



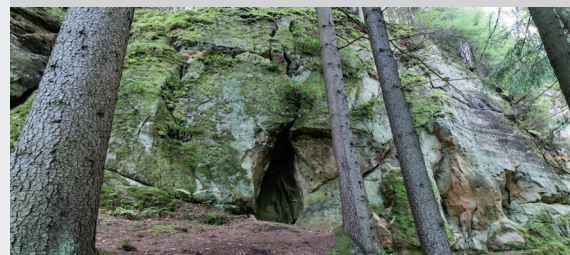
LIEPA, LĪČU-LAŅĢU CLIFFS



Lielā Ellīte Cave



Lielā Ellīte Cave



Līču-Lāņģu Cliffs

Photo: Baltic Pictures



Description

The route leads along natural, few-known trails up to Līču-Lāņģu Cliffs located in the middle of the forest, and introducing to Lode Clay-pit. The route shall be taken together with a guide.



Best time to go

June–October. The outcrops are better visible during the leafless period.



Route

Lielā Ellīte – Lode Railway Station – “Lode” – Līču-Lāņģu Cliffs – Lielā Ellīte.



Distance

Around 9 km.



Duration

Several hours.



Difficulty level

Easy.



Road pavement

Asphalt, gravel road, forest paths, off-road.



Starting point/ destination

Car parking lot at Lielā Ellīte, Liepa.



Public transportation

Liepa is easily accessible by train on the line Riga–Valga (station “Lode”; the train runs 2–4 times per day) and by regional buses on the line Cēsis–Valmiera.



Distance to Riga

102 km



Way marking

None on site. Only guided tours.



Worth knowing!

Check the timetable in advance! Observe traffic rules while on the road. To pass through the area of the company “Lode”, announce yourselves at least one day in advance by dialling +371 27424682. Do not get into the caves, since the sandstone layers there are unstable. Respect the signs placed on site. Walking outdoors is at one’s own risk. Emergency services: 112.

SERVICE

Cēsis Tourism Information Centre

Cēsis, Pils Square 9, +371 64121815, +371 28318318, info@cesis.lv, www.tourism.cesis.lv

Valmiera Tourism Information Centre

Valmiera, Rīgas Street 10, +371 64207177, tic@valmiera.lv, http://visit.valmiera.lv/

Baltic Wildlife

+371 28808440, laura@balticwildlife.eu, www.balticwildlife.eu

AdventureRide,

Pērle 1, Alderi, +371 29269559, info@adventureride.eu, www.adventureride.eu

Leisure park & camping “Ozolkalns”

“Saulkrasti”, Drabeši rural territory, Amata Municipality, +371 26400200, info@ozolkalns.lv, www.ozolkalns.lv

Hotel “Karlmuiza Country Hotel”,

Kārļi, Drabeši rural territory, Amata Municipality, +371 26165298, info@karlamuiza.lv, www.karlamuiza.lv (catering to be announced in advance)

Hotel “Melturi”

Melturi, Drabeši rural territory, Amata Municipality, +371 64129467, +371 29267224, melturihotel@gmail.com

Resort hotel “Jonathan SPA Estate”

Amatciems, Amata Municipality, +371 25606066, reception@jonathanhotel.com, www.jonathanspahotel.com

SIGHTSEEING OBJECTS

1 | Lielā Ellīte Cave 25.42749, 57.38426

Extraordinary sandstone outcrop for Latvia (Amata suite) with several arches, pillars, hollows, and a cave — shaped as a result of suffusion processes. The total length of Lielā Ellīte Cave (also called Ellīte, Velna ceplis, Velna krāsns, Vella Cave, Liepmuiža Cave, Liepa Cave) is slightly above 20 m, the ceiling height reaches 3.5 m, and width — 5 m. A powerful **spring** flows out of the cave. Probably its formation had started some 7000 years ago. The place has been much damaged; at the beginning of the 20th century the white sand was extracted, later on it was trampled and damaged in other ways. Nowadays the object and its closest vicinity are clean and well managed. Lielā Ellīte is an ancient pagan place and an object with long tourism history.

2 | Lode Clay-pit 25.40695, 57.39115

Located between Liepa Village and the primeval valley of the River Gauja. The clay layers of Lode were discovered in 1953 by the geologist J. Slienīš. Ten years later industrial extraction of clay for brick-making was started. The clay-pit became world famous when the geologist V. Kuršs in 1970 first time in the history of the world discovered well-preserved fossils of the Upper Devonian armoured fish and Strunius kurši fish. Still nowhere else such fish fossils in such good condition have been discovered; part of the fossils can be viewed in the expositions and funds of the Latvian Museum of Natural History. Nowadays clay is extracted by the company "Lode" which produces finishing, oven-chimney, and construction bricks, as well as other clay items. The Lode armoured fish deposit is a protected nature monument.

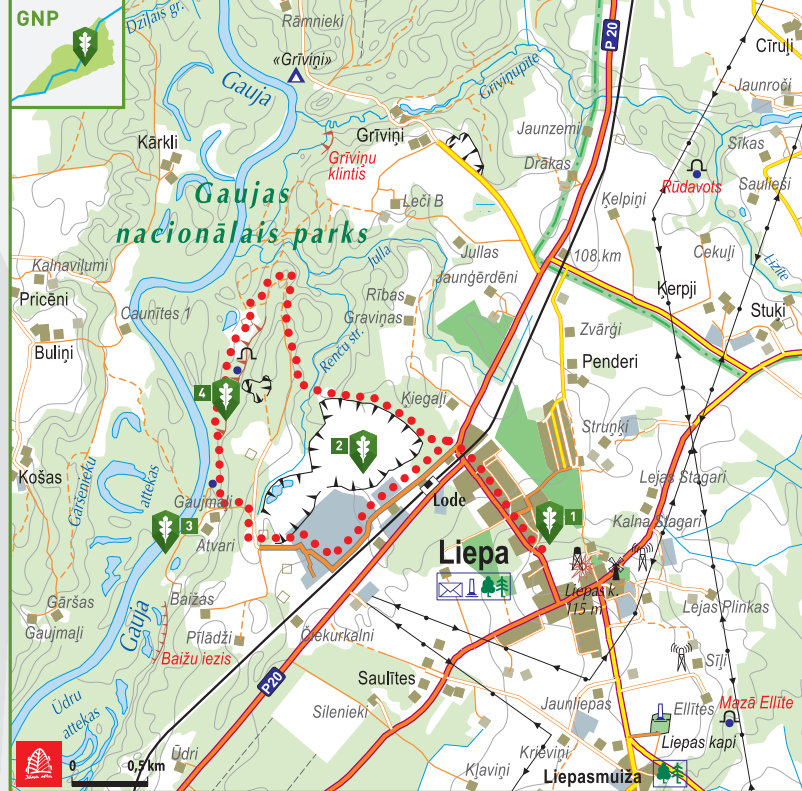
Pay attention! The sandy quarry habitat is home to heat-loving species, which are best spotted on sunny days. The nearby Gauja oxbow lakes are a good place to watch dragonflies, while the local forests are suitable for other invertebrates. The best time to watch insects is June–August. Here you might see the northern dune tiger beetle and the green hawker.

3 | Primeval Valley of the River Gauja

One of the most impressive Baltic terrain forms, which accommodates Gauja National Park to protect and preserve it. Near Sigulda the primeval valley reaches its maximum depth of 85 m and is around 1 km wide, while near Līču–Laņģu Cliffs it is around 0.6–0.7 km wide. Sandstone outcrops, often called rocks by the locals, dating back to the Devonian Period are among the natural and landscape values and tourism sightseeing objects of the River Gauja and its tributaries. Līču–Laņģu Cliffs is one of the largest sandstone set on the River Gauja

4 | Līču–Laņģu Cliffs 25.39306, 57.39311

Around 1 km long rocky cliff on the left side of the primeval valley wall of the River Gauja, which cannot be seen from the river. Its maximum height is ~30 m. The forms of sandstone outcroppings (Gauja suite) are very diverse: pre-dominated by more than 10 m high vertical walls divided by deep lateral



ravines. Around 20 springs are flowing out of the feet of Līču–Laņģu Cliffs, due to which caves of various length and hollows of various sizes have been shaped. **Lielā Laņģu Cave**, which is located on the southern part of cliffs, is the longest (48 m), and a powerful **spring** flows out of it. 50 m to the north of that cave is the **Vidējā Laņģu Cave** (total length 30 m), while another 50 m northward — **Mazā Laņģu Cave** (4.2 m). In the northern side of Līču–Laņģu Cliffs, there is a larger **cave** formed by a spring; and after the ceiling fell down, it turned into an extraordinary ravine with 8 m high, steep walls. On the side of the **ravine**, there is an interesting **cave** with three passages. Not far from here is the 7 m long **Augšāla Cave** and the very narrow, 12 m long **Apakšāla Cave**. Although the feet of the cliffs is not facilitated and is rather hard to access, the Līču–Laņģu Cliffs are quite popular among tourists

Pay attention! In the brooks coming from springs near cave portals and sandstone outcrops, brown mucus — the iron bacteria — are seen. At the feet of the cliffs — large decayed trees and deadwood, which are home to various species of beetles, door snails. Traces by woodpeckers on the trees are also visible. On the outcrops — colonies of single bees, various species of moss (Tortula lingulata moss, great-scented liverwort, etc.) and lichen (crustose lichen, velvet lichen, peltigeras, etc.), polypores, fragile fern, nests of wrens. The area is a good place for wild mushroom picking.



Lode Clay-pit