



Dear Readers, Dear Colleagues

You are now holding the latest issue of the *Ochrany přírody/Nature Conservation Journal* for 2025 in English.

I would like to add that this issue is being published in 2026 when in the Czech Republic the “Year of Protected Landscape Areas” initiative under the auspices of the Czech Commission for UNESCO has been implemented. The Czech Republic has 27 Protected Landscape Areas (PLAs); the Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic (NCA CR) manages 25 of them, five of which are commemorating significant anniversaries of their establishment. Protected Landscape Areas harbour diverse, unique nature and the landscape where fragments of close-to-natural ecosystems often join managed

landscapes and cultural monuments as well (according to the IUCN Category V).

In this issue, you will find a diverse collection of articles addressing what we consider important issues in nature conservation and landscape protection. Thus, we commemorate the 70th anniversary of the designation of the Český ráj/ Czech Paradise, the oldest PLA in the Czech Republic, where fragments of unique natural landscapes—particularly rock formations—historical monuments, and sustainable forms of landscape management are seamlessly integrated in an exemplary manner.

Significant insights are also provided by articles focusing on the landscape, e.g. limiting the destructive impact on biodiversity caused by overpopulated game ungulates, restoring the water regime, or protecting the insect diversity associated with old-growth trees in forests. A report on the successful collaboration between a landowner and forest manager in a stream floodplain and the State Nature Conservancy, namely the NCA CR, demonstrates the expansion of desirable cooperative management of valuable habitats. Current topics include the prevention of wildfires in National Parks as part of providing the proper management of local forests. Interesting are also the articles concerning the legal framework for close-to-nature forest management, the return of the Ukrainian lamprey, perspectives on ecosystem services provided by pollinators, the visitor infrastructure system in Protected Landscape Areas, and the

history of land reform in Czechoslovakia in relation to nature conservation.

Nature conservation, in the context of the broader framework of social change and the geopolitical situation, faces and will face fundamental challenges, and addressing them is not and will not be a trivial matter. However, this will not be possible without fully integrating the reality that nature conservation—based on scientific and expert evidence—is one of the key priorities for human society, regardless of political and electoral preferences. The quality of information can easily be overshadowed by its quantity. Moreover, a well-educated society should respond to these challenges more rationally than a poorly educated one. We are, in fact, more dependent on the nature and its associated processes/functions/services than we want to admit to ourselves. Anyone who believes the exact opposite should brush up on his/her basic knowledge of general ecology.

I would like to thank everyone who has been involved in promoting more effective nature conservation, whether as a professional or volunteer conservationist, or as a responsible forest or agricultural manager.

I hope you enjoy reading this.

František Pelc

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of the Czech Republic*

Ochrana přírody/The Nature Conservation Journal

**State Nature Conservancy
of the Czech Republic Journal
Volume 81**

Special issue: Anthology of articles
published in 2025

Price: CZK 60 (EUR 2.5)

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of the Czech Republic, 2026.**
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ISSN 1210-258X

Registered by the Ministry of Culture
of the Czech Republic Prague
(Register No. E 6001)

**Published by the Nature Conservation
Agency of the Czech Republic, Kaplanova
1931/1, CZ – 148 00 Praha 11 - Chodov, Czech
Republic and the Cave Administration of the
Czech Republic, Kvetnové nám. 3,
CZ – 252 43 Pruhonice, Czech Republic,
supported by the Krkonose/ Giant Mts.
National Park Administration, the Sumava/**

Bohemian Forest Mts. National Park
Administration, the Podyjí/Thaya River Basin
National Park Administration and the Ceske
Svycarsko/Bohemian Switzerland National
Park Administration

Translation into English: Mark Sixsmith,
Jan W. Jongepier, Jan Plesník
Suggested citation of the individual articles:

Bílek L. (2026): The Český ráj/Bohemian
Paradise Protected Landscape Area Has
Been in Existence for 70 years. *Ochrana
přírody/Nat. Conserv. J.* 81, suppl: 2-8.

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On behalf of the publisher, distribution
for subscribers in the Czech Republic
is carried out by the Send Ltd. Prague,
Czech Republic, Ve Zlibku 1800/77, A3 Hall,
CZ-93 00 Praha 9, Czech Republic;
phone +420 225 985 235,
cellular phone +420 777 728 757
send@send.cz, www.send.cz

Orders from abroad are disposed by
the Nature Conservation Agency of the
Czech Republic, phone +420 283 069127,
predplatne@nature.cz

Layout and typesetting:

Jiří Kaláček (kalacek.cz)
Printed by Tiskárna Unipress, Ltd.

This issue was published 20 August, 2026.
Whole issues including references to the
articles are available in open access on
www.casopis.ochranaprirody.cz

