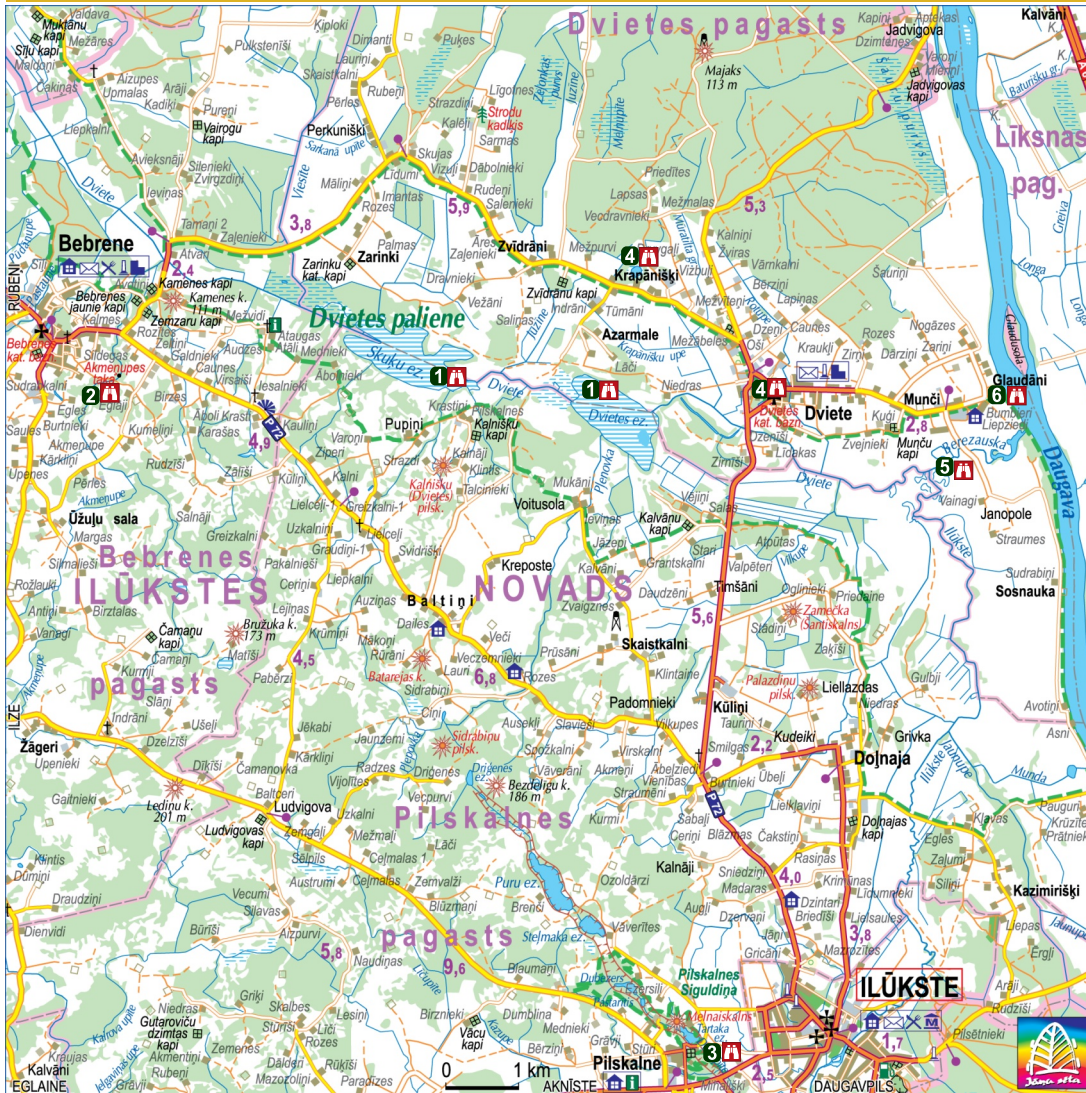




FOR DRAGONFLY WATCHERS DRAGON FLIES AT DVIETES FLOODPLAIN

Welcome to Dviete!

On the territory of Nature park there are no essential restrictions on watching dragonflies: you may walk freely on the roads, ride a bike or drive a car, go by boat. Pitching tents and building campfires is allowed in specially foreseen and facilitated places. During wildlife observation, you should avoid deliberate disturbance of wild animals - usually it can be prevented using good quality optics.



Dragonflies are the real essence of summer. There could be some other ways to enjoy the beautiful nature on a hot summer day, not only walking along winding river banks, or sitting quietly by a picturesque flood lands lake, watching the dragonflies flapping motion or sudden darting. All in all one can find 59 species of dragonflies in Latvia and most of them can be easily recognized after some training. Of course, you should take into account that the dragonfly males and females have different costumes, so do the young dragonflies. Dragonflies are harmless to people, they cannot bite or otherwise endanger you. Taking pictures of dragonflies nicely adds to your hobby - try to get perfectly sharp images of a dragonfly's flight! Dviete floodplain is a good place for observing dragonflies - the insects' way of life is mainly associated with a proximity to water, since dragonfly larvae develop there. Outside the breeding period they can also be met far away from the water where open areas provide plenty of food (other small insects) and you can see them in bush or forest clusters where they have good hiding places. For observing dragonflies it is advisable to visit a more extensive area, not only Dviete floodplain rivers, floodplain lakes with changing water levels, ponds, oxbows and Daugava riverside. There is a vast variety of dragonflies, and its uniqueness is caused by the distant location at Latvia's SE part.

TOURIST SERVICES

Nearby accommodations:

- Drīgenes, 65462296
- Dubezers, 65462296
- Dailes, 29172946
- Liepziedi, 29466687
- Rozes, 29197182
- Dzintari, 26481223
- Rubeni, 28354070
- Saliņas, 29249017
- Ilūkste: Pie torņa, 24227969
- Ilūkste: Glenda, 29368657
- Ilūkste: Ilūkste, 65462175

Bebrene professional secondary school, 65444530

Shops: at Kaldabruņa, Bebrene, Pilskalne, Dviete, Ilūkste.

Nearest public catering services: unsatisfactory throughout the natural park area - ask the guest house to provide sandwiches, thus having better opportunities to vary the route. **Nearest cafes** can be found at Bebrene, Ilūkste or Svete.

ATM: Ilūkste, Daugavpils

Gas station: by the roadside near Pilskalne, in the direction of Daugavpils.

Travel information:
www.celotajs.lv, 67617600
www.dviete.lv, 26109353; 20219770
www.ilukste.lv, 65440826; 20219694
www.bebrene.lv, 65407909; 26109353

Emergency telephone number: 112

While in the Western European and Scandinavian countries dragonfly observation has become a steady hobby, taking place alongside the popular bird-watching, in Latvia its expansion is still expected. Join the pioneers of this hobby! The dragonflies are interesting to watch - you need only a camera for photo shooting or binoculars for their undisturbed viewing. The splendour and acrobatic flight of dragonflies is amazing and the determination of species is rather easy.

ROUTE

The route is intended for dragon-fly watchers going by car or bicycle. Some suitable dragonfly-watching spots are described, and these may be freely combined according to the distance or other criteria. It also describes more typical habitats - numerous in Dviete floodplain and in its nearest vicinity, giving a notion about possibilities to look for certain dragonfly species. In the region there are still good opportunities for discovering new, hitherto unreported species. Selia is a region that has the potential to monitor the migrant species arriving from the south.

When to visit this area? In summer. The flight time of dragonflies varies among species, but mainly it is from

April to October. If you plan one trip in May or early June, and another one - at the end of July or August, then your chance to see all the represented here dragonfly species will be the greatest.

Distance: 170 km from Riga (in one direction). On the spot - about 40 km.

Route: Kaldabruņa-Bebrene-Dviete-Muskie.

Approximate time: two days (if you devote one day only, it's not worthwhile to ride such a long distance).

Routes availability: no data provided. You need to use a good terrain map. In several places you are recommended to travel by radial routes on foot, taking into account the dragonfly's watching peculiarities.

Road surface: mainly dirt roads on the spot, but in plain relief, which makes driving a car or a bike particularly attractive.

Alternatives: dragonfly-watching may well be supplemented by photographing butterflies or combined with fishing. Dviete floodplain also provides bird and plant watching facilities. You can visit the wild horse and cow herds and an observation tower on the shore of Skuku lake, see the beautiful churches or go hiking along Pilskalnes Siguldiņa trails, as well as go boating, especially during floods.

Optics for watching: dragonflies can

be mostly accessed close enough and easily watched with naked eye. Sometimes, however, binoculars can be used (optimally with eight-time magnification) - similar to bird watching. Camera with at least 100mm lens or a good shot zoom capability will be very useful.

Information: www.dabasdati.lv to report on observations and determining species of dragonflies;
www.globalwitcher.com for list-making of dragonfly species and to compare internationally.

Recommended determinant for dragonfly identification can be bought at internet stores: Dijkstra & Lewington, R. (2006). Field Guide to the Dragonflies of Britain and Europe.



Dviete floodplain at the end of summer - when you can best of all watch dragonflies just near the water



One of the largest Latvian dragonflies - the Southern Hawker male may reach 7,5 cm in length

Other routes of active tourism can be found at www.celotajs.lv!

PLACES FOR DRAGONFLY WATCHING

1 The most suitable places for watching dragonflies in Dviete floodplain nature park are Skuku and Dviete lakes, also the Dviete river which links them. There are grassy lakes with changing water regimen, which creates specific conditions with seasonal character. The approach to Skuku lake is most convenient from the park visitor's centre on Putnu (Bird) island. Dviete lake can be approached near Voitusala, in its southern part, or you can arrive from north at Krapānišķi. In any case it is worth walking a longer distance by the lake shore or riverside

2 Akmeņupīte is characterised by its swift flow, stony riverbed and shaded or sometimes exposed river stretches. You can approach it easily from Bebrene along the convenient Akmeņupīte nature trail.

3 Tartaka chain of lakes from Pilskalne direction with well-arranged Pilskalnes Siguldiņa nature trails. The deep lakes, their banks rich in water plants, and the surrounding open spaces are fit for several species of dragonflies. You are also advised to glance over at the pond side at Pilskalne centre.

4 Smaller ponds with different amount of water plants are situated in the park of Dviete village, in Krapānišķi and near several other homesteads, also in the vicinity

of accommodation.

5 - 6 Valuable, though more difficult to approach are the flood-land meadows with old riverbeds 5 at the confluence of Dviete and Ilukste rivers. You can easier get to the Daugava bank near Munci 6. However, you may succeed in finding different dragonfly species even along the drainage ditches, at the roadside in various places of the nature park and in the vicinity.

7 Outside the nature park it is definitely worth going to Svente or Medumi lake, and Boltmuiža marsh is very interesting, where you can even find by chance some rare dragonfly species.

THE OBSERVED DRAGONFLY SPECIES

Apzīmējumi: ■■■■ - suga novērojama regulāri, ■■■■■ - suga novērojama neregulāri

Vērojama suga	Vērošanas vieta	Vērošanas laiks						
		Apr	Mai	Jūn	Jūl	Aug	Sep	Okt
1 Upju zilspāre	Upes straujteču posmi		■■■■■					
2 Rudens zaigspāre	Stāvošu ūdeņu tuvumā, īpaši kur plašāki niedrāji			■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■
3 Ziemasspāre	Stāvošu ūdeņu tuvumā	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■
4 Tumšzilā krāšņspāre	Vecupes, purvainas vietas - bagātīgi klātas ūdensaugiem		■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■
5 Zilā platkājspāre	Paliņu plavas, vecupes, upju un atklātu straumju vietas, ezeri un dīķi			■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■
6 Dienvidu dižspāre	Pie stāvošiem vai lēnu tekošiem ūdeņiem ar apaugušiem krastiem. Medišanas vai pārlidojumu laikā var tikt novērota jebkur			■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■
7 Zilzaļā dižspāre	Pie dažādiem stāvošiem ūdeņiem, īpaši pie mazākiem, noēnotiem dīķiem. Barojas mežmalās un pie izcirtumiem			■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■
8 Melnkāju upjuspāre	Pie upēm ar mierīgu straumi un smilšainu gultni. Tāpat uzturas pie līdžīga rakstura ūdeneskrātuvēm, pārplūdušiem karjeriem			■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■
9 Agrā smaragdspāre	Lielāki stāvoši ūdeņi vai arī lēnu plūstošas upes; purvi.			■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■
10 Plankumainā spāre	Pamatā stāvoši ūdeņi ar bagātīgu veģetāciju.			■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■
11 Spilgtā purvuspāre	Pārpurvojušies upes posmi, aiauguši purvi, vecupes, kūdrainas ūdenstilpes.			■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■
12 Sarkanā klajuspāre	Pamatā visu ūdeņu tuvumā ar bagātīgu veģetāciju, izvairās no straujtecēm.			■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■	■■■■■



1 Banded Demoiselle



2 Emerald damselfly



3 Siberian Winter Damsel



4 Variable damselfly



5 White-legged Damselfly



6 Migrant hawkler



8 Common club-tail



9 Downy emerald



10 Four-spotted chaser



12 Ruddy darter



"Lauku ceļotājs"

Kalnciema iela 40, Rīga, LV-1046, Latvija
T: +371 67617600, F: +371 67830041
lauku@celotajs.lv, www.celotajs.lv

www.celotajs.lv

Photos and text: Andris Klepers