



Punkaharju Nature Reserve

- Location: Savonlinna
- Total area: 765 ha
- Founded: 1991



Metsähallitus, area manager

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Nature reserve

Punkaharju

The winding road on the esker is lined by a sparse rank of Scots pine trees. The blue waters of Lake Saimaa peek through between their trunks. Punkaharju's beautiful landscape was already a popular destination in the early 1800s. A nature reserve was later established to nurture the cultural landscape of Punkaharju. In addition to maintained sections of the esker, some areas have been left in their natural state.

From museum to trail

Punkaharju has a large network of trails, and its varied surfaces provide outstanding outdoor recreation terrain throughout the year. Some of these are wide sandy paths or roads that are in good condition, making them also suitable for use by visitors in wheelchairs. During the winter, the area has ski tracks and

snowshoeing trails. Numerous attractions, such as museums and art exhibitions, offer even more to see. Accommodation, activity and restaurant services are available all year round, both in the nature reserve and its surroundings.

An old travel route

The narrow Punkaharju esker separates two large basins of Lake Saimaa: the clear water of Puruvesi and the rugged and rocky Pihlajavesi. The esker is an old travel route that was used by animals and people – from traders to military battalions.

The Russians built the first road in the 1700s, and it ran right along the top of the dangerously narrow ridge. A section of the original unpaved esker road, which is lined by rock walls, has been preserved on the southern side of Hotel Punkaharju. This can be explored on foot.

The hotel, previously known as Punkaharjun Valtionhotelli, was originally built as a forest ranger's cabin. Today this is Finland's oldest hotel still in operation. If you're interested in the history of the esker, we recommend a visit to Cape Kuikonniemi to see the restored Salpa-Line trenches.

Research yesterday and today

Located right next to the nature reserve, the Laukansaari Research Park is the site where Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke) conducts forest research.

Larch stands more than a hundred years old, which is also where the tallest tree in Finland grows, reveal the long history of research conducted in the area. Part of the research park is an arboretum, where you can familiarise yourself with approximately 100 tree species.

Enjoy the outdoors while protecting nature

- Respect nature and take others in the area into consideration.
- Pets are welcome in the area as long as they are kept on a leash.
- Punkaharju is a litter-free hiking destination. Do not leave any litter in the area.
- There are no campfire sites in the nature reserve, so open fires are prohibited.
- Visitors may freely access the area by foot, ski and watercraft.
- Biking is only permitted on Topeliuksen polku, Hakinkierros, Puulajireitti and on the roads in the area as well as via Pususilta on the Lusto–Harjutie section.
- You can pick berries and mushrooms, but please leave the rocks and plants alone.
- Hook-and-line fishing and ice angling are permitted under Everyman's rights. Persons aged 18–64 years must pay the fisheries management fee for lure fishing. If you fish with more than one rod, you will also need Metsähallitus angling permit no. 7413 for Southern Finland or a lure fishing permit for Puruvesi (www.eraluvat.fi).

Instructions and rules

nationalparks.fi/punkaharju/instructionsandrules

Outdoor Etiquette

nationalparks.fi/hikinginfinland/visitorguidelines

Emergency number 112

METSÄHALLITUS 2022

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