



## DOS AND DON'TS FOR VISITORS

- When moving in the canyon, use only the provided stairways and board trails.
- Keep the sandstone outcrop.
- Put up your tent and make a fire only in the prepared places; on private land, ask the landowner for permission.
- You can use the roads and paths on private land as well as the trails on the lakeshores and riverbanks from sunset to sunrise.
- Drive your motor vehicle only on the provided roads and use car parks for parking.
- Ride your bike only on the roads and cycle lanes.
- Keep your dog on the leash while moving about in the nature.
- You can pick berries, mushrooms and other forest goods in the protected area.

When you see damage done to the nature or visiting objects, inform the Environmental Inspectorate by phone 1313.



### ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY

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ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD

### ARRANGEMENT OF VISITS

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State Forest Management Centre  
Haanja information desk  
Phone: +372 782 9090  
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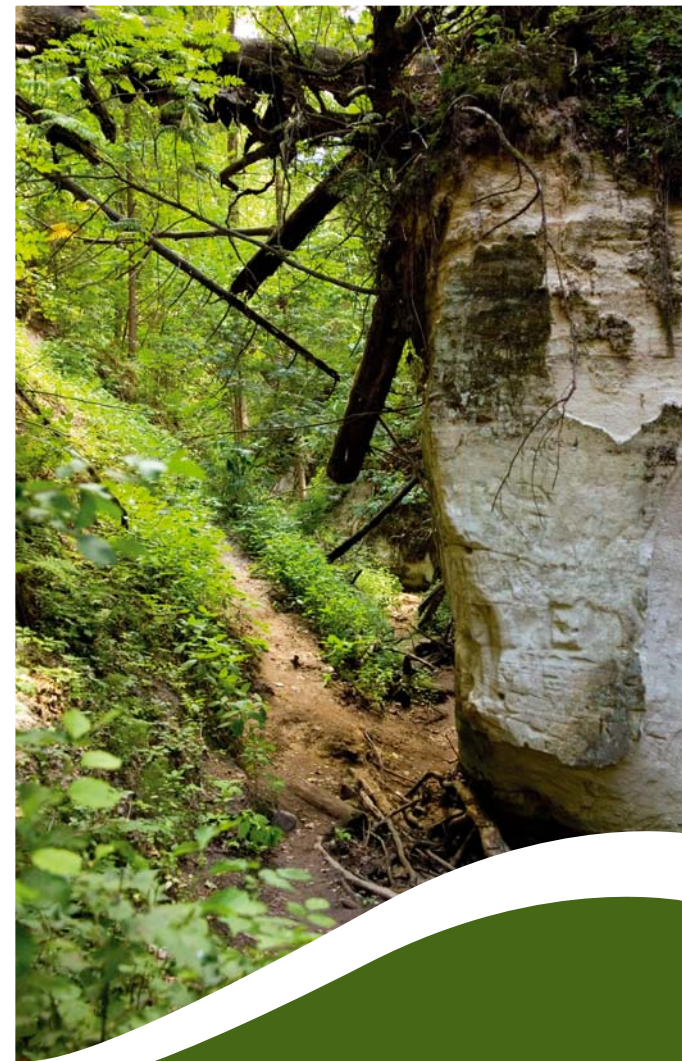


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# HINNI Canyon

Haanja Nature Park





## HINNI CANYON – GRAND DEVONIAN NATURAL MONUMENT OF SANDSTONE

High walls of sandstone can be found in many South Estonia's river valleys (Piusa, Peetri, Võhandu, Ahja, etc), but there are no other deep sandstone canyons. **The Hinni canyon is a unique natural monument in Estonia.**

The Hinni canyon is a 15-20-metre-deep incision valley, dating back to the Devonian Age. The valley is intersected into the sandstone of the Sietin series of the lower part of the Gauja rock bed.

The canyon is upstream 6–10 metres wide, but it quickly becomes as narrow as 3 metres. On the steep edges of the valley woven layer sandstone is exposed in the range of 200 metres and in 5-6-metre-long upright walls or cliffs in white or several yellow tones. Oxidizing of iron around quartz granules has given colour to many rusty sand layers. The woven layers refer to the fact that the sand sedimented and cemented in a shallow body of water for a very long time. The canyon is even more spectacular due to the crisscross-fallen trees and a small spring cave. At the bottom of the canyon the fast-stream Brook Enni runs, which discharges into Lake Kahrila in the Rõuge Primeval Valley.

### BIOTA IN HINNI CANYON

The flora on the sandstone outcrops of the Hinni Canyon is original on its own. Several rare species of moss, such as scented liverwort, pohlia moss, Kyoto moss, woodsy silk-moss, *Brachythecium* moss, *Stellar Calcareous* moss, etc grow.

Near the Hinni Canyon heath forests with dominant spruces are common. A birch wood with some spruces, aspens, maples and grey alders grows as a narrow strip along the canyon.

From time to time a wandering fox, roe deer or hare can be lost to the canyon. The place is a suitable living environment for many rodents.

### DEVONIAN

The Devonian Period started about 416 million years ago and lasted for more than 55 million years. In this period, the conditions on the present territory of Estonia were changeable: the seas and mainland interchanged; the sea was sometimes deeper, sometimes shallower; its waters were clearer or muddier. Estonia was located within the ancient continent of Euro-America near the equator, and the gigantic rivers proceeding from the mountains in Finland and Scandinavia carried sediments to its territory. This is proved by plenty of sandstone and carbonate rocks, sedimented during the Devonian. In

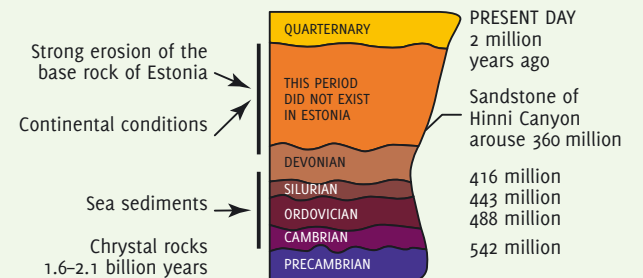


places, the Devonian rocks may be up to 500 metres thick, while the thickest rocks are known to lie in South-Eastern Estonia.

### GEOLOGISTS KNOW THAT...

- The Devonian was called by the county of Devon in the South-West of England. Rocks dating back to the Devonian can be found on all the continents.
- The Devonian is also called the era of fish, because then the part of both freshwater and saltwater fish increased in the fauna.
- The triumphal progress of lung-breathing living creatures began.
- The proportion of land plants grew rapidly.
- During the Devonian, the location of the continents on the Earth was different from the present times – most continents were connected into two large super-continents.

### GEOLOGICAL PERIODS AND THEIR AGE IN ESTONIA



## HINNI CANYON – PART OF HAANJA NATURE PARK

The Haanja Nature Park was founded in 1991 with the objective to protect the landscapes of the Haanja Upland and the local traditional lifestyle. The Hinni Canyon is located in the conservation zone with a strict protection regime and it aims at protecting the sandstone outcrop from the Devonian period, original in Estonia.

The area of the Haanja Nature Park is 16,903 hectares and it includes plenty of natural objects of interest, such as Estonia's highest top Suur Munamägi (318.1 metres above the sea level), the hill with the biggest relative height Vällamägi (303.9 metres above the sea level, 84 metres from the bottom to the top), the bog with the thickest peat layer (17 metres), the deepest lake Rõuge Suurjärv (38 metres deep), the highest located body of water Lake Tuuljärv (257 metres above the sea level), the deepest primeval valley Kütiorg (up to 70 metres deep), and the River Piusa with the greatest slant (213 metres).

The Hinni Canyon is located in the Rõuge Primeval Valley in the north-western part of the Haanja Nature Park. To learn more about the Hinni Canyon as well as the Rõuge Primeval Valley, you should walk the RÕUGE HIKING TRAIL, which runs at the bottom and on the slopes of the Rõuge Primeval Valley from Ööbikuorg (*Nightingale's Valley*) to the Hinni Canyon. The walk is about 10 km long and it can be taken in both directions.