Ojcowski National Park

In 1924, under the direction of Professor Władysław Szafer, a project for the creation of a nature reserve in the Prądnik and Sąspowska Valleys was developed. This project was implemented only in 1956 when Ojcowski National Park was established.

It is the smallest of the 23 national parks in Poland. Its area covers 2146 hectares and includes two Jurassic valleys - Prądnik and Sąspowska - as well as fragments of the Jurassic upland.

In the area under its jurisdiction, Ojcowski National Park protects flora and fauna, as well as natural processes. It takes care of maintaining and restoring the characteristics of its unique landscape, provides access for scientific research and tourism.

The area of the Ojcowski National Park is distinguished by the diversity of terrain and picturesque landscape. Deep valleys carved into limestone are characterized by steep and rugged slopes. Rocky limestone resistant to weathering forms isolated rock formations in the valleys, often with fantastic shapes (e.g., Hercules' Club, Krakow Gate, Deotyma's Needle, and others). The presence of caves is also associated with limestone substrates, with over 400 caves in the Ojcowski National Park. The largest of them include Łokietka, Ciemna, Zbójecka, Sąspowska, Koziarnia, and in the immediate vicinity of the park - Wierzchowska Górna and Nietoperzowa. Guided tours are available for visitors to Grota Łokietka and Jaskinia Ciemna, as well as the Nietoperzowa and Wierzchowska Górna caves located in the Kraków Valleys.

In terms of plant cover, Ojcowski National Park occupies a leading position in our country. A mosaic of plant communities is created here by almost 1000 species of vascular plants, including many relicts with extremely different habitat requirements. The richness of Ojcowski flora is complemented by a list of over 230 species of mosses and liverworts, about 1200 species of fungi, and nearly 220 species of lichens.

The Park's animal world is represented by approximately 6,000 species. The most characteristic group among the fauna is bats (15 species). The most commonly encountered are the common pipistrelle and the greater noctule. A stylized silhouette of a bat is featured in the Park's coat of arms.