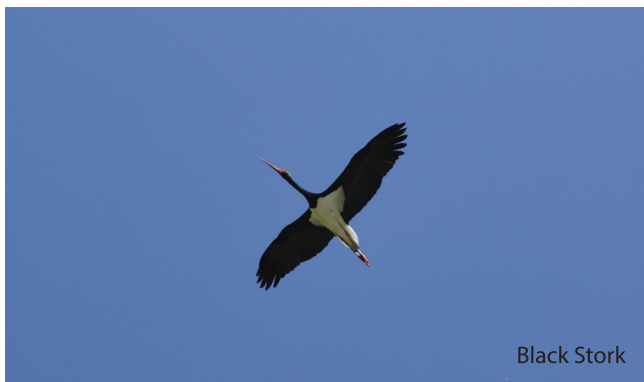


Globally endangered species, such as the greater horseshoe bat, the spur-thighed tortoise (Greek tortoise) and many other amphibians and reptiles are still often encountered in this part of the country.

The fish fauna of River Struma and its tributaries is very specific. Here, you can see several fish species, which are only encountered here and in some of the nearby Bulgarian and Balkan large rivers and nowhere else around the world. Such species include the Struma Schneider (Alburnoides Strymonicus), Struma Loach, Macedonian Trout, Struma Barbel, Orphean Dace, Vardar Nase.



Black Stork



Struma Schneider

Interreg - IPA CBC 
  **CCI 2014TC16I5CB006** EUROPEAN UNION



A Sustainable Joint Future

Transport and pedestrian access to Polska Skakavitsa Waterfall natural landmark is improved through rehabilitation of a municipal road section, construction of eco trails, parking place and resting and observing zones. The activities are implemented within the Project Enhancing the Tourist Potential of the Municipalities of Kyustendil and Konche – A Sustainable Joint Future, CB006.1.21.164.

The project duration is 18 months – from October 18th, 2016 till April 17th, 2018.

The project total budget is Euro 412 105, 36.



Project Enhancing the Tourist Potential of the Municipalities of Kyustendil and Konche – A Sustainable Joint Future, CB006.1.21.164, co-funded by EU through the Interreg-IPA CBC Programme Bulgaria – The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020

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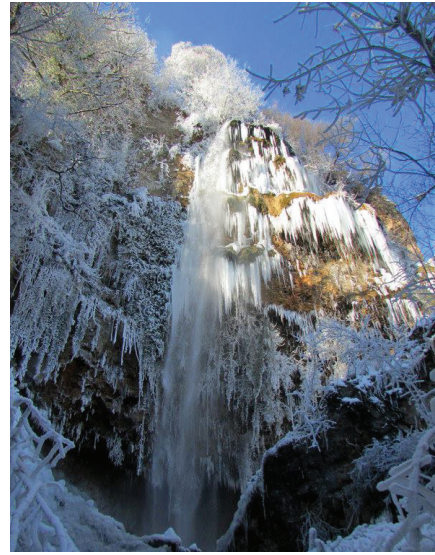
Skakavitsa Waterfall, Polska Skakavitsa Village, Kyustendil Municipality

Among the many natural wonders in the Kyustendil municipality, such as the marvellous views from the Viden Peak, the Struma Gorge with its rock formations, venerable forests of Osogovo, the Dragovishtitsa and Bistritsa Rivers, the Green Hill, the canyon near Tsarvenyano and many more, a little known place makes every visitor to gasp with amazement. Almost inaccessible until recently, now, thanks to the efforts of the Kyustendil Municipality and the cross-border cooperation, it can be easily seen. This is one of the highest waterfalls in Bulgaria – Polska Skakavitsa Waterfall.



Polska Skakavitsa Waterfall is situated near the villages of Polska Skakavitsa and Razhdavitsa – about 25 km apart from the town of Kyustendil to the Northeast. It was announced natural site in 1968 as well as the nearby Zemen Rocks. The waterfall is fed by the tiny and sparkling clean River Shiroki Dol – right-side tributary of Struma River.

The displacement between the highest point, where the waterfall starts, to the level of Struma River is 70 m. The main fall of the water is 53 m high. This remarkable natural phenomena is truly majestic and it ranks among the highest waterfalls in Bulgaria. The Skakavitsa Waterfall, unlike some of its higher rivals, is



active throughout the year. The water level is highest in spring and lowest at the end of summer and in the early dry autumn months. If the ranking of the Bulgarian waterfalls considers only the ones flowing all-year-around, then Skakavitsa Waterfall will be in one of the top positions. It is also remarkable for its travertine formations. These are thin crust of calcium carbonate, slowly accumulating on the rock surface and even coating moss, roots of plants, dry leaves. And so, instead of shrinking in size, due to erosion, the waterfall grows.

The pure and immaculate nature in the region of Kyustendil is the reason why it now boasts well-reserved unique habitats, hosting numerous rare and endangered animal and plant species. Many of them are endemic – they are only encountered in this part of Bulgaria and nowhere else in the world. The Kyustendil region, with its dense venerable forests was the first place to see the return of the lynx, which had disappeared in the previous century.

Within a mere two-hour walk through the Struma Gorge and around the slopes of the Zemen and Kon-yavska Mountains it can be encountered more butterfly species than can be found on the entire territory of the British Isles. Many species protected by law can be found here – Southern Festoon (*Zerynthia Polyxena*), Large Copper, Large Blue, Jersey Tiger, Stag Beetle and many others.

Over 250 bird species may be observed in the Kyustendil area. This number accounts for more than half the species in the Bulgarian fauna. Many of them nest here undisturbed. The famous Aristotle Migratory Path passes through these lands.



Southern Festoon