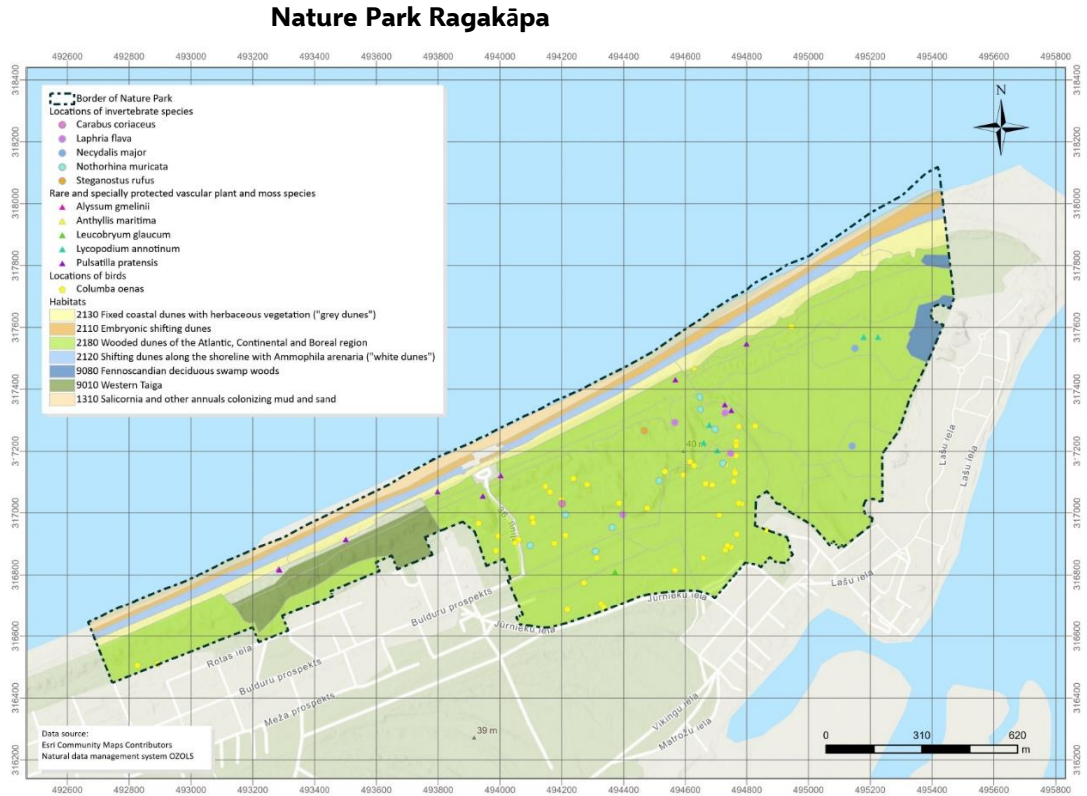


Natura2000 site
Nature Park
"Ragakāpa"
 (LV0303300)
Area: 150 ha
Year of establishment:
 1962

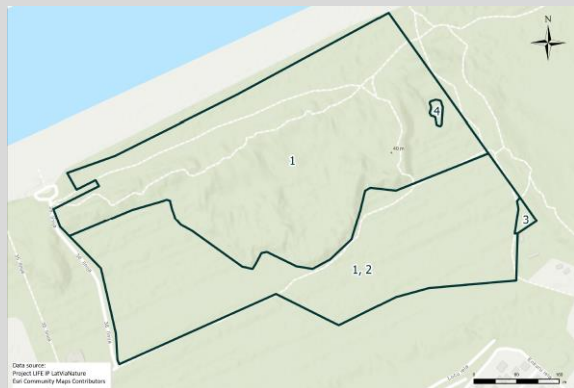
Conservation importance: Important site for the protection of forest coastal dunes. There are 6 types of protected habitats of European importance on the site, which occupy 98% of the territory, as well as 10 plant species, 4 each of bird and invertebrate species, one each of mammals and fungi species (of which 6 are of EU importance).

Ragakāpa – 12-17 m high, one of the highest dunes in Latvia.



Invasive species in Ragakāpa: The dwarf serviceberry *Amelanchier spicata* is the most widespread on the site; the red-berried elder *Sambucus racemosa*, the cotoneasters *Cotoneaster sp.*, the silverberry *Elaeagnus commutata* and the Japanese rose *Rosa rugosa* are less often found. In order to preserve the unique nature assets of the site, the eradication of these species in an area of 49 ha has been prioritised as a top management measure in the Management Plan of Nature Park "Ragakāpa" for 2019 - 2031.

It is planned to test methods of eradication of the invasive alien species dwarf serviceberry on the site within the **Project LIFE IP LatViaNature**. Preparatory work is carried out in Project Action A.7, but practical work - in Action C.6.2. In total the Project plans to test methods of eradication of five different invasive alien species in an area of 100 ha. Ragakāpa is one of 13 pilot areas, but the only one for testing methods of eradicating the dwarf serviceberry.



Ragakāpa pilot area

Size of the pilot area: 32.9 ha
 Land owner: state (under Nature Conservation Agency administration)
 Planned period of activities: 2023 - 2026
 Methods applied:

- Uprooting bushes with manual lifters (1)
- Uprooting bushes with tractor machinery (2)
- Intensive trimming of shoots (2-3 times a year) (3)
- Treatment of stumps with chemical plant protection products after felling (4)

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)





Dwarf serviceberry *Amelanchier spicata*

Description:

- Up to 8 m high, summer green woody plant of the rose family (A, B);
- Dark green, broadly elliptic or rounded leaves (length 3-6 cm; width 2-5 cm) (D);
- White blooms, in short clusters (C). Blooming in late May, June;
- The fruit is berry-like, juicy and edible, unripe - reddish, ripe - blue-black (D). Diameter 7-12 mm. Ripens in August.

Distribution:

- Natural - North America;
- Introduced into Europe as a fruit and ornamental tree and escaped into the wild;
- In Latvia - suburban and coastal forests, mainly dry and moderately humid forests. Found throughout the whole country (E).

Spreading:

Mainly being spread by birds and other animals that feed on the fruits of the serviceberry.

Impact:

The serviceberry forms dense stands, particularly in open, sparse pine forests. It changes the composition of soil nutrient, creates shading, and also alters the plant communities in the invaded areas over time. As a result, species that are only found in nutrient-poor soils are disappearing, including protected species, such as the Eastern pasqueflower *Pulsatilla patens* and clubmosses *Diphysastrum sp.* Also, in such conditions, pines do regenerate worse and deciduous trees introduce instead.

Present management:

- The species is not included in the official list of invasive species of Latvia; therefore, eradication measures are carried out episodically.
- Shoots are formed after felling, and even denser stands are formed compared to the pre-felling without repeated cutting of the shoots or other measures. Managers often choose not to eradicate the species due to this factor.

