

# Flora of Medvednica

Interest in the natural sciences and mountaineering has always been closely connected, especially among the early members of HPD. Near Tomislavov Dom, Fran Kušan—a biologist, botanist, mountaineer, and one of the editors of “Hrvatski planinar”—established a mountain botanical garden in 1939.

The vegetation of Medvednica consists largely of natural, well-preserved forests. A belt of sessile oak and common hornbeam encircles the foothills; however, much of this woodland has been cleared to make way for agricultural land and expanding settlements. At elevations exceeding 300 meters, the gentle slopes are covered by forests of sessile oak and sweet chestnut. Above the oak belt, beech forests appear, covering the largest part of Medvednica. Above 800 metres, the landscape is defined by characteristic Pannonian beech and fir forests.

The Park is home to 115 strictly protected and 153 protected plant species. Among these, the yew (*Taxus baccata*) is particularly noteworthy; while commonly cultivated in urban landscaping, it remains exceptionally rare and endangered in its natural European habitats. On Medvednica, it typically grows individually in shaded, moist areas of beech and beech-fir forests. However, in the areas of Horvat’s 500 steps and Lipa it forms a distinct plant community—a yew and linden forest.

Among the strictly protected species found on Medvednica are two lily species: the Carniolan lily and Martagon lily. Their beautiful flowers adorn the mountain from June through August. Lilies and orchids are encountered relatively rarely, but their uniqueness is immediately noticeable. However, many plants that appear abundant are also at risk of extinction, as visitors often pick them without realizing they are contributing to their decline. This is especially true for spring flowers such as snowdrops, crocuses, dogtooth violets, hellebores, and wood anemones. The snowdrop anemone is critically endangered and faces an immediate threat of extinction across Europe.



Yew tree  
JU PP Medvednica



Mushroom “nursery” on a tree  
Branko Balaško, 2011 / MGZ



Snowdrop from Kraljičin Zdenac  
Tomislav Barkić, 2025 / MGZ