



## DOS AND DON'TS FOR VISITORS

- You can move about on private land from sunrise to sunset unless you do damage to the landowner. In case the private land is fenced or marked, you will need the landowner's permission.
- Drive your motor vehicle only on the provided roads and park it only in the car park.
- Put up your tent and make a fire only in the prepared and marked places.
- At the time of fire risk it is forbidden to make an open fire, even on special grounds.
- Keep your dog on the leash while moving about in the nature.
- You can pick berries, mushrooms and other forest goods in the protected area.
- Try to act without leaving traces in the nature.
- In order to avoid damage to the sand dune vegetation, cycle only on the roads and on the provided trails.

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



### ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY

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ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD

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Publication supported by:  
Environmental Investment Centre



ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTMENT CENTRE

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Front page photo:  
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Layout by: Akriibia Ltd.  
Printed by: Aktaprint PLC

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# NAVESTI Landscape Protection Area



Photo: Morning on Navesti River, A. Ader

## NAVESTI LANDSCAPE PROTECTION AREA

The Navesti Landscape Protection Area is, with its 168 hectares, located to the north of the Suure-Jaani – Vändra Road in Suure-Jaani Rural Municipality, Viljandi County. **The area was taken under nature conservation in 1992 in order to protect the dunes and biodiversity and to maintain the landscape of the Navesti Valley.**

## DUNES AT VANAÕUE

The predominant surface form in the Navesti Landscape Protection Area is a wavy and flat moraine. To the north of the Navesti River, the surface forms created by winds are known as the **Vanaõue Dunes**. The narrow chain of dunes in the north-west – south-east direction is approximately three kilometres long, its average relative height is 4–5 metres and its highest point is 14 metres. The relative height of the dunes from the sea level is 37.5 metres. The windward south-west slope is most jointed with small dunes at right angles. In the south, there are small bog patches closed between the dunes, the size of the largest being about 4 hectares.

## NAVESTI RIVER

The former Pala River was recalled the Navesti in 1599 after the formation of manors. The Navesti River with its picturesque high sandbanks and 79 tributaries is one of Estonia's most water-abounding rivers. Its biggest branches are the rivers of Saarlõgi, Retla, Halliste and Rõpu.

The upper course of the 105.9-kilometre-long Navesti River lies on the Central-Estonian plain. The river flows through Järva, Viljandi and Pärnu Counties and finally falls into the Pärnu River, making it the longest and most water-abundant tributary to

the Pärnu River. The Navesti is one of the five rivers flowing in the Soomaa National Park and contributes to the annual floods which have made Soomaa famous for the so-called fifth season.

18 species of fish can be found in the Navesti River. The most numerous are the roach and the bleak, but the river trout, pike, chub, bream, etc. are also common.

## FOREST

The pine forest, growing on the dunes, is full of light but this does not result from the natural development. Before the foundation of the protected area, plenty of 150-year-old pine trees had been cut down for thinning purposes in order to make the dune more attractive. Although the heath pine forest is dry and poor in species of plants, it is highly evaluated both by holiday makers and by berry and mushroom pickers.

In the 1980s, before the protected area was established, the trees were resined and donated to the chemical industry. Several pine trees still carry bow-shaped scars cut into the trunks with special knives. Nowadays, trees are not resined in Estonia any more.

## FLORA

The landscape protection area is a suitable habitat for several **protected species of plants**, such as the slender crosswort (*Cruciata glabra*), European common twayblade (*Listera ovata*), common spotted orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*) and butterfly-orchid (*Platanthera* sp.).



Photo: Vanaõue Dunes, M. Maala



Photo: Slender crosswort (*Cruciata glabra*), A. Ader

It is forbidden to pick the protected plants and to destroy or damage their habitats to the extent which endangers the preservation of the species in this place. Plenty of plants have been included into the list of endangered species because due to their beauty or other features they are picked too much, which is a hazard to the preservation of the species.

## WALKING TRAIL OF SAKALA ROAD (12 km)

Hereabouts, Carl Robert Jakobson can be regarded as the founder of the tradition of walking in the nature. C. R. Jakobson (1841–1882) was the first Estonian well-informed farmer, politician, enlightener, journalist and one of the most beloved leaders in the Estonian Age of Awakening. He founded “Sakala”, the newspaper of Viljandi County, in 1878. He used to walk from Kurgja, his homestead, to the editor's office of “Sakala” in Viljandi via Vanaõue along the forest path winding between the dunes of the Navesti Valley. That is why the path running through the heath pine forest is called the Sakala Road. **The Kurgja Walk traditionally takes place every spring.** About a third of this 12-kilometre-long walking trail is within the boundaries of the protected area. A recreational space in the middle of the protected area, the Luite camping site, has been built in the area that was formerly used as a sand pit.

The boundary of the Navesti Landscape Protection Area can be found thanks to the special landmark. The local lore calls the place Soldatiküla (*Soldier Village*). The toponym refers to the small holdings which were given to the soldiers who had served in the Russian Czarist Army for 25 years and fought in the Russo-Japanese war. However, the walking trail of the Sakala Road finishes no sooner than at the Kurgja Farm Museum 9.5 kilometres farther away.