

Nature trail "Oborou Hvězda", information board No.2 - Old Oak Growths

([Staré dubové porosty](#) - informace v českém jazyce)

Historically, Hvězda game-preserve was established as a game-preserve for keeping game animals. The current economy respects several viewpoints:

- Natural conditions created to a great extent by the composition of woods that are local here, given by the natural conditions, or else "that are at home here";
- Park arrangement, with decades of history and traditions;
- National Cultural Monument, locality associated with a number of significant events related to the history of our state.



Foliolate trees have always been the base of the wood composition in the newly established game-preserves, especially represented by oaks. This was mostly due to the fact that falling acorns provided for food for the kept animals, and also to the fact that herb vegetation can exist below the oak growth. This is also the case of the Hvězda game-preserve. Oaks in the game-preserve are in their "natural localities", given the altitude, exposition and soil conditions.

Today, a greater part of the forest growth gets closer to the natural composition corresponding to the natural conditions of the game-preserve. The oak growth is among the most valuable, having also the greatest representation (57 %) among the woody plants. When finding out the age of the oldest oaks via a dendrochronological method (by collecting a trunk wood sample and counting the growth rings), it was documented that numerous trees have been growing here since the second half of the 18 th century. However, not a single tree is older than the year 1757. During the "Seven-Years' War" (1756-1763), Prussian king Friedrich II the Great had his main camp here for six weeks. This was where his army retreated after the lost battle with the Austrian army by Kolín (18 th June). Back then, Hvězda witnessed a bloody clash between the Prussian and Austrian soldiers. The Prussian army devastated the woods at Hvězda completely. It was documented that oaks were re-planted in the subsequent years by sowing (planting acorns in the ground). Therefore the oldest oak growth dates back to this period. The geological subsoils at Hvězda mainly consist of sandstone, being permeable and desiccating. Together with age, this is greatly reflected in the condition of some very old oak growths, which suffer from tracheomyces, which is a kind of a mycotic disease manifesting itself via a gradual decay of the leaves. The trees suffering from this disease must be removed from the growth from time to time in order to prevent the disease from further spreading. However, this makes space for the natural regeneration of the growth, which represents the preferred aim of the game-preserve economy. A thoughtful visitor will surely notice places with thin growth of old oaks with newly growing young oaks, the offspring of the old ones. Selected dried trees or stumps thereof are left in place to serve as "nesting trees" providing for space for bird nesting and reproduction of numerous species of insects. Nevertheless, some drying trees or dry branches of live trees have to be removed for safety reasons due to the great number of visitors coming to the game-preserve.

We are convinced that the public will understand the necessity of occasional interventions within the forest growths, aiming especially at the support of the sustainable natural development thereof. We believe this territory with natural value and significant history for the Czech nation shall remain preserved for all the visitors and for the future generations as well.

Nature trail "Oborou Hvězda":

1. [The History of the Game-Preserve](#)
2. [Staré dubové porosty](#) - informace v českém jazyce)