

Warmth liking oak



Above 450m elevation sessile oaks, downy oaks and European turkey oak create a closed forest area where dogberry from the lower laying areas grow high but the tern level still stays rich. The warm liking submediterranean species are fading out and the continental climate lovers are showing up on their places.

This area is in state hands, the owner is Egererdő Forestry Ltd. The forest is here mainly for nature conservation and also soil protection purposes.

Hungary's most distinctive tree is **sessile oak**. Its crop sits on a short stem (pedicle) amongst the leaves unlike sessile oaks on the Great plain which have long stems. It lives on shallow, dry grounds but needs more light and grows slower. Its roots are going deep into the ground therefore it is a resistant tree. In natural circumstances they can live 300 years, but on forestry lands we are lucky to find any 100-year old ones.



We all know the **buzzard** watching from roadside trees and columns, many think they are hawks because of the size of the bird. Their number is big all the year but in wintertime more arrive from the north. Their nests are on the top of high trees. Accordingly to the name they eat rodents, but reptiles and amphibians show up on the menu as well.



European turkey oak has tannic acid in its tissues but it is interesting that amongst the other oaks it has the lowest amount of acid inside. It likes warmth therefore from the perspective of economy it is not the best for northern lands. Frost-cracks, esthetical changes and fungus diseases are not favourable from economical perspectives but ideal for decay eater insects. It grows quite fast so it is mostly used for firewood.



Cornelian cherry grows slow, but in good conditions lives long. From its strong wood good tool handles can be made. The golden-yellow flowers show up in the early months, February-March. The crop grows in September, tastes tart-sweet, sour and it is rich in vitamin-c. Great jam, syrup and Palinka can be made from it.



The biggest bug in Europe is big **stag-beetle or lucanus**. They are getting rare because their natural environment is less and less. They are bound to oak forests. In most part of their life they are larvae and eat decay wood. That is why they need old trees. At the end of May the imagoes show up and start to breed. Late afternoon hours loud flight starts this way to attract their partner. The "stags", the strong 1-2 cm chewers belong to the males only. The males fight over the females then the defeated one falls off the tree and dies. After the mating the winner lives only until the end of July. The female places the ovules and dies in August.

Lichen, especially **oak moss** grows from the symbiosis of fungi and mosses. Mosses are everywhere from the Arctic to the tropics, they can bear a lot but they are very sensitive to the sulphure dioxide contamination of the air. The presence or lack of the moss in an area is proper indicator for air contamination. They are not in inner cities; these places are the so called "lichendeserts".



Dormouse is not very well known because their nocturnal lifestyle. In this forest we can find the mouse size hazel dormouse and the rat size **edible dormouse** too. The later one is a sleep champion: from October until the beginning of April it sleeps in hibernation. In the active period they are very edacious. The mixture of fruits, seeds, green vegetable parts are good combination to get prepared for the long winter sleep.