

A PLACE REDISCOVERED

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SYLWIA PIWOWAR

The research station of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Kosewo Górne is undergoing extensive modernization. This overhaul is part of a carefully planned strategy that will open up new opportunities for the facility's development, benefiting both the scientific community and the local population. Once revitalized, the center will be poised for dynamic growth in near future.



Maja the elk, roaming her enclosure

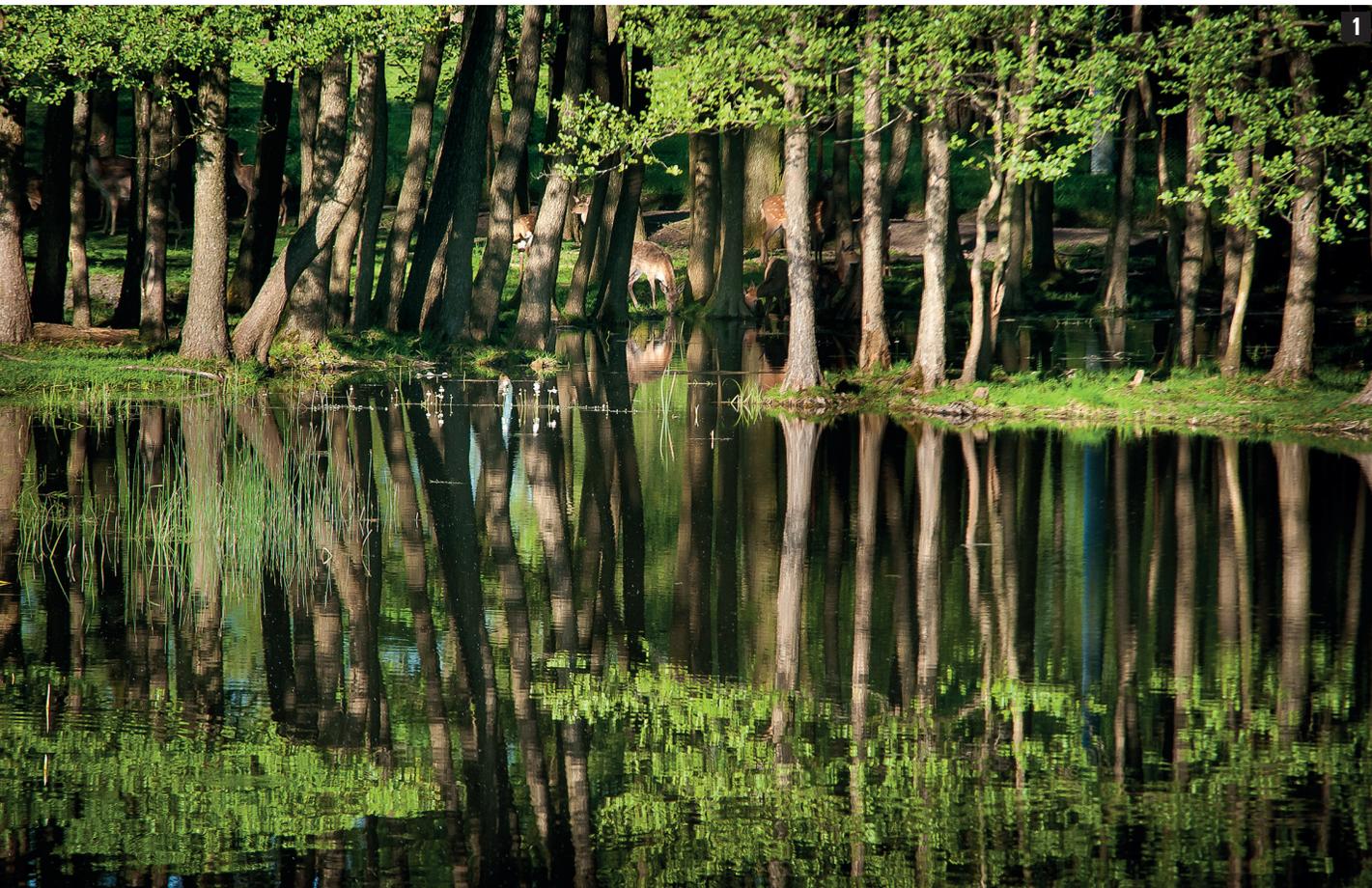


Photo 1
Depressions in the land surrounding the Kosewo facility are mostly populated by alder trees, naturally suited to waterlogged soil. After wet winters, water remains in these depressions almost year-round. Visitors can admire gray alders (*Alnus incana*) reflected in the calm water surface and try to spot deer hiding in their shade

The station is located near Poland’s Masurian Landscape Park, in a lakeland area of immense natural beauty. Here, picturesque hills are covered with blooming meadows, and gravel roads wind through forests stretching down to the local lake. Sunrises and sunsets, morning mists in the valleys, and close encounters with wild animals all contribute to the uniqueness of this place. This is the type of location, with excellent access to wild nature, that wildlife photography enthusiasts enjoy most.

Soon, the profile of the facility will be shifting, towards preserving the historical, cultural, and environmental wonders of the location.

A significant portion of the currently oversized herds of sika deer and fallow deer – species not native to Masuria – will be transferred to licensed breeders. Instead, Old Pomeranian breed sheep will be introduced to the meadows. Though slower-growing, these sheep are known for their resilience and hardiness. Their breeding will be part of a genetic resource conservation program. Additionally, these sheep, acting as “living lawnmowers,” will help maintain trimmed, open meadows.

Another aspect of the modernization is a project to establish an orchard of historical local varieties of fruit trees and shrubs, spanning nearly two hectares. The plants grown here will serve as a gene bank, complementing the one maintained at the Botanical Garden of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Powsin. This orchard will also be beneficial for bees, as a beekeeping farm with nearly 1,000 colonies is slated to be established in Kosewo.

A longer-term goal for the transformation is to prepare the station in Kosewo, along with the areas in Baranów and Śmietki (also owned by the Polish Academy of Sciences), to become incorporated into the Masurian National Park. These plans are laid out for the next 10 years. Meanwhile, the center is opening up to tourists. Visitors can explore the beautiful alder forests, luminous oak groves, fragments of riparian forest, pine woods, swamps, peat bogs, and meadows. Wildlife enthusiasts will have chances to spot wolves, foxes, solitary moose, or herds of native red deer and roe deer, while bird-watchers can observe a variety of species – from cranes and storks to wagtails and tree sparrows.

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Photo 2
A red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) stag, with this year's antlers still in velvet

Photo 3
A branch of European larch (*Larix decidua*) showing both this year's and last year's cones

Photo 4
A pasture on the research station's grounds. In the foreground is a shallow lake that connects to Lake Kuc, visible behind the line of trees

Photo 5
One of many water pools in the forest, surrounded by moor. Many of these water bodies dry up in May or June, but a few retain water throughout the year

Photo 6
The extensively managed Kosewo meadows are both an element of the landscape and the area's greatest natural treasure



7

Photo 7
In addition to deer, sheep are also bred at the facility in Kosewo. Breeding historical sheep breeds will become increasingly important in the coming years

Photo 8
The picturesque backroads of the station grounds, leading into the undisturbed landscape beyond, stretching to the horizon

Photo 9
The “Yellow House” – the headquarters of the agroecological station in Kosewo Górze

Photo 10
Fallow deer quarters in a pine forest with a picturesque old hay shed



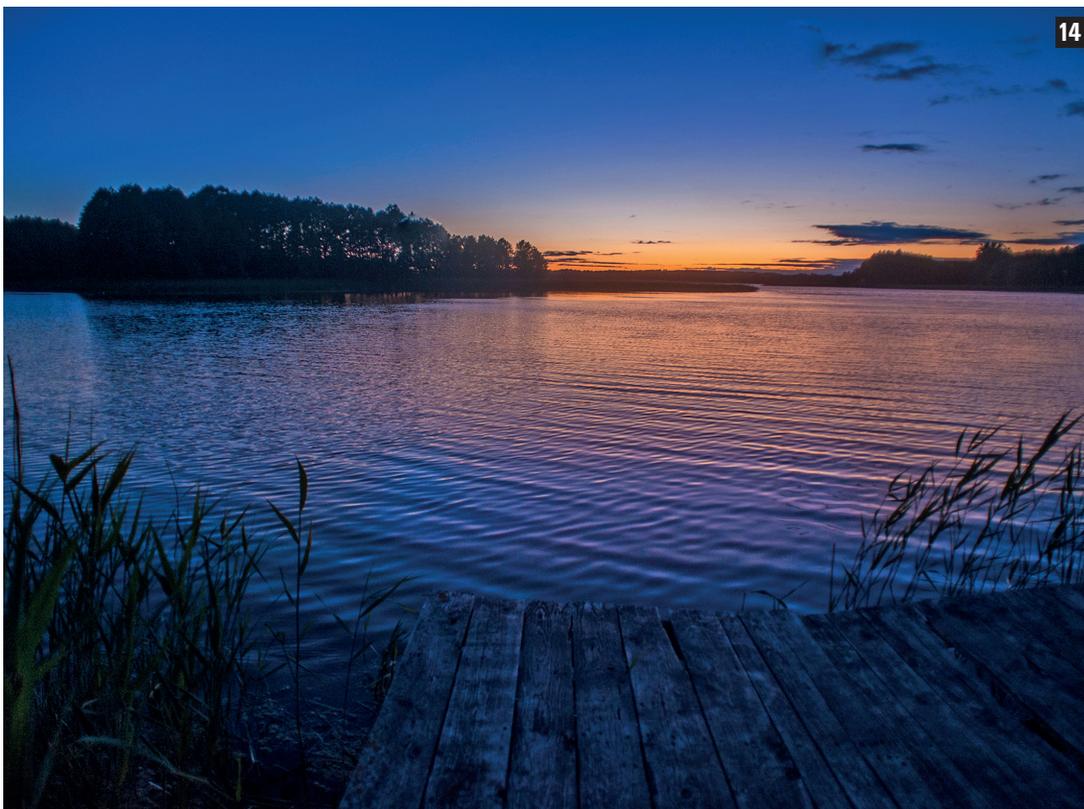
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Photos 11 & 13
The agroecological station of the PAS Botanical Garden – Center for the Preservation of Biodiversity in Kosewo Górne with the picturesque building of the station's office, previously also used as an educational facility

Photo 12
Throughout the hilly terrain of the station in Kosewo, there are numerous closed basins where water stagnates in winter and spring. These provide excellent habitats for alder trees and also important sites for animals

Photo 14
Sunset on Lake Kuc. Wholly owned by the Polish Academy of Sciences, the lake is a very interesting body of water in terms of nature. It is classified as an oligotrophic, whitefish-inhabited lake