High School Forestry Camp in Slovenia

Jan Slapnik and Mateo Usicco, Sara Šinko, Ajda Štefelin

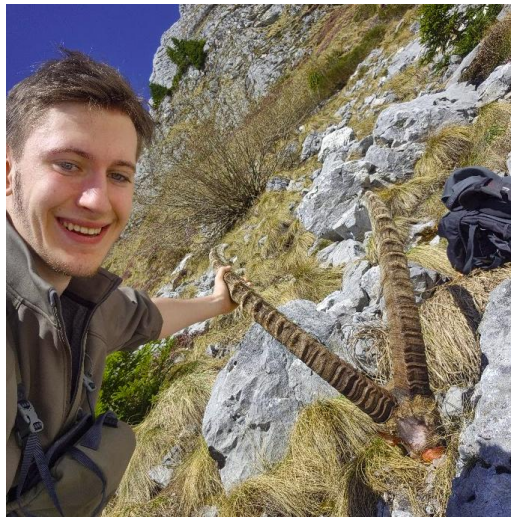
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Who are we?

- **Jan Slapnik** - High School of Forestry, Woodworking and Healthcare(SGLZŠ Postojna) Postojna; 3rd-year student, Professional Bachelor's Degree Program in Forestry; Twice – in 2022 and 2023
- **Mateo Usicco** - School Centre Nova Gorica, Mechanical engineering (SCNG) ; Postojna; 3rd-year student, Professional Bachelor's Degree Program in Forestry; Once in 2024
- **Sara Šinko** - Biotechnical center Naklo, Nature conservation. 2nd- year student, Undergraduate Study in Forestry and Renewable Forest Resources; two times: 2023 and 2024.
- **Ajda Štefelin -** Biotechnical center Naklo, Biotechnical general upper secondary school. 2nd- year student, Undergraduate Study in Forestry and Renewable Forest Resources; two times: 2023 and 2024.









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Why did we choose to attend the camp?

- **Learn from Experts:** To hear real college experiences directly from university organizers and professors.
- **Experience the Profession:** To see what a forester’s daily work looks like in the field.
- **Discover Future Paths:** To explore diverse career opportunities in forestry and environmental science.
- **Test Our Passion:** To make sure forestry is the right major and career choice for our future.
- **Gain Hands-On Skills:** To build practical field experience and connect with like-minded peers.



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More about the High School Forestry Camp

- The Department of Forestry and Renewable Forest Resources at the Biotechnical Faculty organizes the camp every year during the first week of the summer holidays at the Kočevski Rog Scout Environmental Center
- The program is developed collaboratively by a team of younger staff at the Department of Forestry and visiting lecturers who are experts in forestry, hunting and natural sciences.
- The camp is an excellent opportunity for students who are considering studying forestry or other natural sciences, as well as for those who would like to spend a week with their peers immersed in unspoiled nature and disconnected from technology.

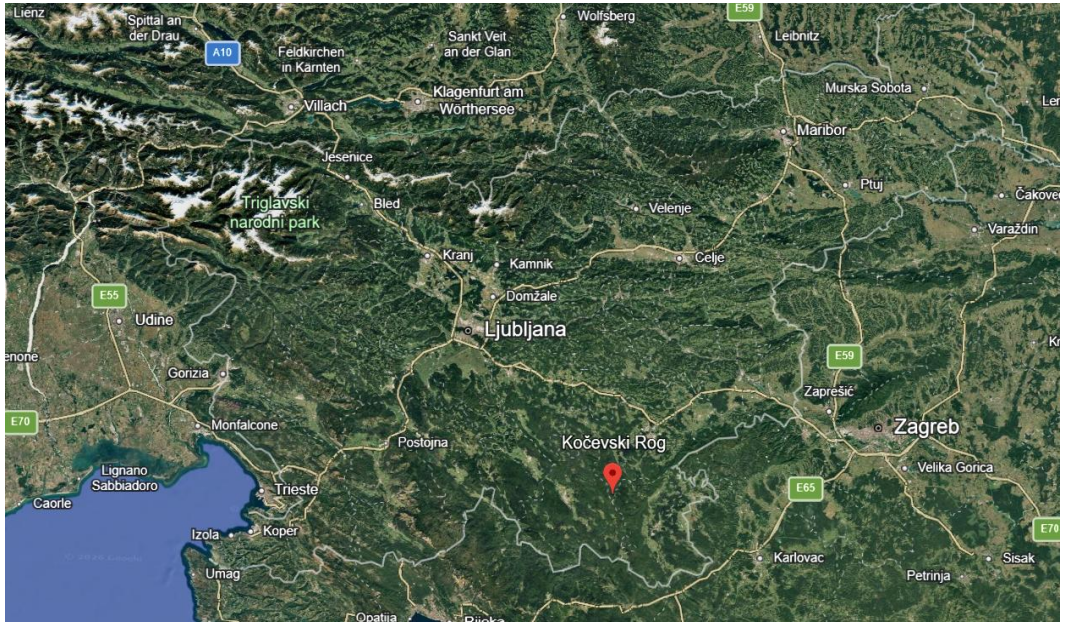


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Location:



- Six oldgrowth forests (Rajhenavski rog and Krokar)
- Fir and beech forests
- Three large european carnivores: gray wolf, brown bear and euroasian lynx
- Žaga rog – steam sawmill (1894)





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Summer Forestry Camp Overview (Poletni gozdarski tabor):

- **Hands-on Fieldwork & Science:** High school students engage in real-world forestry, from exploring virgin primeval forests to studying wildlife and biodiversity.
- **Practical ZGS Experience:** Participants gain direct experience with the Slovenia Forest Service (ZGS), learning forest management planning, tree measurements, and tree marking (*odkazilo*).
- **Technology & Future Careers:** Hands-on training with modern tools (GIS, GPS) alongside university professors, helping students make informed decisions about college majors and future careers in environmental sciences.

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Exploration of Primeval Forests and Forest Ecology:

- **Topic:** Exploring primeval forests (Rajhenavski Rog) and forest ecology.
- **Key Learnings:**
  - Understanding why we preserve primeval forests and what nature teaches us.
  - Comparing managed commercial forests with untouched natural ecosystems.
  - Analyzing natural forest processes, habitat structures, and biodiversity.

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Wildlife and Forest Biodiversity:

- **Topic:** Forest wildlife and biodiversity residents.
- **Key Learnings:**
  - Studying forest organisms ranging from small soil microorganisms to large carnivores (large beasts of prey).
  - Identifying specialized plant species and bird habitats unique to old-growth remnants.
  - Exploring how species depend on structural diversity within forest ecosystems.



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Sustainable Forest Management and Slovenian Forest Service (ZGS) Fieldwork:

- **Topic:** Sustainable forest use and practical fieldwork (including Slovenian Forest Service - ZGS practices).
- **Key Learnings:**
  - **Planning & Assessment (Načrtovanje in meritve):** Conducting field measurements, evaluating tree growth, health, and timber volume.
  - **Tree Selection & Marking (Odkazilo):** Practical demonstration of selecting and marking trees for harvest to ensure forest sustainability and regeneration.
  - Balancing ecological conservation with the economic needs of sustainable forestry.

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Modern Technology and Applied Forestry:

- **Topic:** Modern tools and applied resource management.
- **Key Learnings:**
  - Utilizing Geographic Information Systems (GIS), GPS mapping, and drone technology in forestry.
  - Assessing forest health, carbon sequestration, and climate change impacts through modern science.
  - Understanding how spatial data helps resource managers make informed decisions.

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Environmental Ethics, Climate, and Future Careers:

- **Topic:** Environmental ethics, climate challenges, and career orientation.
- **Key Learnings:**
  - Discussing global environmental issues, renewable forest resources, and climate change mitigation.
  - Exploring academic programs, career pathways, and university options in forestry and environmental sciences.
  - Networking with faculty members from the Biotechnical Faculty (University of Ljubljana) and gaining first-hand insights into the profession.

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Botanical hike:

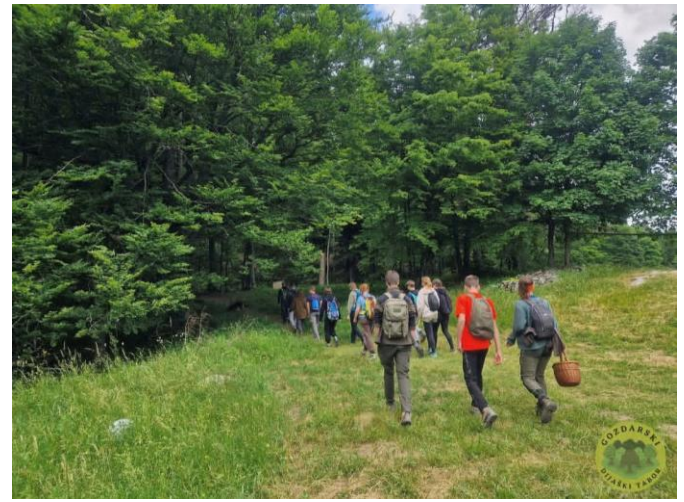




- Hike to the summit of Rog
- Learning about different trees and herbs species
- Gathering edible plants for spread







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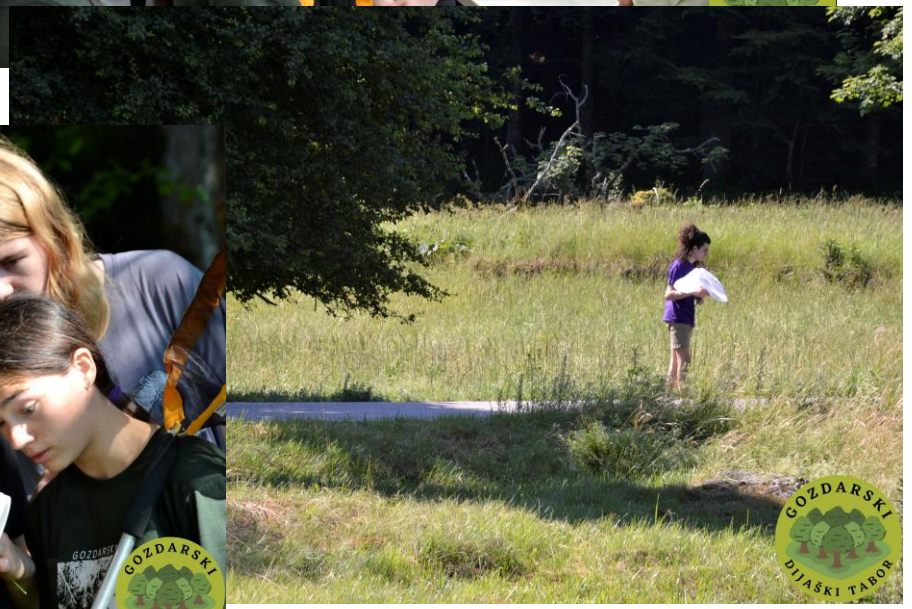
DISCOVERING THE FOREST TROUGH A MAGNIFING GLASS

- Bark beetle traps
- Other important roles for the forest









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Forestry Olympics

- Working in teams
- Various of activities













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Work at the Slovenia Forest Service - planning

- A network of permanent sample plots
- Two concentric circles: inner and outer
- We measure: distance, azimuth, diameter, damage, social status and heights
- Measurements are conducted every ten years









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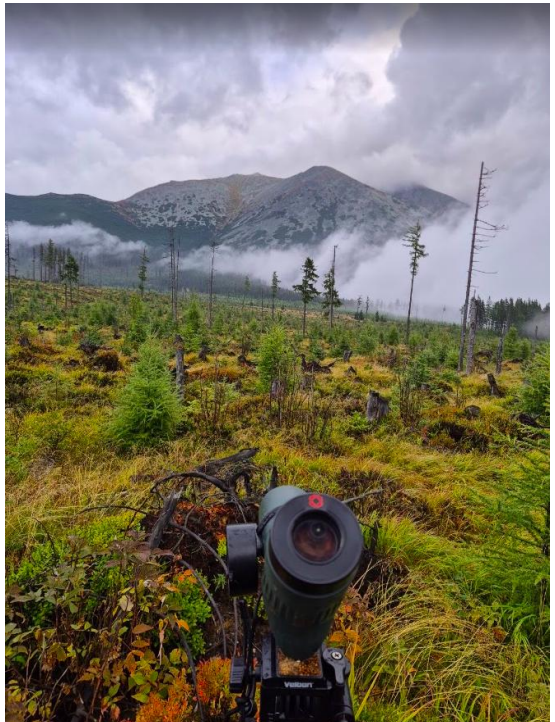
Our experience: JAN

- Observing wildlife from high seats
- Exploring nature in the vicinity of the Rog
- Searching for antlers and an encounter with a bear











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Our experience: MATEO

- Observing mechanized logging (Cut to lenghth method)
- Hike through growth forest
- Forest through the eyes of workers (experience)







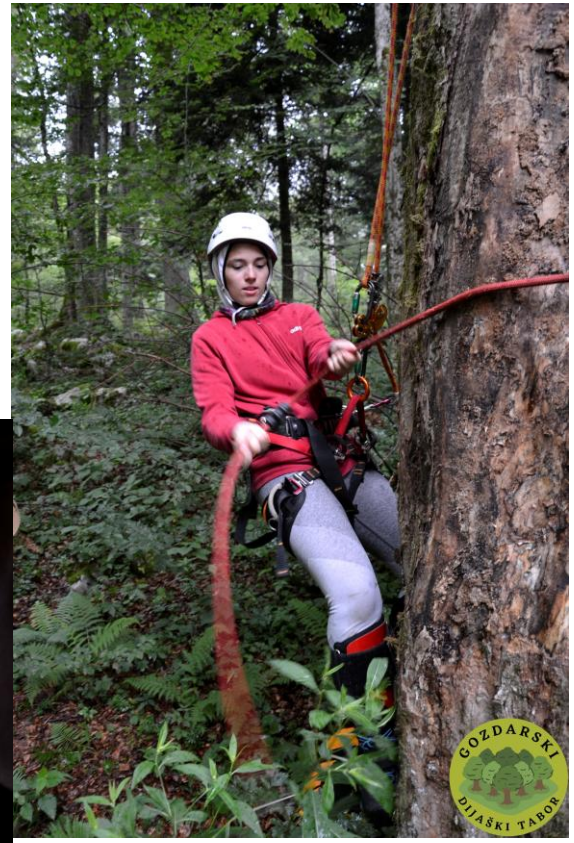
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Our experience: SARA

- Gathering edible plants
- Bear encounter (saw it from hunting hide)
- arboriculture







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Our experience: AJDA



- Catching and identifying insects.
- A chance to observe old growth forests.
- Observing animal footpaths and setting up camera traps.





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How did it influence my academic journey?

- Realistic insight into the profession
- Testing your own interests
- Connecting with experts and students



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Where are we now?






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Conclusion

- Great source of information about forestry in Slovenia
- Confirming the right choice

- OPA MEDO



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