlds of their own, these viewpoints, each in its own way, reveal to us the diversity of the relief and its variety of shapes, and also certain specific features of the local flora, fauna, mushrooms, or geological structures. This brochure gives an overview of several well-known viewpoints located in the basin of the River Kupa. Some of them offer views of this beautiful river that for most of its course marks the border between Croatia and Slovenia, gently winding among the hills and proving once again that nature and its beauty have no frontiers and are equally represented on both sides of the river.

*Public Institution »Privroda«, director  
Sonja Šišić, MSc*

# Categorisation

## Protected areas of Gorski Kotar

In Gorski Kotar, there are eleven important natural areas and individual natural phenomena that are protected by the Croatian Nature Protection Act. These are:



*Common primrose (Primula vulgaris)*  
(Photo: Marĉo Randić)

Rocks of Bijele Stijene and Samarske Stijene Strict Reserve
Rišnjak National Park
Debela Lipa - Velika Rebar Forest Vegetation Special Reserve
Golubinjak Forest Park
Japlenški Vrh Forest Park
Vraĵi Prolaz - Zeleni Vir Protected Landscape
Kamaĉnik Protected Landscape
Geomorphological Natural Monument - Lokvarka Cave
Geomorphological Natural Monument - Source of the River Kupa
Individual Tree Specimen - Old Yew in Mededi
Park Architecture Monument - Park by the Castle in Severin na Kupi

## Explanation of viewpoint categories

Viewpoints are categorised in terms of their approachability and ease of access so that visitors can assess their own capabilities more easily:

- easily accessible viewpoints alongside roads or villages that can be approached without difficulty;
- viewpoints away from urban settlements that can be accessed by forest roads (in a suitable motor vehicle, by bike, or on foot);
- viewpoints with more demanding access (requiring knowledge of hiking trails and orientation using trail marking; featuring paths overgrown with vegetation; requiring prior information from local tourist boards or hiking clubs).

# Map of viewpoints





*Viewpoint close to the castle in Severin na Kupa  
(Photo: Marko Maresić)*

## 1. Viewpoint in the park by the castle in Severin na Kupi

### *Closest town or village*

Severin na Kupi

### *Viewpoint altitude*

246 m

### *Viewpoint coordinates*

N 45.42161° / E 15.16875°

### *Accessibility and approach options*

By bus or car (parking is available close to the main road in Severin na Kupi). The park is a 5-minute walk from the parking lot.

The protected monument of park architecture in Severin na Kupi is located alongside the ancient castle, close to the main road (part of the historic Louisiana Road). A wooden bench to rest on can be found in the upper part of the park, on the edge of a steep slope. A small viewpoint next to the castle offers a view through treetops of ancient lindens towards the northwest, that is, upstream into the depths of the canyon of the River Kupa. At this point, the river is less winding – just a few gentle bends indicate that the fast mountain river here turns into

a slow lowland river which flows further on for the most part through Karlovac County. Beneath the castle in Severin, the River Kupa is still squeezed between wooded slopes on both sides. On the Croatian side, on its right bank, there are the steep and wooded slopes of the hill of Ravan, while on the Slovenian side one can see the slopes of the hill of Straža. On both banks of the river, various trees with lush crowns grow, the most striking of which, due to their silver-greyish colour, are white willows (*Salix alba*).

### *Natural features of the area*

*Forests that follow rivers, and which in the composition of their trees, bushes and low vegetation differ from those in surrounding areas that are not influenced by a river, are called gallery forests. Along the River Kupa, these make up special forest communities which stretch along its course in the form of long narrow corridors. One of the most significant communities of this type in the basin of the River Kupa is a forest of black alder and grey willow. On the slopes of the Kupa canyon, above the belt of*

*gallery forests, plant communities have developed in different environmental conditions. The slopes here are drier, warmer and have less soil than the alluvial flatlands along the course of the river. Around the castle in Severin na Kupi, on the slopes of the canyon, thermophilic forests have developed. The most represented tree species here are hop hornbeam (*Ostrya carpinifolia*), manna ash (*Fraxinus ornus*), sessile oak (*Quercus petraea*), Bosnian maple (*Acer obtusatum*), common dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), Cornelian cherry (*Cornus mas*), and many other forest plants.*



Castle in Severin na Kupi (Photo: Marko Randić)



*View from the viewpoint of Orlove Stijene  
(Photo: Marko Matešić)*

## 2. Orlove Stijene (Eagle's Rocks) Viewpoint





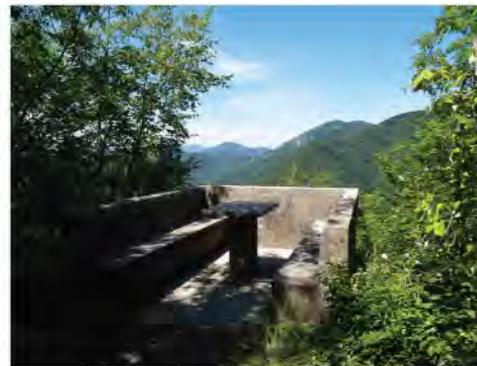
*Nettle-leaved bellflower (Campanula trachelium)*  
(Photo: Marko Randić)

The viewpoint of Orlove Stijene (Eagle's Rocks) is located not far from the village of Razdrto in the area of the Municipality of Brod Moravice, above the mountain slopes that descend towards the River Kupa, on the edge of a steep, partly rocky slope. It can be reached via the Brod Moravice-Velike Drage-Male Drage-Razdrto road, or from the direction of the village of Presika (above Vrbovsko), from where a forest road leads to the Litorić hunting lodge. Visitors are advised to carefully follow the trail markings and sign-

posts, of which there are only a few because this area is mostly visited only by hikers and foresters. The complete absence of urban noises provides the opportunity to listen carefully to the sounds of nature or even enjoy the pleasant silence in the rare moments when birds stop singing. The view from Orlova Stijena opens mostly towards Slovenia, as the River Kupa marks the border here. Closest to us on the opposite side of the viewpoint is the compact, boulder-shaped end of the ridge of the hill of Kozica (860 m), whose slopes are overgrown with dense forest vegetation with bare rock popping out here and there. In the distance towards the northwest, above the wooded and dark hills of Kočevje, the cone-shaped peak of Snežnik (1,796 m) peeps out in the background, the highest mountain of the north-western Dinarides.

### *Natural features of the area*

*As we follow the canyon of the River Kupa upstream towards the northeast, the transition from a lower hilly landscape to a mountainous area is reflected in the change of the composi-*



*Resting area at the viewpoint of Orlove Stijene*  
(Photo: Marko Randić)

*on of the local flora. A significant phenomenon with regard to the area's forest vegetation is the mixing of thermophilic trees, such as hop hornbeam (Ostrya carpinifolia), sessile oak (Quercus petraea) and Bosnian maple (Acer obtusatum) with mesophilic species, such as beech (Fagus sylvatica) and wych elm (Ulmus glabra), which suggest a harsher climate. Among the shrubs and low vegetation, we can find the endemic Croatian barberry (Berberis croatica), Velebit cow wheat (Melampyrum velebiticum), cyclamen (Cyclamen purpurascens), lily*

## Orlove Stijene (Eagle's Rocks) Viewpoint



of the valley (*Convallaria maialis*), bastard balm (*Melittis melissophyllum*), blue-eyed Mary (*Omphalodes verna*), yellow thistle (*Cirsium erisithales*), and other species. The specific location of the viewpoint on the edge of a cliff gives visitors the impression that it hangs in the air, and provides the opportunity to observe the flight of birds such as ravens (*Corvus corax*) and buzzards (*Buteo buteo*) from above, that is, from a 'bird's eye perspective', which is otherwise not very common and gives a clue as to how this microsite got its name ('Eagle's Rock').

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Closest town or village

Razdrto

Viewpoint altitude

572 m

Viewpoint coordinates

N 45.482694° / E 15.04108°

Accessibility and approach options

Cars or bikes suitable for forest and gravel roads; on foot.

---

View from the viewpoint of Orlove Stijene towards the northwest (Photo: Marko Randić)



*View from the viewpoint of Kauranca  
(Photo: Ivana Rogić)*

### 3. Kavranca Viewpoint

#### Closest town or village

Nove Hiše in the area of the Municipality of Brod Moravice

#### Viewpoint altitude

534 m

#### Viewpoint coordinates

N 45.50474° / E 14.92182°

#### Accessibility and approach options

Cars or bikes suitable for forest and gravel roads; on foot.

In the area of the Municipality of Brod Moravice, close to the abandoned village of Nove Hiše, there are two viewpoints: Kavranca (Raven's) and Medveja Stena (Bear's Rock). Visitors who are not familiar with this part of Gorski Kotar might have some difficulty finding them. Therefore, it is advisable to contact the local tourist office or hiking club for more information. From Brod Moravice towards the north, there are many small villages and hamlets. After Šimatovo, a gravel road leads to Nove Hiše. Just before

the entrance to the village, there is a small signpost for Kavranca Viewpoint. From here, it is possible to continue on foot for about 20 minutes to a shaded clearing surrounded by trees. A short path leads from here to the viewpoint, which offers a great view of the River Kupa meandering between the hills, and the small villages located along its banks. On the Slovenian side, one can see Mavrc and Brsnik, and (on the hill opposite Kavrance) the old town of Kostel, a 14th-century fortress with an interesting and turbulent history which resisted the attacks of the Ottomans. It is assumed that Turkish troops during the siege used a catapult to hit the Kostel Fortress with stone balls from Kavrance and the nearby hamlet of Nagličići. On the Croatian side, one can see the small village of Doluš, which was founded approximately 500 years ago, and which was the central point for the construction of the so-called Kupa Canal, a waterway that should have connected Karlovac with Brod na Kupi via the River Kupa but which was never finished (the attempt at building it took place from 1796 to 1802).

#### Natural features of the area

*The flora of this viewpoint reflects the typical features of the canyon. Mountainous and sub-Mediterranean species mix here, and a distinctive endemic community of Kalnik moor grass (*Sesleria kalnikensis*) has taken root in the fissures of the rocks. This endemic grass, which was named after Mount Kalnik, also grows on some mountains in Hrvatsko Zagorje, on the hills of Žumberak and Samobor, and in certain parts of Slovenia and Gorski Kotar, from where it spreads all the way down to Plitvice Lakes. It is a distinctive feature of almost all rocky viewpoints in the basin of the River Kupa. The diversity of the local flora is emphasised by several smaller dolines that reach almost to the edge of the canyon, which makes the microclimatic and floristic-vegetative contrasts even more apparent.*



*Viewpoint of Medveja Stena (Photo: Marko Matešić)*

## 4. Medveja Stena (Bear's Rock) Viewpoint



Old town of Kostel  
(Photo: Ivana Rogić)

The viewpoint of Medveja Stena (Bear's Rock) is located in the vicinity of Kavrancia Viewpoint. Due to the relatively short distance between the two, the view from Medveja Stena is quite similar to that from Kavrancia, yet somehow different and beautiful in its own way. From here, we can follow the course of the River Kupa even further to the west. This viewpoint is located right at the state border, but also on the edge of wilderness, which is why even the access path here is particularly interesting. Following the

trail markings on foot from Nove Hiše, one can reach the viewpoint along narrow forest paths that are partly overgrown, as this viewpoint is rarely visited. For this reason, the nature here is lush and well preserved. Beech trees grow along the entire route to the viewpoint and reach a height of more than 25 metres. They are often overgrown with thick ivy, which creates unique shapes and images. It is interesting that both Medveja Stena (Bear's Rock) and Kavrancia (Raven's) viewpoints were named after animals that once probably frequented these areas.

### Natural features of the area

*Stepping out of the forest to the edge of the rock, we will first notice tufts of endemic Kalnik moor grass, which we already know from the previous viewpoint. This grass is in bloom at the end of winter, right after the snow melts, and later it can be recognised among other grasses by its long blades with spikes on top that consist of just a few straw-yellow spikelets. Along the edge of the canyon, beech forests grow in which the soil is partially overgrown with ha-*

Closest town or village
Nove Hiše in the area of the Municipality of Brod Moravice
Viewpoint altitude
564 m
Viewpoint coordinates
N 45.49798° / E 14.92158°
Accessibility and approach options
On foot.

*iry sedge (Carex pilosa). This is a combination of forest species that is not very common in other parts of Gorski Kotar. On old beeches, the relatively rare lung lichen (Lobaria pulmonaria) grows, which is an indicator of the high quality of the air and the old preserved forests.*



*View from the viewpoint of Obrh to River Kupa  
(Photo: Marko Matešić)*

## 5. Obrh Viewpoint

### *Closest town or village*

Zavrh in the area of the Municipality of Brod Moravice

### *Viewpoint altitude*

563 m

### *Viewpoint coordinates*

N 45.51943° / E 14.93829°

### *Accessibility and approach options*

On foot.

Obrh Viewpoint is located in the vicinity of the village of Zavrh in the area of the Municipality of Brod Moravice. This small viewpoint, partly overgrown with forest vegetation, offers a somewhat more modest view of the River Kupa. Nevertheless, from here we can see the Slovenian hamlet of Žlebe and, on the opposite Croatian side, right below the viewpoint, the village of Gornja Lamana Draga. Apart from the view it offers, this viewpoint and its surroundings are important because of their hydrological and botanical composition: in a relatively small area, here we can encounter plenty of interesting plant species and a water source. The viewpoint can be reached along a forest road

that continues from the village of Zavrh. After 20 minutes of walking, there is a small signpost indicating the viewpoint and the water source of the same name. The viewpoint and the source of the Obrh are just a short walk from each other, but along very steep terrain. The source is particularly interesting. Located beneath a large rock, today it is very important for wild animals and humans, both of whom can find here the key element for their existence, i.e. water, since the surrounding area is rather scarce in sources. Until some 50 years ago, during droughts, people from the surrounding villages used to carry drinking water for themselves and their animals from this source. This task belonged traditionally to women and children. *Obrh* is a toponym, or more precisely a hydronym (the name of a body of water), that is found in several places along both banks of the River Kupa. It indicates a water source that springs out from a steep, often rocky karst slope.

### *Natural features of the area*

*At the viewpoint and along the rocks of the Obrh source, we encounter a good example of*

*special flora and vegetation conditioned by the direction they face (exposure). Differences are particularly pronounced between the colder and shaded slope and the warm, sunny side of the canyon of the River Kupa. Apart from these contrasts in climate exposure, the vegetation at Obrh is also specific because of the bedrock, which consists of dolomite rock. Because it faces north, Obrh is home to a hop hornbeam forest with spring heath (*Erica carnea*), an abundance of white sedge (*Carex alba*) and Christmas rose (*Helleborus niger* s.l.), which is typical of the Dolomites. It is important to emphasise that elements of mountain flora can be found on the shaded side. These include the hairy alpenrose (*Rhododendron hirsutum*) and alpine butterwort (*Pinguicula alpina*), two Alpine species that grow here at an altitude of only five hundred metres and which are probably glacial relicts far outside their habitat high in the Alps. On the other side, on the warm and sunny slopes close to the village of Žlebe in Slovenia, people used to grow grapes (there is a place called Trsje, which derives from trs, the Croatian word for vine, though the vineyards are today neglected and overgrown). These are two entirely different worlds in terms of vegetation.*



*Viewpoint of Kavranova Stena (Photo: Marko Matičič)*

## 6. Kavranova Stena (Raven's Rock) Viewpoint

The interesting viewpoint of Kavranova Stena (Raven's Rock) is located above Skrad. Toponyms (or more precisely ornithonyms) like this one are named after birds - in this case after ravens, which used to nest here. Naming places after birds is not a rarity in the basin of the River Kupa and in Gorski Kotar. Two further examples are the viewpoints of Kavranca (Raven's) and Orlove Stijene (Eagle's Rocks). The viewpoint of Kavranova Stijena can be reached from the centre of Skrad along a narrow asphalted road that leads uphill towards the village of Veliko Selce. From here, the asphalted road continues to the football field in the area of Skradaska Draga, where it turns into an unpaved path that leads towards the viewpoint of Perić. Shortly before the asphalt turns into a gravel road, at the end of a steep ascent, there is a signpost that points to the viewpoint of Kavranova Stena. What really strikes visitors here, maybe even more than the view itself, is the sight of the impressive dolomite rocks that protrude from the slopes of the hill and which are the habitat of rare and interesting plant species, such as the yellow bellflower (*Campanula thyrsoides*), sin-

gle blossoming specimen of which has taken root in rock fissures among tufts of Kalnik moor grass. This viewpoint is located on an overhanging dolomite rock that partially protrudes out of the surrounding dense beech forest. In its immediate vicinity, there are several more groups of rock, some of which are completely surrounded by forest and are particularly picturesque, as over time, as a result of geological processes, they have taken the form of massive towering boulders.

### *Natural features of the area*

*The forests around the rocks are a refuge for smaller yew trees (*Taxus baccata*), which are today a botanical rarity because they grow slowly and have been excessively felled. In the past, all the bigger and more easily accessible yew trees were cut down due to their much sought-after reddish hard wood. The fact that the rock faces north explains why representatives of several montane and alpine plants have managed to inhabit and survive in such habitats. A distinctive feature of this viewpoint is the view that extends far beyond the Kupa Valley with the mountains of Slovenia on the horizon.*

<i>Closest town or village</i>
Skrad
<i>Viewpoint altitude</i>
784 m
<i>Viewpoint coordinates</i>
N 45.42859° / E 14.91052°
<i>Accessibility and approach options</i>
The signpost can be reached by car, by bike, and on foot, and after that on foot along a short path that leads to the viewpoint.



*Yellow bellflower (*Campanula thyrsoides*)  
(Photo: Marko Randić)*



*View from the viewpoint of Perić  
(Photo: Marko Matešić)*

## 7. Perić Viewpoint



# Viewpoints



*Keeled garlic (Allium pulchellum)*  
(Photo: Marko Randić)

If you continue along the forest path that leads from Kavranova Stena Viewpoint, a short drive will take you to a small clearing which has a signpost indicating the direction of Perić Viewpoint. Due to its location on a slope with less forest vegetation, it offers a truly wide view of the surrounding area. Because of this and some of its other features, we might also describe it as an 'aerial viewpoint'. The view from Perić stretches far towards the west; it is maybe one of the most stunning views in this entire area.



*Wall lizard (Podarcis muralis)*  
(Photo: Ivana Rogić)

From here, one can see a series of rocky slopes on the hills and mountains above the valley of the River Kupa, with the impressive outline of the rock of Kuželjska Stijena standing out. The massive peak ridge of the Slovenian Mount Snežnik rises in the distance with its distinctive peak in the shape of a rounded cone, which is often shrouded in a bluish haze. Even more beautiful is the view towards the peak of Skradski Vrh (1,043 m), so if you're visiting Skrad, we recommend walking to this viewpoint along the Šiljar

educational trail to experience this truly unforgettable view. In the past, Perić Viewpoint was much more overgrown with beech forest and different types of shrub, but these have been cleared to make the site accessible to visitors. This has resulted in the formation of a rather large grassy and flowery glade on a gentle slope, which at its edge descends steeply towards the hamlet of Podstena. This toponym, or actually oconym (the name of a settlement), perfectly describes this location, since *podstena* means 'under the rock' in Croatian.

## *Natural features of the area*

*Like many other viewpoints that are located along the edge of a rock, the glade of Perić Viewpoint is overgrown not with just any grass but with endemic Kalnik moor grass. At the beginning of summer, the clearing is dotted with beautiful rare flower species, such as Carniolan lily (Lilium carniolicum), while Turk's cap lily (Lilium martagon) starts to bloom a bit later in the surrounding forests. The blossoming of multi-coloured plants continues until late summer, when we can encounter bloom-*

## Perić Viewpoint

ing keeled garlic (*Allium pulchellum*). Although the viewpoint features wooden benches on which we can sit and admire the view, the dense tufts of distinctive Kalnik moor grass entice us to lie down on them and relax completely in direct contact with the ground and observe the different shapes of the clouds in the sky above and follow them to the distant horizon. However, visitors are advised to be careful, because in the shelter of the Kalnik moor grass we once spotted a well-camouflaged horned viper (*Vipera ammodytes*), which obviously enjoys the warmth of the western slope.

Closest town or village

Skrad

Viewpoint altitude

840 m

Viewpoint coordinates

N 45.42245° / E 14.90875°

Accessibility and approach options

Cars suitable for gravel roads; by bike; on foot.

*View of the hamlet of Podstene in the area of Skrad  
(Photo: Marko Randić)*





*Viewpoint on the slopes of Drgomalj  
(Photo: Marko Matešić)*

## 8. Viewpoint on the north-eastern slopes of Mount Drgomalj

Along the outskirts of Delnice, past a military building complex, there is a forest road that can be used to reach the viewpoint above Hajdova Hiša, the biggest cave in Primorje-Gorski Kotar County. The forest road and its branches are not sufficiently marked and there are not enough signposts to direct visitors clearly to the viewpoint. Because of this, it is strongly recommended to use a GPS device and/or a map when visiting this viewpoint, and also to contact the local tourist office or hiking club, who are familiar with this area. The viewpoint hangs like a 'balcony' on the edge of a very steep rocky section of the north-eastern slopes of Mount Drgomalj. It hangs directly over the valley of the River Kupa, and right across from it, on the other side of the valley, there is the impressive rock of Kuželjska Stijena (874 m). The picturesque hamlets of Ševalj, Grbajel and Guče Selo can be seen far below, and also a few villages on the Slovenian side of the Kupa Valley. This viewpoint also has a historical significance, as in a clearing in the wood, not far from the edge of the steep slope, remnants of a large structure which over

<i>Closest town or village</i>	Delnice
<i>Viewpoint altitude</i>	842 m
<i>Viewpoint coordinates</i>	N 45.45240° / E 14.79568°
<i>Accessibility and approach options</i>	Cars suitable for gravel roads; by bike; on foot.

time has changed purpose several times are still visible. Today, this site is known simply as *Vidikovac*, which is the Croatian word for viewpoint. Hiking enthusiasts will be interested in reaching the grassy ridge of the peak of Mount Drgomalj, which also offers attractive and broad views.

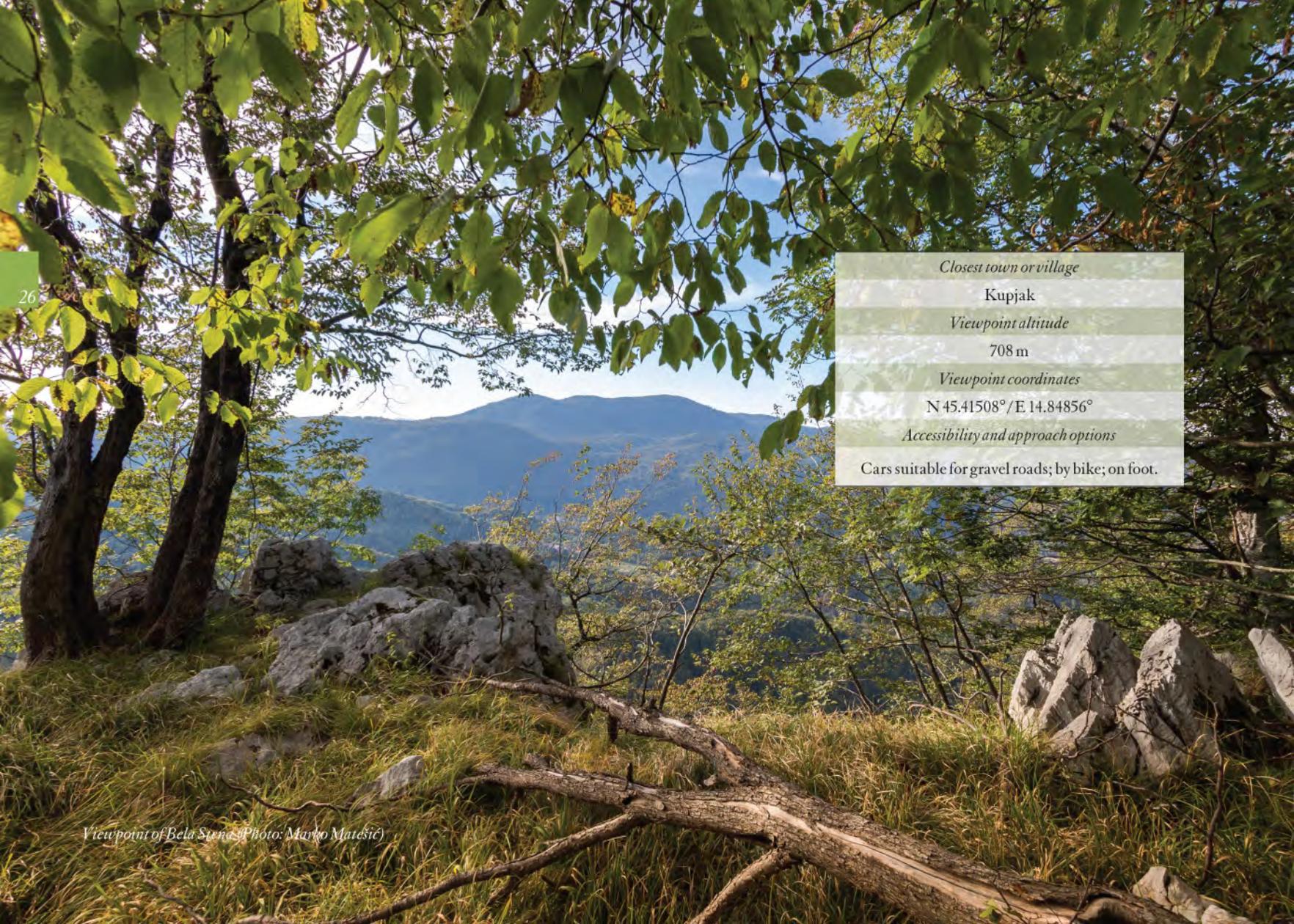
### *Natural features of the area*

*The viewpoint is surrounded by a mountain forest with fir, beech and sycamore maple. Representatives of typical mountain plants have taken root on the rocks here, such as alpine saxifrage (*Saxifraga paniculata*), which is distinguished by lime-encrusted white pores at*



*Alpine saxifrage (*Saxifraga paniculata*)*  
(Photo: Ivana Rogić)

*the edge of its leaves. Other interesting plants in this area include the endemic Croatian barberry (*Berberis croatica*), Velebit cow wheat (*Melampyrum velebiticum*), Kalnik moor grass, and other species. In the summertime, in the forest we can encounter large yellow inflorescences of the heart-leaf oxeye (*Telekia speciosa*), while on fir stumps interesting fruiting bodies of the *Ganoderma carnosum* fungus grow, whose appearance gives the impression that it is coated with a glossy dark-reddish lacquer.*



<i>Closest town or village</i>
Kupjak
<i>Viewpoint altitude</i>
708 m
<i>Viewpoint coordinates</i>
N 45.41508° / E 14.84856°
<i>Accessibility and approach options</i>
Cars suitable for gravel roads; by bike; on foot.

## 9. Bela Stena (White Rock) Viewpoint on the western slopes of Kupjački Vrh

The viewpoint of Bela Stena (White Rock) in the area of Zatisje on the western slopes of Kupjački Vrh hangs as a rocky ledge above the deep ravine of the torrential stream of Velika Sušica. On the other side of the Sušica canyon one can see, below the viewpoint, the tops of individual trees as if they have been arranged next to each other deep below us in the forest. The crowns of the firs and other trees on the rocky sections are slightly scattered, which is most noticeable on the slope of the lonely peak of Zaturni (558 m). It is interesting that this peak, as a rather less prominent part of a longer ridge that stretches from the area of Resnjak close to Delnice, is cut on almost all sides - apart from on the southern side - by torrential gullies. The deepest gullies on the slopes were made by the torrent of Velika Sušica, and from its side one can see the aforementioned bare white limestone rocks streaked with forest on the eastern slopes of Zaturni. The rock of Bela Stena, which lies on the opposite side of the canyon, was obviously named after its bare limestone. On the viewpoint, the rocks are

somewhat cracked and fissured, and partly overgrown with mosses, grass and individual trees. When we approached the viewpoint from a forest path, we surprised a dozen ravens that flew over and below the rocks and in the direction of Crna Hloja and Jezerska Stena. While some of them were flying above us, we could hear their typical cawing and the distinctive sound of them cutting the air with the flapping of their wings in flight. As a rule, at the viewpoints in Gorski Kotar we almost always encounter birds of prey or ravens and other birds as they fly by or rest. The picturesque villages, the most prominent being Marija Trošt with its small church, are located on grassy clearings along the Delnice-Brod na Kupi road. With their scenic appearance, they seem to soften the impression of the wilderness and unspoiled nature of the viewpoint's rocky micro location.

### *Natural features of the area*

*The viewpoint is located in natural surroundings of fissured limestone rocks whose edges*

*protrude from a dense carpet of autumn moor grass (Sesleria autumnalis). Closer to the steep slope, these are joined by individual tufts of Kalnik moor grass (S. kalnikensis).*

*The viewpoint is not completely barren, as there are several trees or smaller groups of thermophilic hop hornbeam, manna ash and whitebeam, as well as bushes of rock buckthorn (Frangula rupestris) and snowy mespilus (Amelanchier ovalis) growing here. Prominent herbaceous low vegetation includes thermophilic species, such as narrow-leaved asparagus (Asparagus tenuifolius), white swallow-wort (Vincetoxicum hircundinaria), cyclamen, etc. From the rocky edge towards the slopes of Kupjački Vrh, there is a gentler slope on which a deeper layer of soil has accumulated. Apart from thermophilic plants, here we also encounter species that are more associated with beech forests, such as blue-eyed Mary, black hellebore and spurge laurel. Particularly striking is an entire grove of Christmas holly trees and bushes (Ilex aquifolium), which is today rather rare in this area.*



*Viewpoint of Veliki Vodenjak (Photo: Marko Matešić)*

## 10. Veliki Vodenjak Viewpoint



*Wild cherry in bloom*  
(Photo: Marko Randić)

There is something special about driving along the old Rijeka-Zagreb road (the historic Louisiana Road, built in the period from 1803 to 1811). Different green landscapes alternate along the way, always creating a new experience. Right next to the road, halfway between Dedine and Delnice, the viewpoint at Veliki Vodenjak simply entices us to stop and rest for a while. Located on a slope that has been cleared of beech forest, this viewpoint offers an uninterrupted view towards the

<i>Closest town or village</i>
Delnice, Dedin
<i>Viewpoint altitude</i>
847 m
<i>Viewpoint coordinates</i>
N 45.39497° / E 14.84175°
<i>Accessibility and approach options</i>
Cars or bikes suitable for forest and gravel roads; on foot.

northwest and northeast. The visible part of the horizon and the sky above it host a variety of atmospheric events: movements of air currents, continuous changes of cloud, all kinds of light effects in the surrounding landscape, and sometimes rain, snow and fog in the Kupa Valley. Because of this, we can say that Veliki Vodenjak is an 'aerial' viewpoint that offers a wide range of views with a deep and distant horizon that stretches all the way to the faraway Slovenian mountains. The view opens towards a part of the Kupa Valley, where one can clearly see the village

of Velika Lešnica and part of Brod na Kupi. On the Slovenian side, we can identify the rock of Kuželjska Stena, whose upper part seems to protrude from a green hill. In fair weather, when the atmosphere is clear (for example after heavy rainfall), one can see the remote Kamnik-Savinja Alps. Apart from the fantastic green vistas, a distinctive feature of this viewpoint is its cultural value, as it represents a monument to road building. It features a 19th-century milestone - a historical marking on a mountain pass with the altitude indicated on it. A special atmosphere and deep shade is provided by a large, old cherry tree that grows next to the fence.

### *Natural features of the area*

*In the clearing below the viewpoint, shrubs of raspberry, elder, hazel and goat willow grow, as well as many lush herbaceous plants that are known in botany as 'tall herbs'. All these species love fresh nutritious soil that receives plenty of sunshine.*

*Viewpoint on Štimčev Vrh at Petehovac  
Mountain Centre (Photo: Marko Matešić)*



11. Viewpoint close to Petehovac Mountain Centre



# Viewpoints



*Hellebore is indicative of dolomite bedrock  
(Photo: Marko Randić)*

Probably the most stunning view of the town of Delnice, the Delnice Valley and the highest peaks of the north-western Dinarides - Risnjak and Snežnik in Slovenia, with numerous lower peaks in their surroundings, can be enjoyed if we climb the path to the restaurant at the peak of Štimčev Vrh, which is one of the most prominent excursion destinations of Petehovac Mountain Centre. The viewpoint is only a few dozen metres away



*Dwarf honeysuckle (Lonicera xylosteum)  
(Photo: Marko Randić)*

from the restaurant and is equipped with an arbour and benches to rest on. The view extends towards the west thanks to an opening in the beech forest. However, an even more comprehensive view of the landscape can be enjoyed from the location close to the telecommunications tower from the edge of the ski meadows towards the northeast and east. From these meadows, one can see the peaks of Kupjački Vrh, Skradski Vrh, Loška

Stena, Kočevski Rog, Višnjevica and Bjelolasica. On the slope of Kupjački Vrh, we can spot the viewpoint of Bela Stena (from which one can see Štimčev Vrh too). In the surrounding landscape, Štimčev Vrh stands out because of its telecommunications tower and can be easily identified among the other peaks. Once we are at Petehovac Mountain Centre, we should make an additional effort and walk to Jagodina Stijena (Strawberry Rock) Viewpoint, which has a legend of unhappy love associated with it. The nature here is particularly interesting because of the bare dolomite rocks, which are not very common elsewhere in Gorski Kotar.

## *Natural features of the area*

*Štimčev Vrh is made of dolomite bedrock, which can be seen in several places close to the viewpoint. A constant feature of dolomite bedrock in the area of Gorski Kotar is a gentle terrain that is usually patched with grassland. Such typical landscapes on dolomite bedrock*

## *Viewpoint close to Petehovac Mountain Centre*



can be found here in the area of Petehovac Mountain Centre. The grasslands around Štimčev Vrh were once used as hay meadows for feeding livestock in winter, and are today rather neglected because there is no livestock any more. The grasslands are decorated with a wealth of flowers of different colours, especially in summer. The most impressive are lilies. In the forests, as soon as the snow melts, large flowers of Christmas rose (*Helleborus niger* L. subsp. *macranthus*) appear, which are indicative of dolomite bedrock.

*Closest town or village*

Delnice

*Viewpoint altitude*

1017 m

*Viewpoint coordinates*

N 45.38080° / E 14.81968°

*Accessibility and approach options*

Cars suitable for gravel roads; by bike; on foot.

*Arbour at the viewpoint (Photo: Ivana Rogić)*

*Viewpoint in Razloge (Photo: Patrik Krstinić)*

12. Viewpoint in Razloge





*Silicate rocks - flint conglomerate*  
(Photo: Marko Randić)

Close to the information & ticket sale kiosk at the entrance to Risnjak National Park, right by the road at the entrance to the picturesque village of Razloge, there is a wooden structure with a bench and fence. It hangs like a balcony over the wooded steep slope of a valley in which the scattered houses of the hamlet of Krašičevica are located. Even if the source area of the River Kupa cannot be seen from here, the surrounding steep slopes of the deep valley indicate that it must

be somewhere in the vicinity. This source is very important in a hydrological sense, as it is the point where underground waters from the wider Risnjak carbonate basin spring up to the surface. As far as the hydrology of this area is concerned, apart from the torrential stream of Krašičevica, another important feature is the deeply cut canyon of the stream of Sušica, which in hydrological terms is a strong torrential stream. At times of heavy rain and rapid melting of snow, the torrential streams of this area make a significant contribution to the River Kupa. The power of the torrents, which in this period gush down to the headwaters of the River Kupa, can be a surprising and impressive experience of natural force for visitors, but can also pose a threat to those that find themselves in torrential riverbeds.

### *Natural features of the area*

*The viewpoint close to the information kiosk in Razloge is located in forest surroundings in which beech forest naturally prevails. How-*



*Goldenrod (Solidago virgaurea)*  
(Photo: Marko Randić)

*ever, on the slope above the viewpoint, a young planted spruce forest grows. With regard to its natural features, this viewpoint differs from all the others previously described in this brochure because of its silicate bedrock. Silicate rocks in this part of the valley consist of a conglomerate with small pieces of flint gravel or yellowish-brown sandstone with tiny glittering flakes of mica minerals. The features of the bedrock are also reflected in the composition of the local flora. Apart from planted spruces, the*

## Viewpoint in Razloge



<i>Closest town or village</i>
Razloge
<i>Viewpoint altitude</i>
553 m
<i>Viewpoint coordinates</i>
N 45.49624° / E 14.70246°
<i>Accessibility and approach options</i>
By car; by bike; on foot.

*prevailing species on the edge of the forest and in the clearing are heather (*Calluna vulgaris*), wood sage (*Teucrium scorodonia*), alder buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*), hawkweed (*Hieracium* spp.), and bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*). Hard fern (*Blechnum spicant*) can also be found in some spots. These are all plants that indicate an acidic soil.*

*Wooden platform at the viewpoint  
(Photo: Marko Randić)*

*View from the viewpoint towards the hamlet of  
Srednji Kupari (Photo: Patrik Krstinić)*

### 13. Viewpoint above Srednji Kupari

*Closest town or village*

Razloge

*Viewpoint altitude*

360 m

*Viewpoint coordinates*

N 45.51454° / E 14.70261°

*Accessibility and approach options*

By car; by bike; on foot.

If we continue from the information kiosk at the entrance to the national park through the picturesque village of Razloge (where, at certain locations, one can also admire exceptionally beautiful views) along the road that leads to Hrvatsko (visitors of the park usually do this on foot and not by car), we will reach a spot where the edge of the road is marked by a wooden fence and the road widens. This is the site of a second attractive viewpoint, which offers a great view of part of the course of the River Kupa, which here has a wonderful fresh turquoise colour. This is not surprising because at this point it has

flowed for only a few hundred metres after springing up from the karst underground through a 154-metre-deep Vauclusian source. Along the course of the Kupa, we can also see scattered houses in the hamlet of Srednji Kupari, which are located on the attractive grassy clearings of alluvial fans.

#### *Natural features of the area*

*Both viewpoints, the one at the information kiosk and this one above Srednji Kupari, are located in lush forest surroundings, with common hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) being the prevailing species in the source area of the Kupa Valley, and beech in certain other areas. The viewpoint above Srednji Kupari is situated in a distinctive location in terms of its relief, as it sits alongside a ridge of dolomite rock. Because of this, in places with deeper soil it features common hornbeam forest, while on the ridge of the rock, where the soil is shallow, a different type of forest prevails with hop hornbeam, manna ash, Cornelian cherry and other more or less thermophilic vegetation that prefers shallow, alkaline, carbonate, dry and warm soils.*



*Carbonate rocks - dolomite (Photo: Marko Randić)*



*Blackberry leaves (Photo: Marko Randić)*

County of Primorje & Gorski Kotar

  
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ISBN 978-953-8117-05-3

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