

WELCOME IN THE HOUTSAEGER DUNES AND THE KERKEPANNE FOREST



The Houtsaeger dunes and the Kerkepanne forest are pressed between the residential areas of De Panne and Sint Idesbald. Together they cover some 86 hectares extraordinary dune areas. You will find special plants like burnet rose, nottingham catchfly, nutans and milkwort here. And if you are lucky you could hear an oriole or a nightingale.

ECOLOGICAL VALUE

Despite the pollution of the ground water, the Houtsaeger dunes have a special biological and landscape value. The dry, semi-natural dune landscape with moss, lichen and bunt grass vegetation is part of the best developed of the whole coast. The dune chalk grasslands with rare plant species like yellow rockrose and bestraw broomrape are of very high importance. The presence of creeping mashwort, an internationally protected species, is also important.

The Kerkepanne forest is one of the oldest small forests on the Flemish coast. Plants such as sweet violets, star of Bethlehem and in the drier spots blackberries and ferns like to grow here.

This area is also very rich in songbirds. The presence of berry shrubs like Seabuckthorn, burnet rose and elder makes the ground good as feeding and resting area. The forest provides nesting places to golden orioles, green and great spotted woodpeckers and to birds of prey like sparrowhawks and hobby. The main migrating songbirds are blackcaps, garden warblers, European robins, song thrushes and common linnets.



Queen of Spain fritillary

The ponds house various amphibians including the European protected great crested newt.

Special invertebrates, such as the Queen of Spain fritillary mainly survive in the open dune areas.

MANAGEMENT

The objectives of the management are to promote the largest possible natural biodiversity in the region. Due to the history with lots of human influence and the limited surface it is necessary to adjust here and there by cutting open dune hollows and dune grass landscapes. A herd of donkeys graze on the grounds all year round.



burnet rose



star-of-Bethlehem

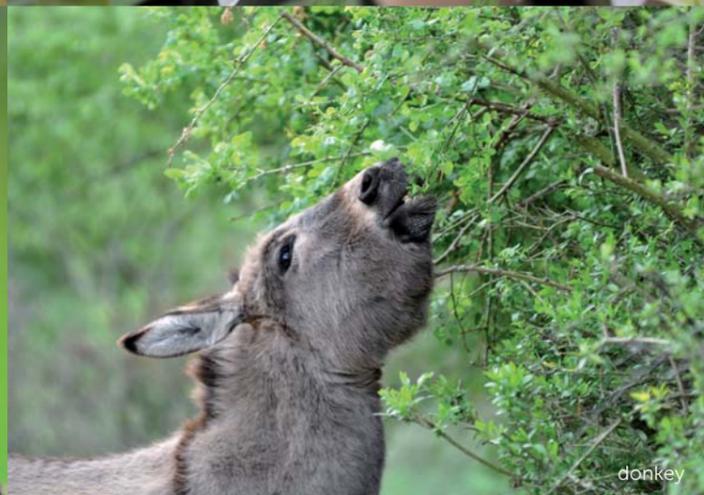


These animals were chosen for their self-sufficiency in this barren dune area and their historical role as working animals in the dunes. They ensure that besides shrubs, forest and brushwood there is enough space remaining for grassland, moss dune and parts of open sand.

Various ponds were also dug in the Houtsaeger dunes. That led to the return of the creeping mashwort and the great crested newt.

To ensure the development of the open dune forest is as natural as possible, the exotic tree species are progressively removed. The old forest character of this area is central in the choice of management of the Kerkepanne forest.

morel



donkey

SECOND LARGEST NATURE RESERVE IN FLANDERS.

The Houtsaeger dunes are part of the Flemish nature reserve 'The Dunes and Forests of De Panne'. This reserve covers 650 hectares and is thus the second largest in Flanders. The Flemish Nature Reserve is a first step towards a border crossing nature park on the West coast. It consists of various areas: the Westhoek, the Cabour dunes, the Zwarte Hoek, the Oosthoek dunes, Garzebekeveld and of course the Houtsaeger dunes.

ACCESSIBILITY

The Houtsaeger dunes and the Kerkepanne forest are freely accessible all year on the signposted walking paths. A play area was also fenced off in the Kerkepanne forest.

Guided nature walks are regularly organised in the Houtsaeger dunes. Please contact the Tourist Information of De Panne, tel. 058 42 18 18, and the Agentschap voor Natuur en Bos, Vlaams Bezoekers- en Natuureducatiecentrum De Nachtegaal, tel. 058 42 21 51.



walker

NOORDZEE

NIEUW-
POORT

SINT-IDESBALD
(KOKSIJDE)

HOUTSAEGERDUINEN

KERKEPANNEBOS

LEGEND	
	WATER / SEA
	BEACH
	MOBILE DUNE
	GREY DUNE
	DUNE SLACK VEGETATION
	SCRUB
	WOODLAND
	LIMIT OF THE NATURE RESERVE
	FOREST PLAYGROUND
	MAIN ROAD / SECONDARY ROAD
	KERKEPANNEPAD
	HOUTSAEGERPAD
	OLLEVERPAD
	OTHER PATHS
	CATTLE GRID
	ENTRANCE / INFORMATION
	PARKING
	COFFEE

NIEUWPOORTLAAN

N34

PANNELAAN

DE PANNE

VEURNELAAN

JAN VAN LOOYLAAN



0m 100m 200m 300m 400m

N35

VEURNESTRAAT

NOORDDREEF

KOKSIJDEWEG

HOW TO GET THERE

It is best to explore the Houtsaeger dunes via the entrance at the Noorddreef, a small street that starts at the square at the crossroads of the Veurnestraat (N35 De Panne-Veurne) and the Koksijdeweg (N396 De Panne-Koksijde). There are 2 entrances on the Nieuwpoortlaan too.

CONTACT DETAILS

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