

## The Vrljika river

The Vrljika is a typical karst river that originates from several karst springs near the villages of Proložac and Glavina. The largest and most generous source is Opačac. It supplies drinking water to most of the Imotski region. In addition to Opačac, the Vrljika stream is formed by sources: Jauk, Utopišće, Duboka draga, Zdilar's Vrilo and Two Eyes. The upper course of Vrljika is protected as a Special Reserve, which is home to endemic Softmouth Trout and Spotted Minnow.



### Interesting ....

The waters of the Vrljika River change their name five times to the confluence with the Neretva River: Vrljika, Matica, Tihaljina, Mlada and Trebižet. The very name Vrljika comes from the archaic Croatian verb "vrljati", which means to twist and can still be heard in the speech of the inhabitants of the Imotski region.

## Prološko blato and Lokvičić lakes

Prološko blato is a flood area in the western part of the Imotski field with rich wetland flora and fauna. Numerous wetland birds inhabit Blato periodically, and endemic fish species of Imotski Spined Loach and Albanian Roach live in lake water. There are three karst lakes on the far western perimeter of the field near the settlement of Lokvičići: Galipovac, Mamica Lake and Knezovic Lake. These lesser-known lakes of exceptional beauty are valuable reservoirs of fresh water in the surrounding waterless karst. There is a marked hiking and tourist trail around the lake, maintained by the Croatian Mountaineering Association Imotski.



### Interesting ...

The youngest lake in the Imotski region is "Bučusa". It was formed in 2004 by the collapse of the earth and the penetration of water in the south western part of Prološko Blato. The very origin of the lake is a good example and proof of the formation of other Imotski lakes ..

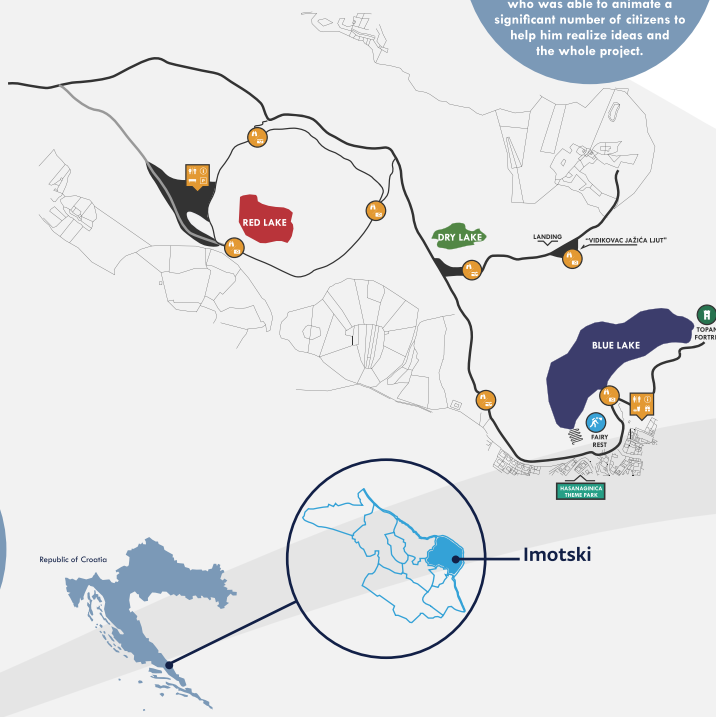


## Gaj

Imotski Gaj is a vast forest area north of the city. The area was artificially afforested with black pine, an urban plan conceived as a city park intended for recreation and nature walks. In the area of Gaj there is an educational trail with educational and information boards and a description of the most important natural-geographical landmarks of the area ..

### Interesting ...

The afforestation and landscaping of the Gaj Park was organized by Russian forestry engineer Boris Hyperboreysky. He lived in Imotski as a refugee between the two world wars. Hyperboreysky was a great lover of nature, an enthusiast who was able to animate a significant number of citizens to help him realize ideas and the whole project.



Public Institution for the Management of Protected Areas in the County of Split and Dalmatia „Sea and karst“

## Protected parts of nature in the area of Imotski region



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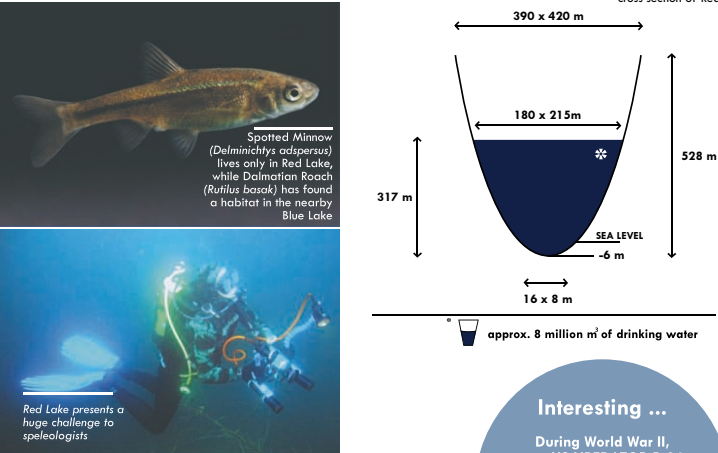
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# Red Lake

Red Lake is a speleological object and the deepest lake in the Republic of Croatia. Depth of water changes throughout the year depending on rainfall. For high water levels the depth of the Red Lake is greater than 300 meters. The highest measured water level was 317 meters. The water depth is never less than 225 meters. It is named after the reddish colour of the surrounding bauxite rocks and the formation of the lake is associated with the collapse of the ceiling of a large underground cavity. Water flows into the lake through a branched underground channel system. There are several speleological objects in the steep cliffs of Red Lake – caves. Some are constantly submerged, while some are without water during lower levels and available to underground researchers – cavers/speleologists.

Schematic representation of the cross section of Red Lake



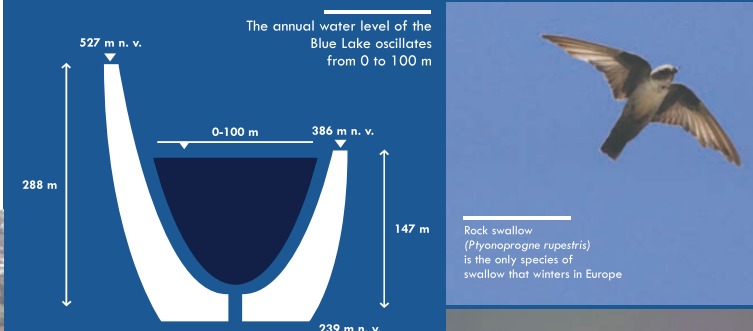
## Interesting ...

During World War II, two US LIBERATOR B-24 bombers fell in the Red Lake. The bombers were hit by German air defense on April 13 1944, and parts of them are still on the bottom of the lake today.

Unlike Blue, the bottom of Red Lake is below sea level

# Blue Lake

Blue Lake is a picturesque karst lake on the western edge of the city. It was also caused by the collapse of the ceiling of underground cavities. Depending on the amount of precipitation, the depth of water varies considerably. When it dries at the bottom, a traditional football game is played between the Elves and the Werewolves – football teams from the east and west sides of the lake. Blue Lake is a favorite picnic area of Imotski citizens. Unlike Red Lake, it is much more approachable and accessible to picnickers and tourists.



## Interesting ...

In 1943, the first football game was played at the bottom of the dried up Blue Lake. This tradition has continued to this day, with one important rule - the result must always remain draw.



Bluebird (Monticola solitarius) and rock swallow nest on the cliffs of Imotski lakes

Drywall serpentines lead to the shore of the lake

# Topana

The Topana Fort is one of the most important fortresses in the interior of Dalmatia. It was built in the tenth century on a natural ridge above Blue Lake. Throughout history, it has been of strategic importance. When the Turks conquered Imotski in 1493, Topana became the center of Turkish rule. Only in 1717 did it pass into the hands of the Venetians. In 1718, the church of Our Lady of the Angels, the patron saint of the town of Imotski, was built inside the fortress. The day of the city and the feast of Our Lady of the Angels is celebrated on August 2 and has a special significance as a reminder of the day when the Christian army liberated the Imotski region from the Turks. Today, Topana is a viewpoint and cultural events take place in it, during the warm part of the year.



## Interesting ...

The former border between the Ottoman Empire and the Venetian Republic, which still separates the Republic of Croatia from Bosnia and Herzegovina today, was established by cannon shots from Topana. The name Topan comes from the Turkish word Tophana which means foundry and cannon store.



At the foot of Topana is the football stadium Gospin dolac



Topana Fortress was inhabited until 1816