

Tourist Guide for the Tátorján Educational Trail



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Aerial photos and internet links included in the publication:

www.google.hu/maps www.karnyuftasnyitortenelem.blogspot.com www.geocaching.hu

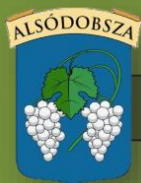
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General description of the trail

With the construction of the Tátorján educational trail along the Hernád river – besides the existing Kék hullám and Magas part trails – another great opportunity has opened up to get to know the lesser known section of the Hernád Valley. The trail touches the villages of Alsódobsza, Szentistvánbaksa and Megyaszó (only outer part), presenting the values of their environment.

The founding members of our association decided in the spring of 2007 to build an education trail. After obtaining the necessary permits, the physical creation of the nature trail was followed. The painting of the signs began after cleaning up and widening the route, and in the summer, three resting places were set up with benches serving the comfort of hikers.

The international nature trail sign was chosen as the sign for our trail. On both sides of the road, in both directions, the white square-based signs with a blue stripe drawn from the lower left corner to the upper right corner are clearly visible. Their frequency is around 50-100 meters. In less obvious places directional arrows were used to make orientation easier.



General description:

Length: 17 km

Shape: Figure eight

Recommended starting point: Park in front of the Alsódobsza general store.

Can only be walked on foot, only a few places are accessible by bicycle!

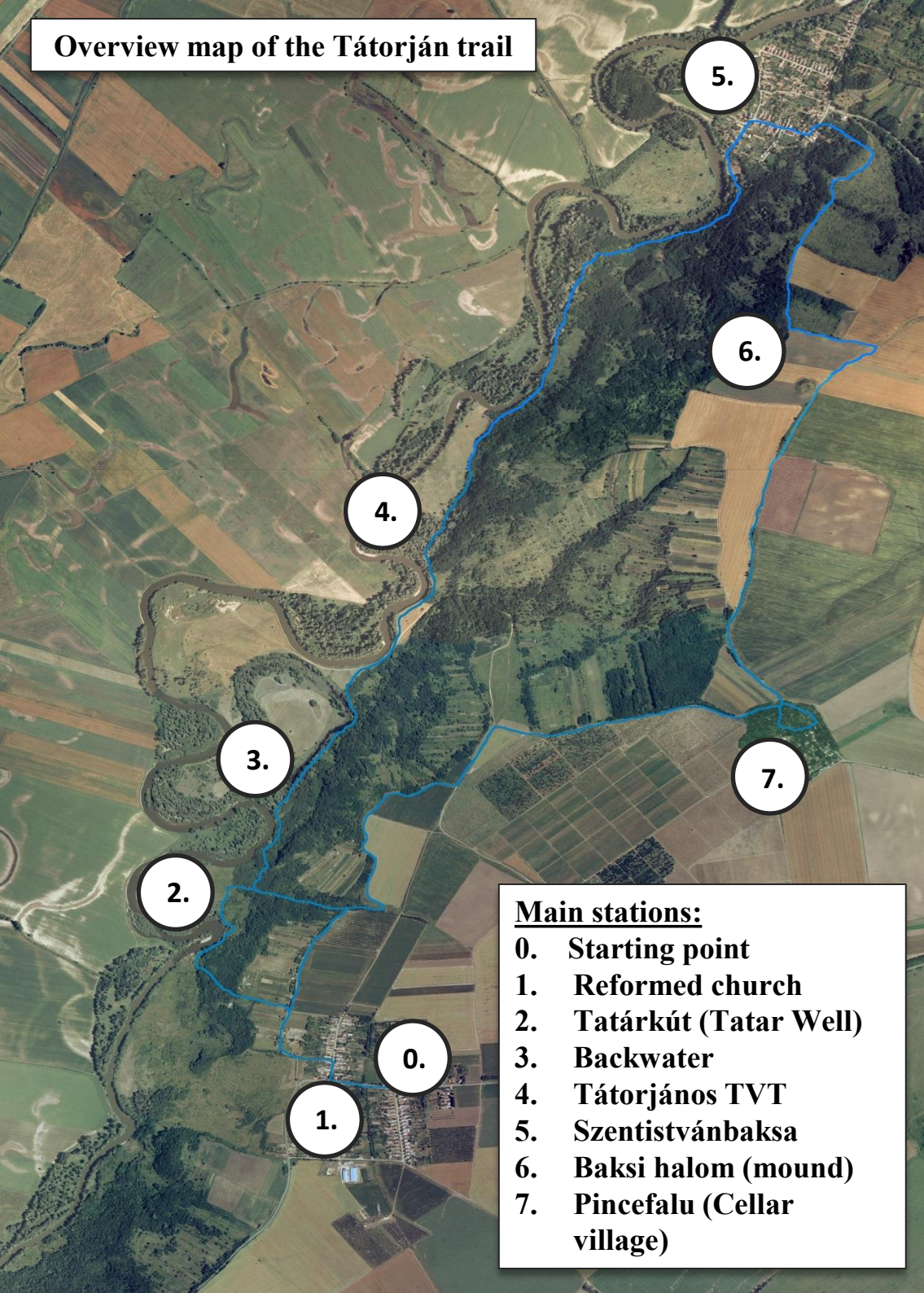
Time required to complete: approx. 7-8 hours

Affected settlements: Alsódobsza- Megyaszó (outskirts)- Szentistvánbaksa

We hope this little booklet will guide you along this educational trail and provide useful additional information about the sights.



Overview map of the Tátorján trail



Main stations:

0. Starting point
1. Reformed church
2. Tatárkút (Tatar Well)
3. Backwater
4. Tátorjános TVT
5. Szentistvánbaksa
6. Baksi halom (mound)
7. Pincefalu (Cellar village)

0. Starting point: Alsódobsza

The first written mention of the village dates back to 1332. It was named after the former owner, the Dopsa family. The old village was originally located in a different place, closer to the Hernád River.

From there, due to continuous landslides and then an earthquake, it moved to its current location in the second half of the 18th century. The 21st meridian passes through today's Rákóczi Street.

A beautiful panorama can be seen by the tourists from the part of the village which facing the river. To describe it we cannot find more beautiful words than those written down by former teacher József Balogh: „*The village of Alsódobsza is located where the northeastern tip of the Great Hungarian Plain and the southwestern spurs of the Zemplén Mountains meet. More specifically: in the northwestern corner of the southern part of the former Zemplén County, next to the Hernád River, where the northern edge of the Harangod region merges into the sunny slopes of the southwestern hills of the Zemplén Mountains. This is a beautiful place!*

Useful information

Although the trail can be accessed from several places, we primarily recommend starting from Alsódobsza. This publication also describes this route. There are two bus stops in the center of the village, which are frequently visited by buses from both Miskolc and Szerencs. There are also parking places available next to the Heroes' Grove in the center. You can also stock up on food and drinks from the general store located here. Thanks to the figure eight formation, everyone can return to the starting point by the chosen means of transport.

The natural beauty of the village's surroundings fills everyone with admiration. The village lies on a plateau and offers a beautiful view of the Hernád River to the West, with its countless silvery bends. To the Hernád Valley's sea-level plain, its background, the Szikszó hills, further away the Bükk Mountains, Miskolc, and the constantly smoking Diósgyőr, and several more villages near Szikszó, and in their background, the Tatra mountain masses, which are visible in clear weather, sparkling in pink.”

1. View of the High Tatras from Alsódobsza

1. Reformed Church

It was located in the old village near Hernád, together with the first church. The first document referring to the renovation of the church is dated 9 May 1724.

The present church was built in 1807, when the old church was damaged, and its remains were demolished and rebuilt in its current location. Until the church was completed, services were held under the sky in the unfenced courtyard of the crumbling parish, damaged by earthquakes, on benches from the old church. In 1872-73, the 20-meter-high stone tower was erected in front of the eastern facade.



2. Reformed church

On 20 August 1889, a huge fire raged in the village that destroyed the church, but which was rebuilt by 1890 with great cooperation.

In 1891, the central part of the village was again destroyed by fire. However, for the upcoming Millennium commemoration year, the church, school and their outbuildings, which had burned to the ground, were rebuilt by the hardworking population with public donations and cooperation. In 1902, Antal Novotny from Timisoara produced an openwork bell with a diameter of 73.2 cm for the village.

The church cast a slightly smaller one in Csepel in 1927, with a diameter of 62.5 cm.

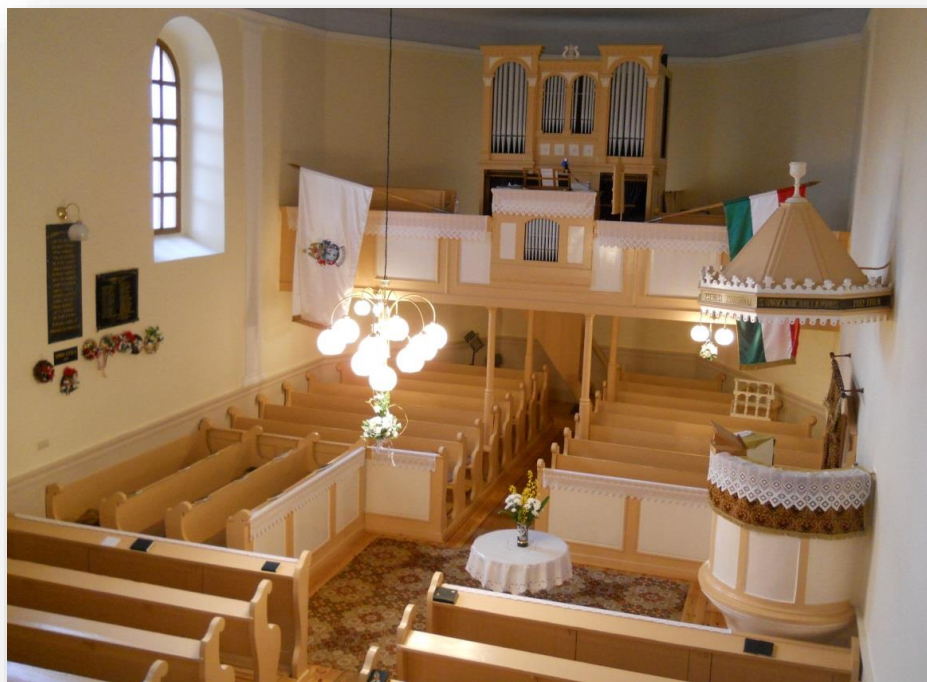
3. The big and the small bell



In 1948, the church was renovated at the initiative of the local Communist Party (MDP), and the works were completed by 20 August. The renovation was carried out by the workers of the Diósgyőr Factory, led by factory director József Herczeg. The population of Dobsza provided the sand. On 31 October 1982, for the Reformation Day, the church underwent another renovation.

In 2007, on the 200th anniversary of the church's construction, this historic building was completely renovated inside and outside thanks to donations from Presbyter Károly Búdi and the followers, making it a real jewel box for the village and the surrounding area. It was completely painted and had underfloor heating, the church spire was given a new covering, and the organ was also repaired.

The organ, donated by the followers, was handed over on 10 October 1943. The artistically designed organ was made by organ builder József Gerstenengst in eight versions. There are another 5 Gerstenengst organs in the Tiszáninnen parish in the villages of Erdőhorváti, Martonyi, Vadna, Pácin, and Vámosújfalú. It had not been played for a long time, but since its renovation in 2007, it has been regularly used for church occasions, and sometimes there are also concerts in the church.



4. The interior of the church with the pulpit and the organ. On the left wall there is a memorial plaque from the First and Second World Wars

The Hernád River

The Hernád River (Hornád in Slovak) originates in Slovakia, near the village of Hernádfő (Vikartovce), on the northern side of the King's Hill (Kráľ'ova hol'a) in the Low Tatras, at an altitude of 1040 meters. It leaves Slovakia near the village of Abaújnádasd (Trstené pri Hornáde) and enters Hungary near Abaújvár. It is a border river with a length of about 10 km. The largest city on its banks is Košice.



5. The bend of the Hernád River on the Megyaszó-Alsódobsza border

Its total length is 286 kilometers, the Hungarian section is 118 km. The catchment area is 5436 km², of which 1136 km² is in Hungary. This territorial division causes problems mainly during floods, and in the past many pollutants also entered the river as by-products of the Košice industry. Its water flow is extremely variable: it varies between 6–450 m³. It flows into the Sajó in the area bordered by the villages of Köröm, Muhi, Ónod and Sajóhídvég.

Its tributary is the Vadász-patak (brook). Its only artificial branch is the Bársonyos brook. The difficulty level of the Hungarian section is ww-1, light white water and fast flowing water. It is one of the least regulated rivers in Europe, it can only be navigated by kayak or canoe, there are many islands and fallen trees. It is recommended for canoeing- mainly in the upper section- for experienced canoeists. The average drop of the riverbed is 55.7 cm/km, the average speed is 2.1-6 km/h, the average depth is 1-3 m, and the width is 20-60 m. It can be difficult for rowers to navigate because the river changes its bed frequently, and there are no signs indicating the river kilometer. The river is dammed in 4 places, so in these places we can only move forward by lifting the boat over them. Its advantage, compared to Bodrog, which is recommended for “beginner rowers”, is that you can easily find a suitable place to camp almost everywhere. It is easy to moor on the sandy or pebble shore.

Participants on the Hernád tour are recommended to set off with an experienced guide and to study the 12th booklet of the Water Touring Maps series published by the Hungarian Nature Conservation Association. Canoe rental, tent sites, and directions are also available at the Nagykinizsi Vidám Vidra Water Camp.

Underwater world - Fish in the Hernád

The Hernád River is home to a large and valuable fish fauna, which is why it is considered a popular fishing water for anglers. About 50 out of the 96 fish species found in our country have already been detected in the river. Currently, the number of invasive species is still small, although we can encounter **stone moroko** (*Pseudorasbora parva*) more and more often. The most common fish species in Hernád is the **bleak** (*Alburnus alburnus*), if we notice small or even large groups of fish often swimming on the surface of the water, we can almost be sure to see them. During the spawning season, the protected **European bitterling** (*Rhodeus amarus*) and the **spined loach** (*Cobitis taenia*) are regular on the shoreline, and on the edge of larger streamlines we can see **gudgeon** (*Gobio gobio*) in smaller groups.

Stone Moroko



Rudd



European Bitterling



Spined Loach



Gudgeon



Bleak



Underwater world – Crayfish in the Hernád

Of the three native crayfish species in our country, belonging to the order of decapods (Decapoda), the **European crayfish** (*Astacus astacus*) and the **Danube crayfish** (*Astacus leptodactylus*) have so far been detected in the river. About 20-30 years ago, the Danube crayfish, known for its huge, slender claws, were present in large numbers in the Hernád River and in the artificially created Bársonyos brook, also known as Kis Hernád (which starts from Hernádszurdok and flows back into the Hernád at Böcs). Unfortunately, both species were significantly reduced by the disease called crayfish plague, furthermore they are also very sensitive to pollution.

Invasive crayfish species are increasingly spreading, which are resistant to disease, more prolific, and thus suppress the spread of native species. Of the five alien crayfish species, the most common in the Hernád River is the **spiny-cheek** (*Orconectes limosus*), as it has already been detected in the Sajó River near Girincs (and from there it can easily swim up to the Hernád) and in a small gravel pit lake in Zsujta, which already belongs to the Hernád valley. It is only a matter of time before we manage to detect it in our beloved river. Determining the species that we have in our hands is not easy, in any case, anyone who encounters a crayfish in the river (we are thinking of anglers here) should notify us after taking some (top view) photos. This is necessary because it is advisable to take appropriate steps as soon as possible in the event of an invasive species appearing.

Photos: Balázs Szelényi



*Danube
crayfish*



*European
crayfish*



*Spiny-cheek
crayfish*

Geocaching

Geocaching began on 3 May 2000, when Dave Ulmer hid the first cache in the United States of America, after selective jamming was removed from the GPS system on 1 May. The essence of the game is that a previously hidden cache must be found based on its geographical coordinates. A GPS device can also be used freely for this. The game has been played in many countries around the world. The first cache was placed in Hungary on 24 June 2001.

As we reach the next stop on the educational trail, we can easily join in on this game, as there is a cache here too.

The information needed for this is provided here:

2390. Where the Shore Breaks (GCDBSZ)

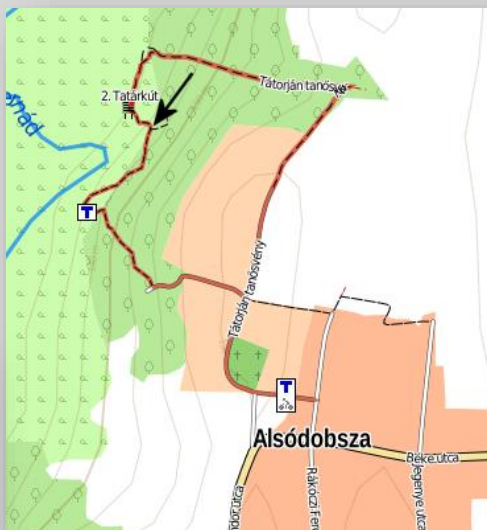
Latitude: N 48° 11.241'

Longitude: E 20° 59.717'

Elevation: 134 m

Hide type: Traditional geocache

Distance from starting point: 600 m



The location of the cache

The environment that hosts the cache



2. Tatárkút (Tatar Well)

We have arrived at the second and the most beautiful stop on our nature trail, where the bend of the magnificent Hernád River can be seen. There is a rich wildlife in this place, which is a popular stop for anglers and rowers.

This section of the Hernád river, suitable for watering the animals, is called the Tatar Well, which is a great example of the deep impact the Tatar invasion of 1241-42 had on the population.

The agricultural areas on the other side provide suitable nesting and feeding areas for the **Eastern imperial eagle** (*Aquila heliaca*).

The **black stork** (*Ciconia nigra*), which is also highly protected, uses the closed floodplain forests for nesting and feeding. There is a rich variety of fish, amphibians and reptiles.



6. *The bend in winter*



7. *Summer landscape*



8. *Black Storks*



9. Eurasian Eagle-owl nest on the loess wall

The slowly creeping clay-sand-loess layers collapse near the shore; the material of the collapse is gradually carried away by the river. On the constantly renewing steep slope, only mineral lithosol can form, which is a mix of loess, Pannonian clay and sand layers.

The alluvial deposits formed over millions of years emerge from the forest surrounding the leisurely winding river like a castle wall. The bedrock of the loess wall is largely Pleistocene loess, which was deposited on clay layers on the relatively deep volcanic rocks of the Tokaj Mountains here. It is a favorite nesting place for the largest owl species in Hungary, the **eagle-owl** (*Bubo bubo*). On the left bank of the Hernád, the clay-sand boundary located in the deeper layers slopes towards the river. The loess wall, which reaches 100 m thickness in certain places, creeps towards the river at an average speed of 0.5-1 dm/year. The seismic activity experienced today may play a role in causing large-scale movements.

3. Old-Hernád

Continuing our journey along the Hernád, in the shade of softwood groves squeezed by the acacia forest, we reach a backwater surrounded by dense reeds, and that is the third stop of our educational trail. The area is under nature protection (Megyaszói Tátorjános Nature Reserve), and is also part of the NATURA 2000 network. Its total area is 35.3 ha (of which the backwater is 10.9 ha). The backwater was separated from the living Hernád River, its water is replenished by floods, and it is also said to be fed by a spring.



10. Spring snapshot

Further backwaters can be found to the north, in the following places: Vizsoly, Hernádvécse, Göncruszka (Vider - Berek backwater), Hernádszurdok, Zug-Zsujta. Most of them were created after river regulation or large-scale floods. In this place, you can observe many species of waterfowl, and during the grazing season, you can admire the herd of native gray cattle. After a long frost, this place offers an excellent sporting opportunity for skaters, who regularly visit the Old-Hernád from nearby villages.

The only turtle in our country, the **European pond turtle** (*Emys orbicularis*), is rarely seen, but the **broad-bodied chaser** (*Libellula depressa*) is common here.



11. Eurasian Spoonbill

12. European Pond Turtle

13. Grey heron

The floating seaweed association is home to a large number of protected **floating fern** (*Salvinia natans*) and duckweeds (*Lemna minor/ Spirodela polyrrhiza*). During the breeding season, many amphibian species can be found. The **edible frog** (*Rana esculenta*) is most often seen, while the **agile frog**(*Rana dalmatina*) can be seen hiding under leaf-litter or escaping with great leaps in the forests of our nature trail. The **grass snake** (*Natrix natrix*) is often seen searching for its prey, and less often the **dice snake** (*Natrix tessellata*) sunbathes on the trunks of fallen trees. The common predatory fish species of the backwater is the **northern pike** (*Esox lucius*). The also native **tench** (*Tinca tinca*) and the rare **crucian carp** (*Carassius carassius*) are also present. Previously, it was common, the **black kite** (*Milvus migrans*) can sometimes be seen, whose main food is dead fish, but for some years the **white-tailed eagle** (*Haliaeetus albicilla*), the largest nesting bird of prey in Hungary, has been nesting in our area. The most common are the **mallard** (*Anas platyrhynchos*) and the **grey heron** (*Ardea cinerea*), and the **spoonbill** (*Platalea leucorodia*) appears less frequently.

In the last few years, the **European beaver** (*Castor fiber*) has also appeared in the Hernád, which reached our river by swimming up the Tisza and Sajó rivers. Its presence is mostly revealed by its chewing marks. The traces of the **Eurasian otter** (*Lutra lutra*), the emblematic animal of our association, can also be observed. The European otter is an endangered species throughout our continent, and its nominal value is 250,000 HUF.



14. Eurasian Otter



15. Common Kingfisher



16. Old White-tailed Eagle



17. Beaver chew marks along the Hernád River

4. Tátorjános Nature Reserve in Megyaszó

It has been a protected area since 1996 and is a Natura 2000 area.

The aim of the protection is to preserve the habitat of the highly protected **Tartarian Breadplant** (*Crambe tatarica*) which is tátorján in Hungarian. According to the decision the most important thing is to protect this plant, to ensure and help its spread and survival.

In addition, the protection of other plant and animal species living on the loess plateau and the landscape is also important to preserve.

On the left side of the Hernád, loess settled on the Pannonian sediments on the high bank, which largely determines the flora of the area. In the southern part of the area, on its northern edge, where the distance between the Hernád River and the backwater is only a few meters, the river is constantly washing the "dam" and it is likely that after the dam breaks through, the backwater will become the new riverbed of the river. If that change occurs, the hydrological conditions of the area will also change.

Its flora is partly continental, partly Mediterranean-sub-Mediterranean and partly Pannonian. The most valuable species of the flora is the Pontic-Pannonian species of tartarian breadplant, which is highly protected in Hungary and a Natura 2000 designation species. In the early 1990s, there were still nearly 100 individuals living in the area, a quarter of which were in bloom. Over the next 10 years, its population decreased to 3 due to the erosion of the coast. Unfortunately, in 2006, its population was destroyed after a landslide on the Hernád coast.



18. Tartarian Breadplant in the area in 1995



19. Giant Peacock Moth



20. European Stag Beetle male



21. Oil Beetle

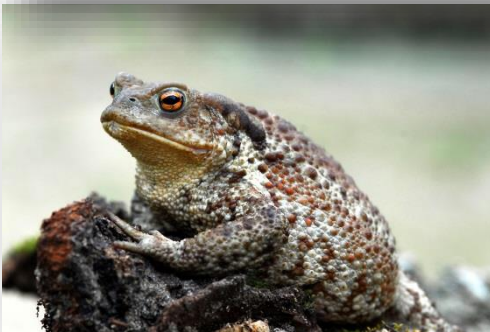
Loess grasslands occurring in small patches on the tops of loess walls are characteristic, and the typical species of them are **spring Adonis** (*Adonis vernalis*), **greater pasque flower** (*Pulsatilla grandis*) and the **tuberous Jerusalem sage** (*Phlomis tuberosa*). On the edge of the flowing loess walls, only remnants of the Tatar maple-loess oak forest can be found. Along the Hernád and in its floodplain, reed beds, tall sedges and brush-grass marsh meadows bordered by willows and softwood forest remnants are characteristic. In the Tátorján area, its original biotope was completely covered by the invasive white acacia, which greatly changed the original form of the habitat.



22. Spring Adonis



23. The habitat of Tartarian Breadpalnt in 2007. The species has not been found since then



24. Common Toad



25. Buzzard with magpies

The Tartarian Breadplant



The species is a relict plant of the postglacial warm period in our country, the herald of the Hazel Age loess steppes of the Carpathian Basin. It is one of the characteristic, but rare species of the loess steppes of the Pannonian region. Its area of the Black and Caspian Seas is extensive, but only local isolated populations live in our country. The recorded domestic population is 2600-3000 individuals. The species is currently an endangered and highly protected in our country, its conservation value is 100,000 HUF. It is listed in the IUCN Red Book. Its collection as food may have contributed to the decline of the domestic population.

Morphology

Description from the end of the 16th century: a large bushy white-flowered grass on the steppes like sheep. The leaves of the plant are large, winged. Its taproot, which is shaped like a stick, can penetrate up to 1 m deep in older age, often as thick as an arm. Perennial, the root overwinters (hemikryptophyton). After seed germination, only leaves develop in the first year, and in early May it produces white flowers in multiple compound racemes. At this size, it is a bulbous plant with a diameter of 1 m.



Taxonomy

Phylum: Tracheophyta, Class: Magnoliopsida, Order: Brassicales,
Family: Brassicaceae, Genus: Crambe



Biology

The individuals sprout at the end of March, beginning of April. Flowering begins in the period from the last days of April to the first day of May. In its last days, only blossomed individuals can be observed.

During June and July, fruiting specimens can be seen, and fruiting corms detach from their bases starting from the end of summer.

If germination was successful and the stem has grown strong and reached the age of 1-2 years, the 1 m diameter bush with its spreading appearance means light competition for other species. Its own offspring can be found next to the mother plant, sometimes 2-3 individuals grow into each other. The Tartarian breadplant, which rolls along like a devil's cart, gets stuck in the interweaving of blackberry bushes, hawthorn and blackthorn bushes, so the density of individuals can increase here.



26. Size of an average Tartarian Breadplant

**The photos of the plant, its parts and habitat were taken in Belsőbáránd.
Unnumbered photos: Attila Bereczky**

5. Szentistvánbaksa

The origin of the name Szentistvánbaksa could come from its history: charcoal burners settled in the large beech and oak forests that once dominated the landscape, and the village may have received its name after the chopped, hemispherical wood piles (boksa). According to the other version, in the past, the population bred goats in large numbers; its meat and milk served as excellent food before the spread of cows. Salt blocks were laid out in several places for the goats, which is where the name of the village can be derived - after the expression baksózó - from.



27. Landscape of the village from the trail



28. Old traditional house



29. Hernád River on the edge of the village

The name is first mentioned in 1262 in the form of Alsó-Baxa. Szentistvánbaksa already had a mill on the Hernád in 1321, which undoubtedly indicates significant grain production. In the 15th century, the Hegymegi family also had a part of the estate in Baxa.

In 1427, Alsó Baksa is listed in the land census with a serf land. In 1576, Imre Abonyi was the landlord, with whom the population converted to the Reformed religion.

In 1608, Szentistvánbaksa belonged to the Reformed church district of Abaúj.

In 1627 it was listed in the county records as Alsó or Szent-István-Baksa. In 1635 the Turks ravaged the village and its inhabitants fled.

The agricultural serf population faced difficulties in the following century. In 1643, István Abonyi, the hereditary lord of Baxa, was appointed head of the county's portal infantry. It was destroyed during the occupation, and in 1715 it became a curial village, with no population.

The lord of the land from 1744 to 1802 was András Abonyi, with whom the Abonyi family became extinct. During the repression following the failure of the Rákóczi War of Independence, only a few people lived in the settlement. The village was repopulated with Reformed Hungarians in the 18th century. In 1833, it was listed as a Hungarian village, with a Reformed church, synagogue, 90 houses, 691 inhabitants (179 Roman Catholics, 460 Reformed, 52 Jews) and a flour mill. In World War I, 11 of the village's inhabitants died a heroic death.

In 1696, the Reformed had a stone church in Szentistvánbaksa, the fate of this church is unknown. The late Baroque building that stands today was built between 1818 and 1829. The ground area of the north-south oriented church is 7 x 16 m (with 180 seats), the height of the bell tower in front of the southern facade is 24 m. Its interior is covered by a flat ceiling with wooden beams, and the building closes in a semicircular arch on the north.

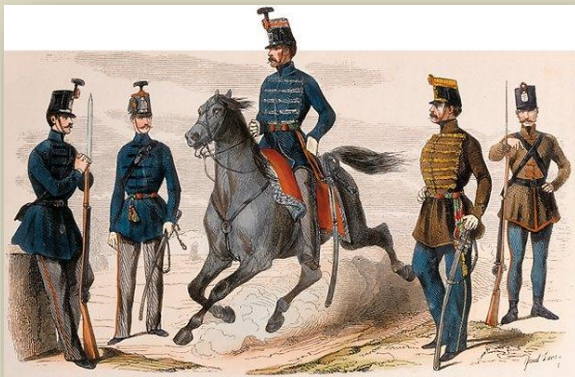
The 157 kg (66 cm) bell was cast by László Szlezák in 1927 in Budapest, with the inscription: "Cast under the tutelage of István Kóka." The 61 kg (49 cm) bell was cast by János Thúry in 1886 in Budapest, with the inscription: "Made by the Evangelical Reformed Church of Szentistvánbaksa during the tutelage of János Csorba..."

30-31. The Reformed Church and its interior



Memorial plaque of József Keményfi

Our association erected the memorial plaque in the village of Szentistvánbaksa in honor of the 1848/49 Revolution and War of Independence. He was born in Szentistvánbaksa in 1812 as József Hartmann. In the spring of 1848, he was elected first lieutenant of the Košice National Guard.



National Guards

On 28 September, Kossuth appointed him captain, and he joined the Hungarian Army, where he served in the Felduna Corps. He had his baptism of fire in the Battle of Pákozd and then served in the 44th Battalion with the rank of captain.

In the fall of 1848, a course was launched at the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Pest for those “who wish to train themselves for military service.” József Keményfi was appointed as a teacher here on 15 November. He formed the “Pest University Legion” from the students here, with about 150 people, on 1 January 1849. On 22 March 1849, the legion routed the Serbs with a heroic charge at Kiszombor. The unit participated in the battles of Szőreg on 5 August and Timisoara on 9 August. After the surrender of Világos, Keményfi was first court-martialed as a military staff officer, and then in February 1850 he was conscripted into the imperial army as a private for 12 years, but he soon escaped and reached Hamburg, and from there he emigrated to America.

In the American Civil War, he served as a captain and aide-de-camp to the first Republican presidential candidate, General John C. Frémont. After the Compromise of 1867, he returned home and became a lawyer. In 1887, he was elected town clerk of Zilah and a member of the local Honor Society. He died in Zilah on 24 November 1895.

*A' pesti egyetemmel a hadi tudományokat hallgató' tanuló' offi-
cior, mely az elönnémet a fennsorhoz köztelté' utjában
magán' volt kaptatva, egy felit azon. elöttel hogy meachit.
hessen, más felit pedig azon magasztosabb indultól is keltet.
seg-erövel amlenestere, hogy a hozánál. szolgálat, alut.
nak felcölletés' és kordítás' következtelen, nagy vértelen
egyetem' legio neve' azapát' alakult. E meglétén, legelő*

Keményfi József
örögy

Detail of his letter in which he reports on the formation of the "Pest University Legion", and his signature

Source: www.karnyujtasnyitortenelem.blogspot.com

6. Baksa mound

We have arrived at the most panoramic station on our educational trail. The Szentistvánbaksa mound is a defining element of the landscape. It is a great point of reference and offers an excellent and impressive panorama. Its shape, origin and history have long been of interest to the surrounding population.

Even Mór Jókai mentions it in his work *The Tomb of Thonuzóba*: “Everything the scholarly diver told us was true to the letter. There, on the high ridge, under a huge mound, there was a prehistoric pile grave, similar to the one found on the Baksa mound in Abaúj. The pagan ancestors buried their great men on such high mountain peaks. From where they could easily climb to the sky, and in the evening, at midnight, if they came out, they could look far into the world.”

There are many legends about the mound, mixing facts with elements of fantasy.



A real island

Szentistvánbaksa is a significant archaeological site in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County, and the findings reveal a unified picture of a Bronze Age human settlement that once existed in the area of the village. On a dominant hill above the village, traces of Avar-era burial chambers built on piles were discovered in the late 1800s, which date back to the 2nd or 3rd century BC. In the 1930s, the staff of the archaeological department of the Hermann Ottó Museum in Miskolc carried out excavations on the hill that still rises 10 meters above the arable land and contains the former “crypt”.



32. An excellent reference point and a great lookout point at the same time

During the excavations, ceramic vessels and remains of Avar-era weapons were found in large quantities. In the present-day fields around the burial mounds, plows still turn out countless smaller ceramic fragments and stone pieces brought here from the Zemplén Mountains during the Avar period.

Field fleawort (*Tephrosia integrifolia*) also grows on the Baksa mound, on the steepest, northern-facing slope that cannot be ploughed. We also encountered the **feather grass** (*Stipa capillata*) on the little hill several times during our hikes. Leaving the Baksa mound and continuing south on the nature trail, but still in the immediate vicinity of the hill, there is a still-extant, semi-natural meadow where **broad-leaved spiguel** (*Peucedanum cervaria*) and **mountain fennel** (*Seseli osseum*) grow. Other less valuable, but interesting plants here were the white **wormwood** (*Artemisia absinthium*) and the **Lady's bedstraw** (*Galium verum*).



33. Field with Feather Grass

Bull Meadow

“Baksa is the end of the world!” shouted the former merchant from his horse-drawn cart, selling his wares, because the road through the beautifully situated settlement of Abaúj certainly leads no further once it reaches the left bank of the Hernád River.



34. Greater Pasque Flower

However, winding cart paths leading further from the village, between hills with loess soil, lined with vineyards and acacia forests, lead to a meadow that, from early spring to late autumn, from the Pheasant's eye to the Marsh Gentian, also makes the heart beat faster for anyone who even slightly interested in wild plants.

The meadow on the border of the village bears the geographical name Bull Meadow to this day. The actual primeval grassland is dominated by loess-significant plant associations and plant species typical of the loess steppe.

To list some of the species that occur: **Pheasant's eye** (*Adonis vernalis*), **black pasque flower** (*Pulsatilla nigricans*), **greater pasque flower** (*Pulsatilla grandis*), **snowdrop windflower** (*Anemone sylvestris*), **herbaceous periwinkle** (*Vinca herbacea*), **periwinkle** (*Vinva minor*), **grass-leaved iris** (*Iris graminea*), **dwarf almond** (*Amygdalus nana*), **large-flowered self-heal** (*Prunella grandiflora*), **sand esparcet** (*Onobrychis arenaria*), **bloody crane's bill** (*Geranium sanguineum*), **red bugloss** (*Echium maculatum*), **Jerusalem sage** (*Phlomis tuberosa*), **scentless feverfew** (*Tanacetum corymbosum*), **Pannonian knapweed** (*Centaurea scabiosa* subsp. *sadleriana*), **owl-head clover** (*Trifolium alpestre*), **swordleaf inula** (*Inula ensifolia*), **dianthus** (**Danube pink**) (*Dianthus collinus*) **harebells** (*Asyneuma canescens*), **Italian aster** (*Aster amellus*), **goldilocks aster** (*Aster linosyris*), **cross gentian** (*Gentiana cruciata*), **marsh gentian** (*Gentiana pneumonanthe*).



35. Black Pasque Flower



36. Dianthus



38. Bull Meadow: Reminiscent of an ancient theater



37. Marsh Gentian

Road to the Cellars

We have reached the last stop of our journey. Leaving Baksa, the wild and romantic environment ceases, the landscape is replaced by agriculturally cultivated areas, arable lands. On the further part of our journey, we can encounter orchards, vineyards and see old abandoned wine cellars and wine houses. If we walk carefully, in both spring and winter, we can see the **red fox** (*Vulpes vulpes*), a frequent and regular chicken thief of the surrounding villages.

Among the birds we can see the **white stork** (*Ciconia ciconia*) that also breeds in the village, and the **raven** (*Corvus corax*) that breeds on high-voltage electric lines, which has been replaced in its breeding by the **red kestrel** (*Falco tinnunculus*). Incidentally, a nesting box can also be seen here on the traverse.



39. Red fox



40. Vineyard

41. Sunset in the area



8. Pincefalu (Cellar village)



42. Monument at the entrance to the cellar village

For wine lovers, the neat little cellars of the Megyaszó cellar village are a real metropolis and also an interesting architectural monument. The village's cozy row of cellars, numbering 116 wine houses, is located in the so-called Kis-Megyaszó, in the contiguous acacia forest next to the village. According to the grape cadastre classification, the grapes grown here are part of the Bükk wine region (formerly known as the Bükkalja wine region). It is a popular excursion destination for locals, and you wouldn't find a more ideal place for wine tasting. The really old winemaking tools found in the cellars testify to the expertise and love of the people living here for wine culture.

Since viticulture is a popular pastime of the village's inhabitants, many families still store their wine here. The delicious juice consumed here and the wonderful panorama from here instantly drive away the worries of everyday life.



43. Lesser Mouse-eared Bat



44. The Little Owl

In the vicinity of human settlements, the **little owl** (*Athene noctua*) can be seen and heard at night, but often during the day as well, which was mistakenly called a bird of death by the ignorant people of old times, because the insects that gather at the light during the vigil lured our little owl there too. In winter, it looks for a hiding place in the cellar village, in summer the **long-eared owl** (*Asio otus*) breeds in various nests, and less often its relative the **short-eared owl** (*Asio flammeus*) can also be seen. The **sand lizard** (*Lacetra agilis*) is common, and in the evening we can meet the **common spadefoot** (*Pelobates fuscus*), and we can also have the chance to observe the **lesser mouse-eared bat** (*Myotis oxygnathus*) hunting mosquitoes.



45. Golden field of grain



46. Long-eared Owl



47. Blackthorn

Megyaszó

On the coat of arms of the village of Megyaszó, a brown bear standing on two legs facing right, blowing a golden bagpipe, is depicted on the green mound. According to oral tradition, King László Kun enjoyed spending time here with his warriors. Many bears lived in the forest, and the wilderness was loud with their roars. Their roars could be heard in the village, which at that time only consisted of a few houses. This is also where the name of the village comes from, which first became Medveszó, then Mediaszó, and finally Megyaszó.

It is located in the southwestern corner of Zemplén, the center of the Harangod region. The Bronze Age finds found here and the excavated Migration Period cemetery prove that the area has been inhabited for thousands of years. The name of the settlement first appears in written records in 1219. It was granted a town status in the 18th century, during which time the Miskolc-Kosice trade route affected the settlement. The Gothic-style Reformed church, which is under enhanced monument protection, was rebuilt in the 1600s, and a castle wall with loopholes was built around it. Its organ was purchased from the Reformed Church in Košice, and its pulpits were carved from Karara marble. The Catholic church was built in 1949, and here is a copy of János Fadrusz's famous work, the "Crucifix". Another work by Fadrusz, the "Matthias Head", can be viewed in the lobby of the mayor's office. The village museum can be viewed in the building opposite the Reformed Church.



Megyaszó coat of arms



48. Reformed church



49. Catholic church

Back to Alsódobsza

After resting in the shade of the cellars, with a short walk we can return to our starting point, Alsódobsza accompanied by grape arbors and orchards. We can see our wild species that are more common in mainly agricultural areas, so we can meet the **pheasant** (*Phasianus colchicus*), **brown hare** (*Lepus europaeus*), **roe deer** (*Capreolus capreolus*) which can gather in larger groups in winter. We can also meet the **smooth snake** (*Coronella austriaca*), which most closely resembles the common viper, although smooth snake is completely harmless. In summer, they often go out to sunbathe on the roads, and among the ruined remains of abandoned winehouses we can also see the **sand lizard** (*Lacerta agilis*). We hope that what you have seen has pleased you, and that you will leave this Hernád-side region rich in experiences, refreshed in body and soul.



50. Brown Hare



51. Sand Lizard



52. Roe in winter fur



53. Smooth Snake

The work of our association in pictures



Educational presentations for children on Fish Day



Experiential Pedagogy-Based Birds and Trees Day



Organization of professional days



Organizing trips



Local History Collection



Maintenance of the Tátorján trail



Speleology



Animal rescue

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Background photo: Sunset above Szikszó from Alsódobsza(Szilárd Simkó)

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