



# The Elkraga Nature Trail



Foto autors Ventspils Tūrisma informācijas centra foto arhivs

The trail winds along Lake Usma, which is the sixth largest lake in Latvia by area and the second by water volume. A 700-metre nature trail for health walks has been built from pine boards around Lake Usma in Ventspils parish. It is especially good for people with motor impairment, the elderly people and families with small children. The audio material is available in Latvian and English, it can be listened to using QR-code stickers that will be placed on an information board.

The trail also offers a view of the fabulous and sung Moricsala, which is part of the Moricsala Nature Reserve, founded in 1912. It is the second oldest nature reserve in Europe. The nature trail offers a stunning view of Morics Island, one of the last areas untouched by human activity, with no economic activity having taken place here for over 200 years. Morics Island is unique by its incredibly old forest: the trees growing here are up to 500 years old. The island is a good home for rare species of lichens, mosses and insects, it is a paradise for beetles and the only place in Latvia for a colony of fish hawks (ospreys). The island is home to 222 species of butterflies, some of which are found nowhere else in our country and not even in the Baltic States. The Moricsala Nature Reserve is included in the Natura 2000 – the network of nature protection areas in the territory of the European Union.

Count Moritz of Saxony and his soldiers took refuge on the island in 1727, fleeing Russian troops. However, seeing the superiority, the count one night fled the island and went to Ventspils, later becoming a famous French army marshal. From then on, Zivjusala became known as Moricsala.

Moricsala is an invaluable natural value, as it contains 1/5 of all Latvian plant species and many rare insect species. The island is closed for daily visits, a special permit from theKurzeme Regional administration of Nature Conservation Agency is required.

SURFACE Trampled footpath, a wooden footbridge. In humid weather conditions, the cover can be slippery.

📍 Svētības, Usma, Usmas pagasts, LV-3619, Latvija

