



Mennään luontoon!

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CONTENTS

We are third-year social studies students from Tampere University of Applied Sciences. We implemented this nature guide as part of our studies at the request of the Valkeakoski reception center.

Getting to know nature is an important part of settling in, but going there without previous experience may seem a little scary. With the help of this guide, we hope to inspire readers to enjoy Finland's beautiful nature and its offerings.

Table of contents

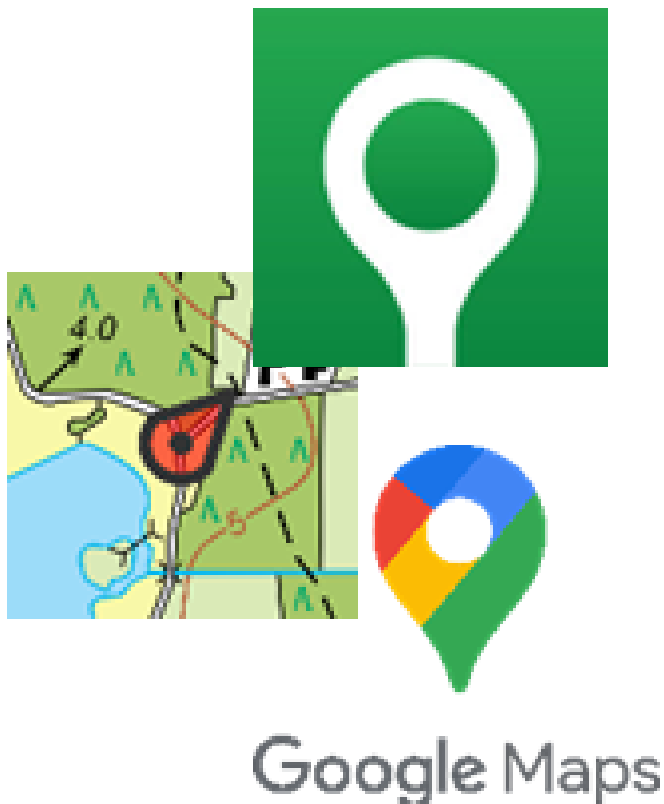
Apps and Tools.....	3
Checklist for lighting a fire.....	4
The Top-10 for trips in nature.....	5
Campfire sites at Valkeakoski.....	6
Making a Fire.....	7
Nature Trails in Valkeakoski.....	8
Berries of the Forest.....	10
Sources.....	13



APPS AND TOOLS



In Finland, the general emergency number is 112. You can download the free **112 Suomi** app for your phone, which makes it easy to call the emergency number. The app automatically provides the emergency center with your exact location. We strongly recommend installing this app on your phone.



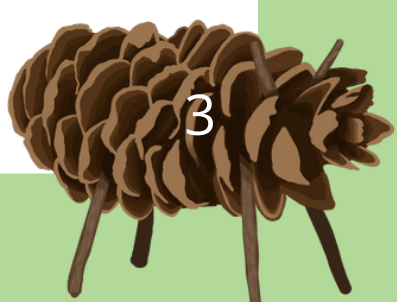
Additionally, it's a good idea to have a GPS-based map application on your phone. Examples like **Karttaselain**, **Topo GPS**, or **Google Maps** work well and are available for free. You can also plan your outdoor trips in advance using online maps, such as those available on the Finnish National Land Survey's Karttapaikka service. Familiarize yourself with common map symbols using apps and online resources.

Remember to ensure your phone has enough battery before heading out into nature!



There are many potential hazards when carrying sharp tools or planning to make a fire, such as a campfire, during an outdoor trip.

In Finland, carrying sharp tools like knives or axes in public places is not allowed without a valid reason. Make sure to carry such tools only when heading into nature. Keep them out of sight, for example, in your backpack, and only take them out when you need to use them.



CHECKLIST FOR LIGHTING A FIRE:

- Check if a **forest fire warning** is in effect in your area.
- There is no firewood available at the campfire sites near Valkeakoski, so bring your own!
- Ensure you are at a designated public campfire site or have the landowner's permission to light an open fire.
- Make sure there is a bucket of water nearby for extinguishing the fire.
- Ensure there are no flammable chemicals or plants near the fire.
- Do not burn trash in the campfire; instead, collect and recycle it properly.
- Never leave the fire unattended.
- Extinguish the fire thoroughly before leaving the campfire site.

Check your local forest fire warnings here:



Check here for public campfire sites near Valkeakoski:



TOP-10 THINGS TO BRING WITH YOU:

- Warm, weather-appropriate clothing suitable for nature.
- Sturdy, high-ankle walking shoes.
- First aid kit – includes bandages, band-aids, painkillers, etc.
- A fully charged phone for emergencies.
- Flashlight and reflector for visibility and safety.
- Plenty of drinks, such as water or juice.
- Snacks and food, like sausages, bread, marshmallows, coffee, fruits, etc.
- For the campfire: a knife, matches, and your own fire starters.
- A suitable backpack or bag to carry everything.
- Most importantly, a relaxed and calm attitude!



CAMPFIRE SITES AT VALKEAKOSKI

You must bring your own firewood to all the campfire sites!

Kirjaslampi

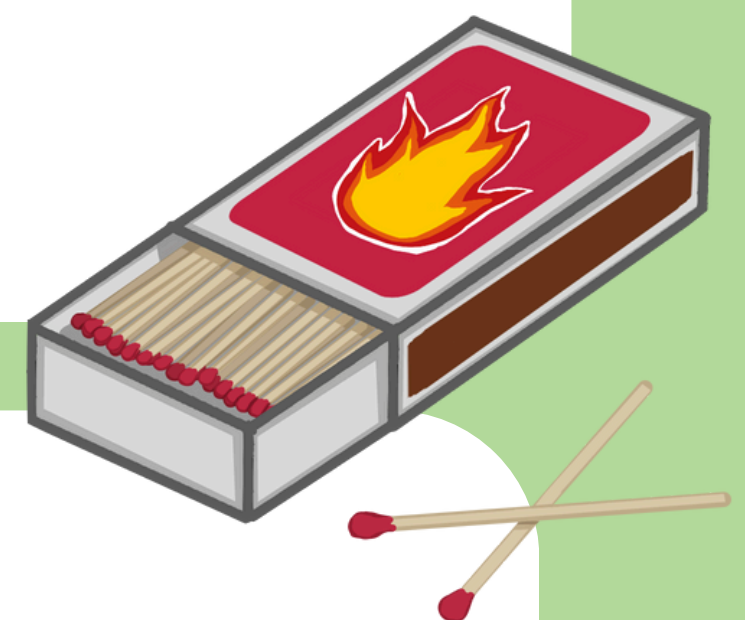
Along the Kirjaslampi walking trail, there is an open grilling spot. Nearby, you'll also find a playground, a dance pavilion, and a swimming area.

Riuttasaari

These campfire sites are located on an island, which is easily accessible via a small wooden bridge. The area features two firepits. Riuttasaari also has a beach, an outdoor toilet, a nature trail, as well as beautiful natural scenery and waterways.

Korkeakangas

Korkeakangas has something for everyone. The area includes a grilling hut, nature trails, frisbee golf courses and various other exercise opportunities. In winter, you can also go sledding and skiing.

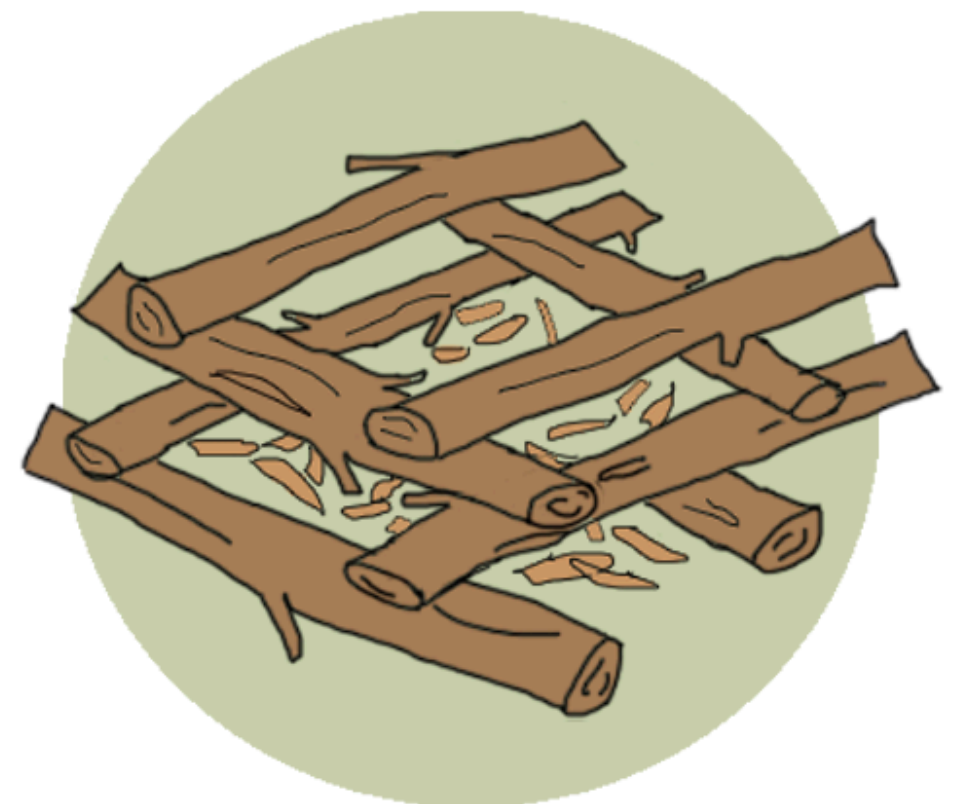


MAKING A FIRE

Everyone has their own way of making a fire, but with dry wood, birch bark, and matches, you're off to a good start. It's best to stack the wood loosely, leaving spaces between the logs, either stacked on top of each other or leaning against one another. Place kindling—such as birch bark, newspaper, toilet paper, or fire starter cubes—at the center of the woodpile. Then, light the kindling.

Criss-cross fire

- A good all-purpose fire
- Easy to add logs as needed
- Kindling is placed in the middle of the structure



Each type of campfire has its strengths and weaknesses. If fire-making is new to you, starting with a reliable criss-cross fire is a good choice.

Building and lighting a fire:

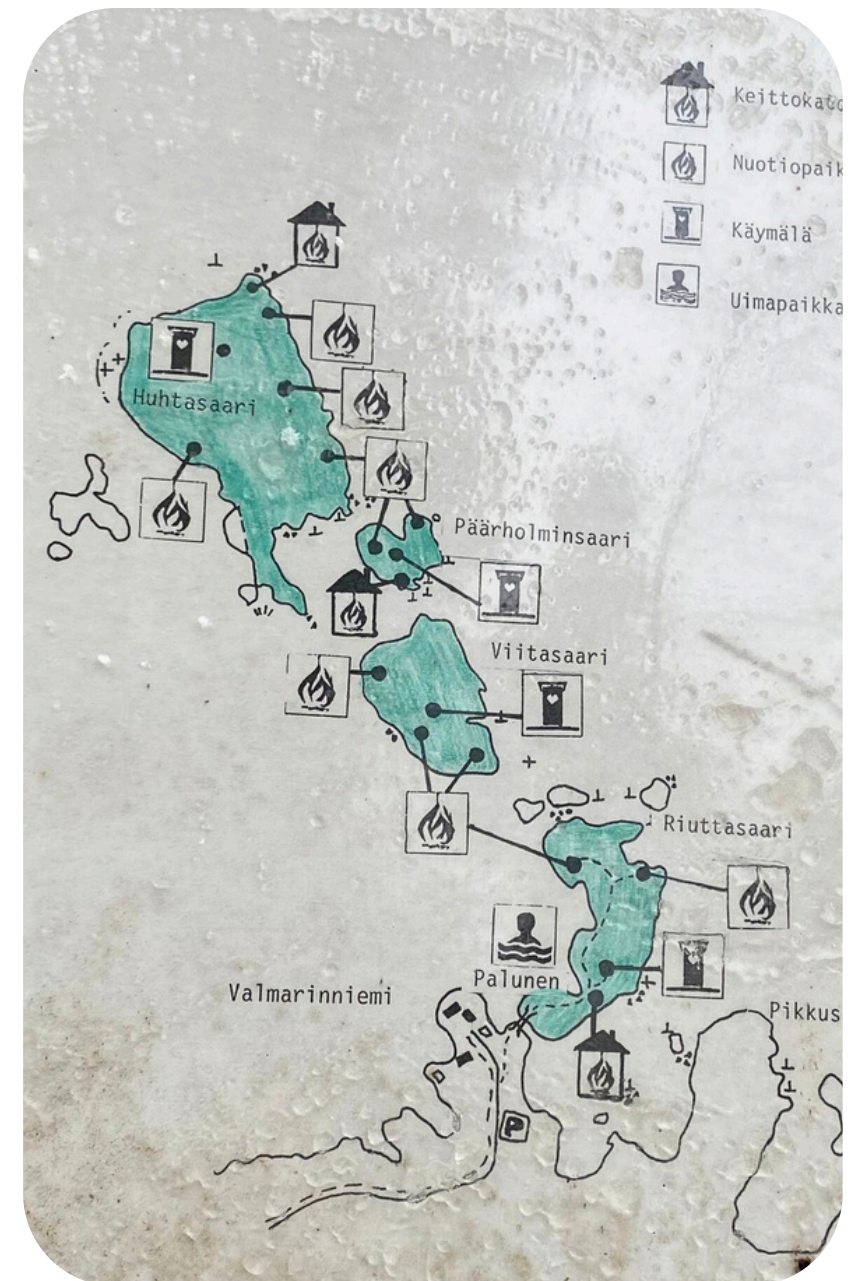


NATURE TRAILS IN VALKEAKOSKI

Valmarin niemipolku

The 2 km long trail on the Valmari Peninsula winds through diverse forest and lakeside landscapes. The area has good walking and cycling connections and is located 5 km from the city center. The trail is not barrier-free and includes some steeper ascents and descents. The route is clearly marked. The trail is suitable for all ages for peaceful outdoor activities and enjoying nature. There are also a few campfire sites along the way.

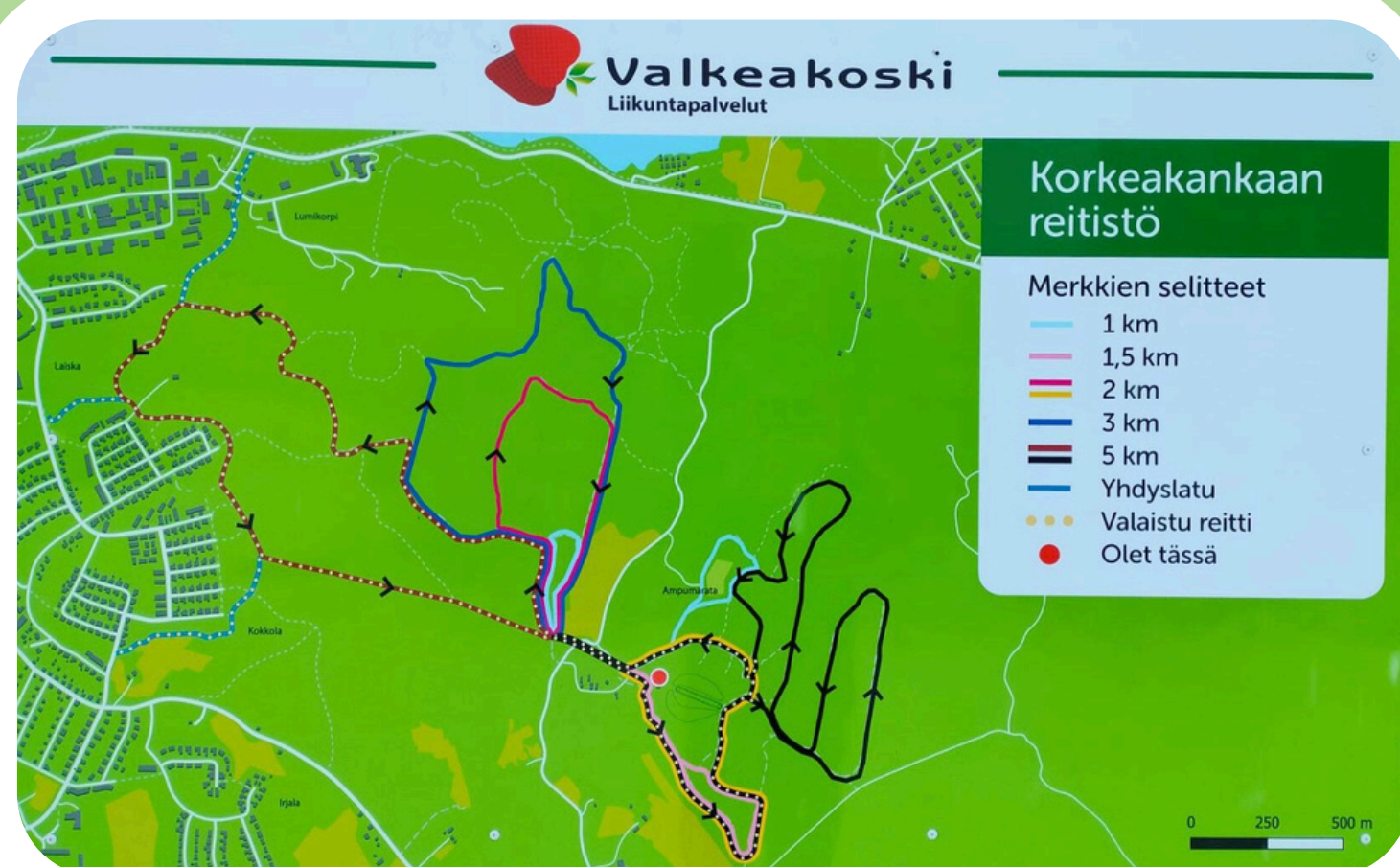
Address: Valmarintie 103, Valkeakoski.



Mettivuoren luonnonhoito- metsän polku

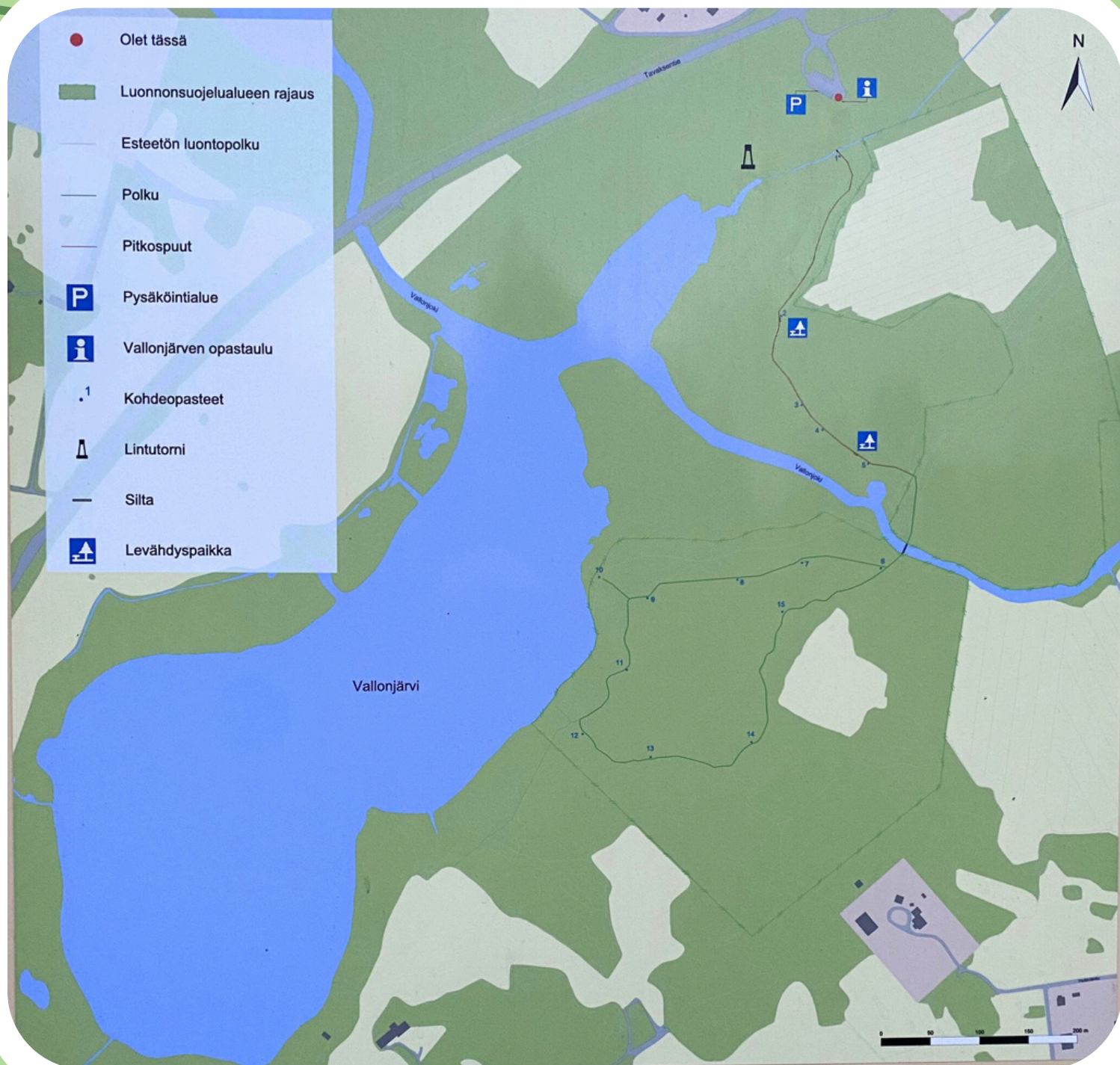
The 1.5 km long Mettivuori trail, located in the Korkeakangas area, approximately 4.5 km from the center of Valkeakoski, runs through a diverse forest management area. The route is easy to follow, but not disability accessible. The Korkeakangas area has good light traffic connections and trail connections from Sointula and Juhannusvuori.

Address: Veikko Hakulisentie 112, Vakeakoski



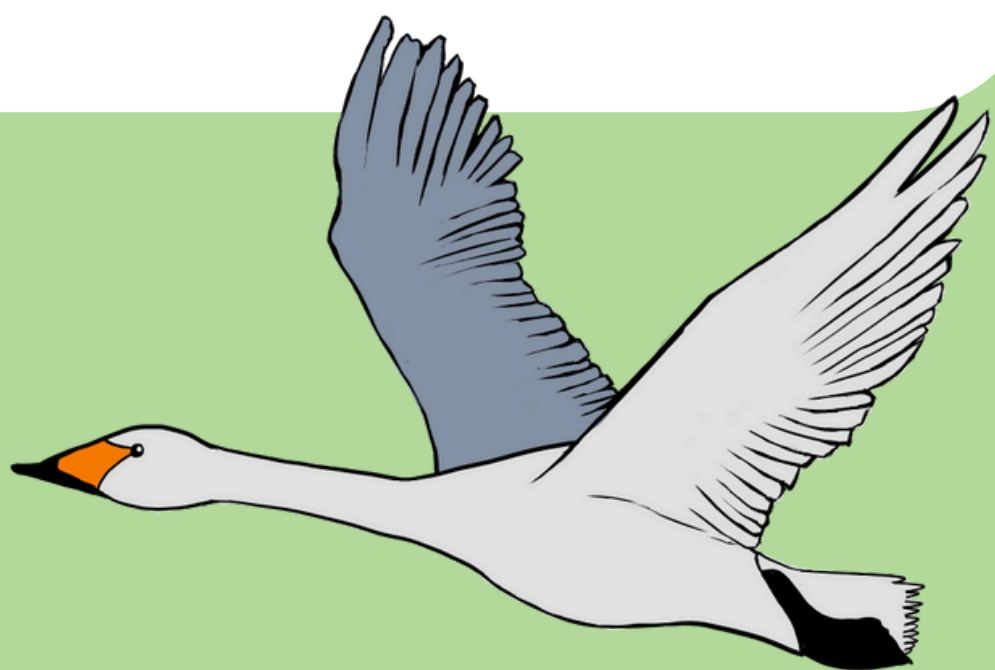
Vallonjärven luontopolku ja lintutorni

On the beautiful, 2.2 km long Vallonjärvi trail, you can experience varied forest and lake landscapes. It is located just a kilometer from the city center. The trail is not barrier-free and includes duckboard sections. The trail is well marked, and there are information boards about Finnish nature along the way. Suitable for the whole family and offers a peaceful environment for walking in nature.

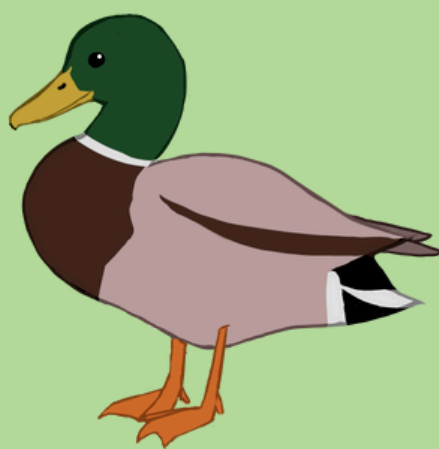


At the start of the trail, there is a birdwatching tower offering stunning views of Lake Vallonjärvi, ideal for observing birds, especially during spring and autumn migrations.

Address: Tavaksentie 33, Valkeakoski.



Laulujoutsen
(Whooper swan)



Sinisorsa
(Mallard)



BERRIES OF THE FOREST

Blueberry

Habitat: Fresh and grove-like taiga forests and wildernesses, including dry taiga forests and arctic hills.

Picking season: Mid-July to early September

Appearance: Small, round, dark blue berries with wax-like skin and delicate small leaves.



Lingonberry

Habitat: Dry, fresh and grove-like taiga forests, wilderness, swamps, crags, arctic hills, field margins, roadsides

Picking season: early September to mid-October

Appearance: Small, red, round and shiny berries with dark green and glossy leaves.





Raspberry

Habitat: Rocky hills and cliffs, clear-cuts, roadsides, field and forest edges, and coastal groves

Picking season: Early August to early September

Appearance: Soft, medium-sized, roundish berries that are red or pink. Leaves are green with sharply toothed edges.

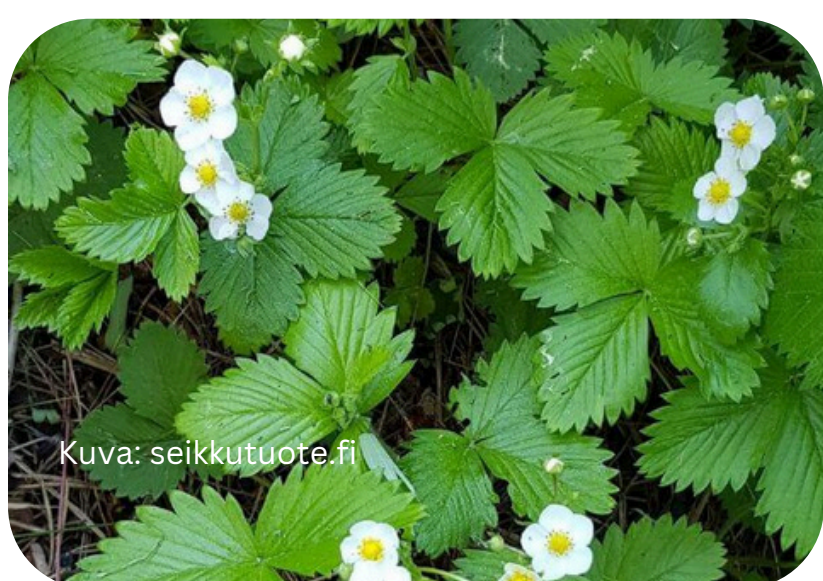


Wild Strawberry

Habitat: Meadows, pastures, roadsides, fields, forest edges, groves, sandy forests, and clear-cuts.

Picking season: June to July

Appearance: Small, red, juicy, and shiny berries that detach easily. Leaves are green and form a basal rosette.



Cloudberry

Habitat: Wetlands, marshes, bogs, string fens, forested mires, peatlands, and rocky wetlands.

Harvest season: Mid-July to early August

Appearance: Medium-sized, orange/yellow, shiny, and juicy drupe-like berry. Leaves are green and ear-shaped.



Kuva: vastavalo.net

Several other berry plants also grow in Finland. Here are some examples: cranberry, crowberry, bog bilberry, sea buckthorn, and juniper.

In Finland, the "Everyman's Rights" allow everyone to freely pick wild berries, mushrooms, and flowers from nature.

It is important to remember that some forest berries are poisonous. Never eat a berry if you don't know what it is!



SOURCES

<https://www.valkeakoski.fi/kulttuuri-ja-liikunta/ulkoilu-ja-veneily/nuotiopaikat-ja-laavut/>

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